



RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

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FIRST SESSION OF THE FIFTY-SEVENTH PARLIAMENT

Tuesday, 14 March 2023

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TUESDAY, 14 MARCH 2023

 The Legislative Assembly met at 9.30 am.

Mr Speaker (Hon. Curtis Pitt, Mulgrave) read prayers and took the chair.

Mr SPEAKER: Honourable members, I respectfully acknowledge that we are sitting today on the land of Aboriginal people and pay my respects to elders past and present. I thank them, as First Australians, for their careful custodianship of the land over countless generations. We are very fortunate in this country to have two of the world's oldest continuing living cultures in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples whose lands, winds and waters we all now share.

ASSENT TO BILLS

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

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

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

Date of Assent: 28 February 2023

A Bill for An Act to amend the Coroners Act 2003, the Criminal Code, the Domestic and Family Violence Protection Act 2012, the Evidence Act 1977, the Oaths Act 1867, the Penalties and Sentences Act 1992, the Public Guardian Act 2014, the Telecommunications Interception Act 2009, the Youth Justice Act 1992 and the legislation mentioned in schedule 1 for particular purposes

A Bill for an Act to amend the Cape York Peninsula Heritage Act 2007, the Central Queensland Coal Associates Agreement Act 1968, the Land Act 1994, the Land Regulation 2020, the Land Title Act 1994, the Mineral Resources Act 1989, the Place Names Act 1994, the Stock Route Management Act 2002, the Survey and Mapping Infrastructure Act 2003, the Survey and Mapping Infrastructure Regulation 2014, the Vegetation Management Act 1999 and the legislation mentioned in schedule 1 for particular purposes, and to repeal the Foreign Governments (Titles to Land) Act 1948, the Starcke Pastoral Holdings Acquisition Act 1994, the Survey and Mapping Infrastructure (Survey Standards) Notice 2021, the Survey and Mapping Infrastructure (Survey Standards—Requirements for Mining Tenures) Notice (No. 1) 2011 and the Yeppoon Hospital Site Acquisition Act 2006

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

Yours sincerely


Governor

28 February 2023

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 28 February 2023, from Her Excellency the Governor to the Speaker advising of assent to certain bills on 28 February 2023 [\[281\]](#).

SPEAKER'S STATEMENTS


Auditor-General and Assistant Auditor-General, Appointments

 **Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I advise that on 8 March 2023 I administered the Affirmation of Office to Brendan Worrall as Queensland Auditor-General, and the Affirmation of Office to Karen Johnson as Assistant Queensland Auditor-General. I table a copy of the affirmations.

Tabled paper: Affirmation of Office of Mr Brendan Worrall as Auditor-General of Queensland, dated 8 March 2023 [\[282\]](#).

Tabled paper: Affirmation of Office of Ms Karen Johnson as Assistant Auditor-General of Queensland, dated 8 March 2023 [\[287\]](#).


Absence of Members

 **Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I have received advice from the member for Ipswich West, Jim Madden MP, that he will be absent from this week's sittings of the House. The member's notification complies with standing order 263A.

I also advise that the Deputy Speaker is absent this sitting week as he is attending the 71st Westminster Seminar on Effective Parliaments in the United Kingdom.


PRIVILEGE

Speaker's Rulings, Alleged Contempts of Parliament

 **Mr SPEAKER:** On 9 March 2023, I tabled three rulings regarding matters of privilege including: a ruling relating to a complaint by the Minister for Transport and Main Roads alleging that the Leader of the Opposition, the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, the Manager of Opposition Business and the members for Mudgeeraba and Maroochydore committed various types of contempt between March and September 2022; a ruling relating to a complaint by the member for Maiwar alleging that the Minister for Communities and Housing, Minister for Digital Economy and Minister for the Arts deliberately misled the House in response to a question on notice on 3 January 2023; and a ruling relating to a complaint by the member for Burleigh alleging that the Minister for Energy, Renewables and Hydrogen and Minister for Public Works and Procurement deliberately misled the House in his answer to a question without notice on 11 May 2022. I ruled that all three matters did not warrant the further attention of the House via the Ethics Committee. I now refer to these matters so that if any member wishes to exercise their rights in respect of those matters under the standing orders, they should do so immediately, identifying the matter.

SPEAKER'S RULING

Same Question Rule

 **Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I have considered the application of the same question rule to the Youth Justice and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2021, the Strengthening Community Safety Bill 2023 and the amendments approved for circulation by the member for Burdekin yesterday afternoon. In summary, the same question rule is enlivened by clauses 14 and 41 of the Strengthening Community Safety Bill, contrary to standing order 87. Furthermore, amendment No. 6 is the same as an amendment moved by the member for Traeger to a previous bill that was negatived, thus enlivening the same question rule in standing orders 87 and 150. I seek leave to incorporate my full ruling circulated in my name.

Leave granted.

SPEAKER'S RULING—APPLICATION OF SAME QUESTION RULE TO STRENGTHENING COMMUNITY SAFETY BILL

I have considered the application of the same question rule to the Youth Justice and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2021 and the Strengthening Community Safety Bill 2023.

On 25 February 2021 the Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services introduced the Youth Justice and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. The bill was passed with amendment on 22 April 2021. On 21 February 2023 the Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services introduced the Strengthening Community Safety Bill.

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

Clauses 14 and 41 of the Strengthening Community Safety Bill propose amendments to provisions that are substantially the same as amendments previously considered and agreed to by the House in the same session of parliament. This is contrary to Standing Order 87.

Accordingly, I rule that the same question rule is enlivened by clauses 14 and 41 of the bill contrary to Standing Order 87. A motion to suspend Standing Order 87 would be required for these clauses to be considered.

Furthermore, the Member for Burdekin yesterday afternoon approved the circulation of amendments to the Strengthening Community Safety Bill 2023.

Amendment number 6 is the same as an amendment moved by the Member for Traeger to the Youth Justice and Other Legislation Bill 2021. That amendment was negatived, thus enlivening the same question rule in Standing Orders 87 and 150 to the Member for Burdekin's amendment number 6.

PETITIONS

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

Woodgate, Boat Ramp

Mr Bennett, from 346 petitioners, requesting the House to commence construction of the already-identified Queensland State Government Priority 1 Project for Walkers Point, Woodgate boat ramp [\[275\]](#).

Youth Crime

Mr Nicholls, from 2,479 petitioners, requesting the House to help address the youth crime crisis by making breach of bail an offence for youth offenders [\[276\]](#).

Youth Crime

Mr Mander, from 9,451 petitioners, requesting the House to undertake a range of measures to address youth and juvenile crime [\[277\]](#).

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

Redland Bay, Boat Ramp

273 petitioners, requesting the House to withdraw the approval of a large public boat ramp to be constructed at Weinam Creek Redland Bay and to find an alternative site that does not impact so badly on the Redland Bay and islands communities [\[278\]](#).

Scenic Rim Regional Council, Mayor

970 petitioners, requesting the House to cause the removal of the Mayor of the Scenic Rim Regional Council and appoint an Administrator [\[279\]](#).

Pioneer Valley, Resumption of Land

630 petitioners, requesting the House to halt any Pioneer Valley land compulsory resumption negotiations or contracts until the completion of the business case and EIS for the proposed Pioneer-Burdekin Pumped Hydro project [\[280\]](#).

Petitions received.

TABLED PAPERS

PAPERS TABLED DURING THE RECESS (SO 31)

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

24 February 2023—

- [217](#) Office of the Commissioner (Meriba Omasker Kazip Kazipa)—Annual Report 2021-2022
- [218](#) Legal Affairs and Safety Committee: Report No. 41, 57th Parliament—Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Bill 2022
- [219](#) Legal Affairs and Safety Committee: Report No. 42, 57th Parliament—Inquiry into the Monitoring of Places of Detention (Optional Protocol to the Convention Against Torture) Bill 2022
- [220](#) Health and Environment Committee: Report No. 29, 57th Parliament—Health and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022
- [221](#) State Development and Regional Industries Committee: Report No. 37, 57th Parliament—Local Government Electoral and Other Legislation (Expenditure Caps) Amendment Bill 2022
- [222](#) State Development and Regional Industries Committee: Report No. 38, 57th Parliament—Examination of Auditor-General reports on the water sector

27 February 2023—

- [223](#) Medicines and Poisons Act 2019: Extended Practice Authority 'Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health practitioners' (Version 3)
- [224](#) Medicines and Poisons Act 2019: Extended Practice Authority 'Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health workers' (Version 1)
- [225](#) Medicines and Poisons Act 2019: Extended Practice Authority 'Indigenous health workers' (Version 2)
- [226](#) Medicines and Poisons Act 2019: Extended Practice Authority 'Midwives' (Version 2)
- [227](#) Medicines and Poisons Act 2019: Extended Practice Authority 'Pharmacists' (Version 3)
- [228](#) Medicines and Poisons Act 2019: Extended Practice Authority 'Registered Nurses' (Version 2)
- [229](#) Medicines and Poisons Act 2019: Extended Practice Authority 'Queensland Ambulance Service' (Version 2)
- [230](#) District Court of Queensland—Annual Report 2021-2022: Erratum

28 February 2023—

- [231](#) Legal Affairs and Safety Committee: Report No. 33, 57th Parliament—Inquiry into matters relating to donor conception information, final government response
- [232](#) Health and Environment Committee: Report No. 30, 57th Parliament—Subordinate legislation tabled between 13 October 2022 and 29 November 2022
- [233](#) Education, Employment and Training Committee: Report No. 32, 57th Parliament—Subordinate legislation tabled between 11 November and 29 November 2022

1 March 2023—

- [234](#) Auditor-General Report 10: 2022-23—Health 2022
- [235](#) State Development and Regional Industries Committee: Report No. 39, 57th Parliament—Examination of Auditor-General Report No. 16: 2021-22—Contract management for new infrastructure

3 March 2023—

- [236](#) Fisheries Act 1994: Fisheries (General) (Vessel Tracking) Amendment Regulation 2019, No. 180, explanatory notes: Erratum
- [237](#) State Development and Regional Industries Committee: Report No. 33, 57th Parliament—Examination of Auditor-General Report No. 9: 2021-22—Regulating dam safety, government response

6 March 2023—

- [238](#) Queensland Curriculum & Assessment Authority—Annual Report 2020-2021: Erratum
- [239](#) Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority—Annual Report 2021-2022: Erratum

9 March 2023—

- [240](#) Ruling by the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, Hon. Curtis Pitt—Alleged contempt of the Parliament by the Leader of the Opposition, the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, the Manager of Opposition Business and the members for Mudgeeraba and Maroochydore
- [241](#) Ruling by the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, Hon. Curtis Pitt—Alleged contempt of the Parliament by the Minister for Communities and Housing, Minister for Digital Economy and Minister for the Arts
- [242](#) Ruling by the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, Hon. Curtis Pitt—Alleged contempt of the Parliament by the Minister for Energy, Renewables and Hydrogen and Minister for Public Works and Procurement
- [243](#) State Development and Regional Industries Committee: Report No. 34, 57th Parliament—Water Legislation Amendment Bill 2022, government response
- [244](#) Economics and Governance Committee: Report No. 41, 57th Parliament—Strengthening Community Safety Bill 2023

13 March 2023—

- [245](#) Family Responsibilities Commission—Annual Report 2021-2022
- [246](#) Statutes Amendment (National Energy Laws) (Gas Pipelines) Act 2022 which received Royal Assent on 24 November 2022
- [247](#) Transport and Resources Committee: Report No. 29, 57th Parliament—Inquiry into Coal Mining Industry Safety: Erratum
- [248](#) Letter, dated 22 February 2023, from the chair, Aboriginal Centre for the Performing Arts Board, Selwyn Button, to the Minister for Communities and Housing, Minister for Digital Economy and Minister for the Arts, Hon. Leeanne Enoch, presenting the financial statements for the Aboriginal Centre for the Performing Arts (ACPA) and Audit Closing report
- [249](#) Aboriginal Centre for the Performing Arts Pty Ltd—Financial Statements—30 June 2022

TABLING OF DOCUMENTS (SO 32)

STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

The following statutory instruments were tabled by the Clerk—

Medicines and Poisons Act 2019:

- [250](#) Medicines and Poisons (Medicines) Amendment Regulation 2023, No. 6
- [251](#) Medicines and Poisons (Medicines) Amendment Regulation 2023, No. 6, explanatory notes
- [252](#) Medicines and Poisons (Medicines) Amendment Regulation 2023, No. 6, human rights certificate

Public Trustee Act 1978:

- [253](#) Public Trustee (Interest Rate) Amendment Regulation (No. 2) 2023, No. 7
- [254](#) Public Trustee (Interest Rate) Amendment Regulation (No. 2) 2023, No. 7, explanatory notes
- [255](#) Public Trustee (Interest Rate) Amendment Regulation (No. 2) 2023, No. 7, human rights certificate

Police Service Administration and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2022:

- [256](#) Proclamation commencing remaining provisions, No. 8
- [257](#) Proclamation commencing remaining provisions, No. 8, explanatory notes

Public Sector Act 2022:

- [258](#) Public Sector Regulation 2023, No. 9
- [259](#) Public Sector Regulation 2023, No. 9, explanatory notes
- [260](#) Public Sector Regulation 2023, No. 9, human rights certificate

Integrity and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2022:

- [261](#) Proclamation commencing certain provisions, No. 10
- [262](#) Proclamation commencing certain provisions, No. 10, explanatory notes
- [263](#) Proclamation commencing certain provisions, No. 10, human rights certificate

Legal Aid Queensland Act 1997:

- [264](#) Legal Aid Queensland Regulation 2023, No. 11
- [265](#) Legal Aid Queensland Regulation 2023, No. 11, explanatory notes
- [266](#) Legal Aid Queensland Regulation 2023, No. 11, human rights certificate

Economic Development Act 2012:

- [267](#) Economic Development (Variation of Caloundra South UDA) Amendment Regulation 2023, No. 12
- [268](#) Economic Development (Variation of Caloundra South UDA) Amendment Regulation 2023, No. 12, explanatory notes
- [269](#) Economic Development (Variation of Caloundra South UDA) Amendment Regulation 2023, No. 12, human rights certificate

Planning Act 2016:

- [270](#) Planning (Caboolture West Interim Structure Plan) Amendment Regulation 2023, No. 13
- [271](#) Planning (Caboolture West Interim Structure Plan) Amendment Regulation 2023, No. 13, explanatory notes
- [272](#) Planning (Caboolture West Interim Structure Plan) Amendment Regulation 2023, No. 13, human rights certificate

REPORT BY THE CLERK

The following report was tabled by the Clerk—

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

Land and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022

Amendments made to Bill

Short title and consequential references to short title—

Omit—

'Land and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022'

Insert—

'Land and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023'


MINISTERIAL PAPER

The following ministerial paper was tabled by the Clerk—

Deputy Premier, Minister for State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning and Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympic and Paralympic Games Infrastructure (Hon. Dr Miles)—

- [274](#) Response from the Deputy Premier and Minister for State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning and Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympic and Paralympic Games Infrastructure (Hon. Dr Miles) to an ePetition (3787-22) sponsored by the member for Theodore, Mr Boothman, from 1,464 petitioners, requesting the House to allow Wellcamp to be used for homeless families and people without suitable housing

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS**Vaping, Parliamentary Inquiry**

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Olympic and Paralympic Games) (9.35 am): All Queenslanders have the fundamental right of choice when they decide what they will consume, but choice should be backed in by fact. That is a big reason why our government will ask the parliament's Health and Environment Committee to undertake a wideranging inquiry into the increasing and worrying prevalence of vaping in Queensland, particularly among children and young people, but also among adults. I want all Queenslanders to understand what they are inhaling and the health risks associated with this relatively new but alarming trend.

I am concerned that teachers are reporting to us that primary school children—I will say that again, primary school children—are taking up vaping in their recess breaks. I am concerned that teenagers are vaping in huge numbers and that they see it as an alternative to smoking cigarettes, when in fact it may be a stepping stone to smoking. I am concerned that otherwise rational and educated adults are swapping cigarettes for vapes because they believe it is a healthier, even harmless, alternative when in all probability it is a dangerous alternative.

Research from our Chief Health Officer's office shows the prevalence of daily smoking in Queensland continues to fall and, as of 2020, had declined by 47 per cent since 2002. However, according to the Australian National University, people who try vaping are three times more likely to take up smoking.

This important parliamentary inquiry will look at the prevalence of vaping particularly among children and young people, the approach schools are taking to discouraging uptake, the awareness of the potential health risks associated with vaping and, most critically, what these products actually contain. Does anyone have a fact-based understanding of what they are inhaling? Do these devices contain nicotine or, worse, do they contain dangerous or toxic chemicals? What are the possible health risks and long-term consequences? That information is vital to ensuring we are able to better educate Queenslanders.

This inquiry will complement the work that health ministers across the country are undertaking with the national e-cigarette working group, reviewing measures to protect young people from the harms of e-cigarettes. At the same time, our government will introduce new legislation this week to strengthen Queensland's anti-smoking laws. The new legislation will include stronger enforcement of illicit tobacco sale and supply, the introduction of a licencing scheme for the sale of tobacco, the expansion of smoke-free areas and tougher restrictions on cigarette sales in licenced venues. We are doing this because smoking remains the No. 1 preventable cause of death and disease in Queensland. We are doing this because Queensland has made huge inroads in educating Queenslanders, halving the smoking rate in this state over the past 25 years, and we will not stop in the interests of the long-term health of all Queenslanders.

North-West Queensland, Weather Events




Hon. A PALASZCZUK (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Olympic and Paralympic Games) (9.38 am): Communities in the Far North, the gulf and North-West Queensland have experienced extended monsoonal rains this summer, with extensive rainfall and flooding across the region since December last year. In the last week alone, the towns of Doomadgee and Burketown have experienced record flooding leading to both towns being isolated. More than half the residents of Burketown were evacuated from the rising floodwaters. These two communities, as well as Mornington Island, Normanton, Gregory, Karumba and others in the region, have been isolated for long periods over this wet northern summer. There has been an enormous effort by local and district disaster management groups, police, Fire and Emergency Services, council officers and local volunteers, and I thank everyone who has worked so hard to keep Queenslanders safe across this vast region. In particular, I want to thank those officers who stayed in Burketown to manage evacuations and ensure the safety of residents as well as the pilots who ferried to safety well over 100 people.

This most recent rainfall event saw record March rainfall across the north-west region with Century Mine seeing 754 millimetres of rainfall in the month to date, well above the total annual average of 567 millimetres. This large amount of rain falling on already saturated catchments has resulted in unprecedented flooding across the region, with floodwaters at Doomadgee up to 8.54 metres and waters at Burketown well exceeding the March 2011 record of 6.78 metres. Sadly though, many properties have been flooded and we can expect significant damage as well as widespread stock and wildlife losses. I do want to assure families in those communities that there will be more support coming their way.

Floodwaters are slowly receding; however, they will remain above major flood levels for much of this week, leaving some towns isolated. On Sunday joint Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements were announced for loans for primary producers and small businesses in the council areas of Burke, Carpentaria, Cloncurry, Doomadgee, Mornington and Mount Isa. This is in addition to the personal hardship assistance and the essential services reconnection scheme payments already activated for Burke. Three-quarters of Burketown—37 houses—have been inundated by water above the floorboards, and rapid damage assessments and clean-up activities will commence once it is safe to do so. I also want to thank the department of communities for establishing a community recovery hub at the ibis hotel in Mount Isa.

More rain and thunderstorms have been forecast for North-West Queensland which could elevate already record high water levels. Major flood warnings are still in place and I urge people to be safe and take precautions when travelling throughout the region. We are now also monitoring a moderate chance of a tropical cyclone forming in the Coral Sea into next week. I urge residents to continue to check the current weather information, follow advice from authorities and always remember: if it is flooded, forget it.

Olympic and Paralympic Games, Delivery

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Olympic and Paralympic Games) (9.41 am): The 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games are the biggest transformational events this state is likely to see. Our strong response to the pandemic has provided Queensland with the strongest economy in the nation. 2032 provides us with the light on the hill to deliver the infrastructure and jobs that will drive us forward for the decades to come. No other state has this advantage and we are making the most of it.

Let me stress once again: none of the major infrastructure we will build is solely for the Olympic and Paralympic Games; 84 per cent of the venues we need already exist. The new facilities we will deliver are already needed and will provide decades of use to our communities long after the closing and opening ceremonies, and they are spread across our state. The budgets for those facilities are dwarfed by what we already spend on vital service areas such as health and education, new and improved hospitals, schools, social and affordable housing, and police. This is in addition to CopperString, our Train Manufacturing Program and our \$62 billion Energy and Jobs plan, mainly based in regional Queensland.

Delivering what is needed before 2032 requires a huge effort. For almost a year, Deloitte have been independently examining the best way to coordinate and deliver what we need. They consulted with games partners including: the Commonwealth government, Brisbane City Council, Gold Coast council, Sunshine Coast Council, SEQ Council of Mayors, the IOC, the Olympic and Paralympic Games Organising Committee, the Australian Olympic Committee and Paralympics Australia. They examined Sydney 2000, London 2012, Paris 2024 and even Rio 2016. What they have recommended is a fit-for-purpose approach to suit Brisbane 2032.

Deloitte has recommended a Brisbane 2032 Coordination Office. It recognises the state government's existing expertise in delivering infrastructure like roads, schools and hospitals.

Mr Minnikin interjected.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Members to my left.

Ms PALASZCZUK: You only delivered one—

Mr SPEAKER: Order!

Ms PALASZCZUK: Look behind you. That is—

Mr SPEAKER: Order, Premier. You will direct your comments through the chair.

Ms PALASZCZUK: You still have not seen—

Mr SPEAKER: Order, members.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I was provoked, Mr Speaker.

It recognises the state government's existing expertise. It cuts red tape. It avoids unnecessary and expensive duplication and, unlike a delivery authority model, it is accountable to this parliament. As Deloitte said—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Please cease interjections, members to my left. I would like to hear this ministerial statement.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Deloitte said—

"The model leverages existing capability and legislative powers within agencies.

"There is a high level of goodwill and willingness to co-operate among Games Delivery Partners which good governance will facilitate."

The office will be headed by the Director-General of the Department of Regional Development, Manufacturing and Water, Graham Fraine. Mr Fraine has held a number of senior roles in government over numerous years including former deputy Under Treasurer. He has also worked in transport and has experience in Treasury. He is very highly regarded. He is also—

Ms Simpson interjected.

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

Ms PALASZCZUK: Underpinning that crucial coordinating body is the Olympic and Paralympic Games Infrastructure Office, which will design and deliver the key venues, villages and transport infrastructure. Both offices report to the Brisbane 2032 Intergovernmental Leaders Forum. The forum includes: the state and federal governments, OCOG president, the Lord Mayor of Brisbane, the mayors of the Gold and Sunshine coasts, a representative from the SEQ Council of Mayors and the Local Government Association.

Mr Bleijie interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Not you.

Mr SPEAKER: Order!

Ms PALASZCZUK: Thank goodness for that.

Mr SPEAKER: Premier, it would be helpful if you could direct your comments through the chair.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I was provoked again, Mr Speaker. It is becoming a habit on that side of the chamber. IOC Vice-President John Coates says—

Mr Bleijie interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Deputy Leader of the Opposition, you are warned under the standing orders.


Ms PALASZCZUK: So rude.

Mr SPEAKER: It is not assisting the House, Premier, to make commentary on my rulings.

Ms PALASZCZUK: IOC Vice-President John Coates says, 'This model makes eminent sense to me.' The President of Paralympics Australia, Jock O'Callaghan, says, 'This is great news not just for Paralympians but for everyone associated with the games.' Because there are still 9½ years before the games, this model will be reviewed after two years to ensure it is working as it should.

As I have said many times, these games do not belong to a government; they belong to all of us; they belong to all Queenslanders. One way we are trying to ensure this is our legacy process, which has invited online submissions from the public. These will be shared at a legacy forum in Brisbane next week. Teamwork won us these games. It is with teamwork we will deliver them, and 2032 will go down as the best Olympic and Paralympic Games with benefits to Queensland for decades to come.

CopperString 2.0

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Olympic and Paralympic Games) (9.46 am): Queensland has always been the 'big' state with big ideas, big dreams and big projects for an even bigger future. Last week, I announced one of the biggest. The \$5 billion CopperString 2032 project is the biggest economic development project in North Queensland ever. It is the biggest expansion of the power grid ever. It is not just one project; it enables many. It begins with a 1,100-kilometre powerline, which will supply the power to new mines that will allow the development of the North West Minerals Province. It unlocks the richest source of minerals this state has ever seen since the discovery that led to the founding of Mount Isa more than 100 years ago.


Once again, this is one of the biggest deposits of rare earth and critical minerals in the world with an estimated value of more than half a trillion dollars. Best of all, the CopperString powerline will be 100 per cent built and owned by the people of Queensland. Eight hundred direct jobs will be supported during six years of construction beginning next year. Once built, it will connect to the nation's biggest renewable energy zone—clean, green, renewable energy to power the extraction of resources critical to producing more clean, green, renewable energy for the entire world. These are minerals used in battery production including: cobalt, graphite and high purity alumina needed in lithium batteries as well as copper, zinc and vanadium. These are to the new century what oil was to the past.

By 2030, the International Energy Agency estimates the value of clean energy investment will exceed that invested in oil. We are in the midst of a clean energy arms race, and thanks to CopperString 2032, Queensland is at the forefront. This is further evidence of a government ensuring Queensland's

future. A lesser government might be content to simply mine these minerals, but we will go a step further. We will also manufacture the products that require the minerals to be mined and we will train the students of today in the jobs for tomorrow. We have already started construction of a major \$17 million expansion of the Bohle TAFE campus with two new training hubs that will offer more than 20 new skill sets to supply the workers we will need.


As the *Courier-Mail* reported, this announcement has been heralded by organisations ranging from the Queensland Resources Council to climate activists and unions as a nation-building project and the missing link in Australia's energy transformation, as the Climate Council said. The WWF has also welcomed the commitment, saying that this brings us one step closer to making Queensland a renewable energy superpower. The decision to upgrade North Queensland's energy backbone has been likened to upgrading a single unsealed road to a six-lane highway. We believe in creating our own luck, we believe in making things in Queensland—farms, factories, batteries, trains and the world's biggest pumped hydro—and we believe in delivering them in regional Queensland.

North-West Queensland, Weather Events

 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Murrumba—ALP) (Deputy Premier, Minister for State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning and Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympic and Paralympic Games Infrastructure) (9.50 am): Many Queensland communities are currently facing widespread destructive floods, with levels across the Gulf of Carpentaria and the north-west surpassing records set in 2011. Numerous flood warnings are current across Northern and Western Queensland and a flood watch continues for the Gulf Country and parts of the Lake Eyre Basin. Late last week more than 500 millimetres of rain fell in just two days, surging river levels to burst their banks and spread out across the Channel Country. There have been evacuations from inundated towns and devastating impacts to homes, businesses and primary producers. Thankfully, the Doomadgee and Gregory airstrips have remained open which has allowed for the restocking of essential supplies such as food and medicine.

The Queensland government swiftly activated the joint Commonwealth and state funded Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements to support the residents impacted by these floods. To date, 41 local governments have been activated for various assistance, including personal hardship assistance, support for primary producers and small businesses and relief measures to help uninsured home owners. The Queensland Reconstruction Authority is on the ground in Mount Isa to support recovery planning and will continue to work with impacted communities and the Commonwealth to determine what further assistance may be required. Queensland communities are no stranger to flooding. We will always ensure that wherever and whenever disaster strikes our communities receive the assistance they need to get back on their feet.

Olympic and Paralympic Games, Infrastructure

 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Murrumba—ALP) (Deputy Premier, Minister for State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning and Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympic and Paralympic Games Infrastructure) (9.51 am): The Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for Queensland. The significant investment in infrastructure will reshape our capital city, our region and the entire state over the next decade and beyond. The benefits will last long after the closing ceremony, delivering not just sporting venues but new homes, public space, retail precincts and transport options. The Palaszczuk government is determined that the biggest contribution of the games is the lasting legacy to our state.

Recently the Premier and I joined the Prime Minister to announce the intergovernmental agreement for the 2032 games and today the Premier has confirmed the establishment of the Brisbane 2032 Coordination Office. The office was recommended by the IOC's global consulting partner Deloitte, which has independently examined the best way to deliver the games. It will oversee work essential to delivering the games including security, First Nations, sustainability, infrastructure and legacy outcomes. Importantly, the office will be advised by an intergovernmental leaders forum with representatives from all levels of government and games partners. My own department will work closely with the Brisbane 2032 Coordination Office through the Olympic and Paralympic Infrastructure Office to continue to progress the significant venues, villages and transport infrastructure associated with the games. I know all of the games partners want to deliver the best games and the greatest legacy for Queensland. Through the leaders forum we will continue to work together to achieve just that.

I want to thank the Brisbane City Council, the Gold Coast city council, the Sunshine Coast Regional Council, the Council of Mayors for South-East Queensland and the Commonwealth government for working with us to develop the 2032 governance model. I want to thank Lord Mayor Schrinner and mayors Tate and Jamieson for the important contribution they will make to the leaders forum. The Coordination Office will be led by current Director-General Graham Fraine as the chief executive officer. Mr Fraine, the current Director-General of the Department of Regional Development, Manufacturing and Water, has extensive experience and I am sure will do a great job at leading this important Coordination Office.

As recommended by Deloitte, an independent performance review of the Coordination Office will be undertaken within two years of its establishment to ensure it continues to deliver the infrastructure and other games work efficiently and with Queensland legacy in mind. Just as we deliver the roads, hospitals, schools and sporting infrastructure Queensland needs across the state, the Palaszczuk government will deliver the infrastructure and services that will ensure the Brisbane 2032 games deliver long after the closing ceremony.

CopperString 2.0



Hon. CR DICK (Woodridge—ALP) (Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment) (9.54 am): The Palaszczuk government has a plan for Queensland's energy future. It is a plan to deliver affordable, reliable, renewable energy across the state, supporting the development of new heavy industry and advanced manufacturing, and it is a plan for all of Queensland. There is no clearer demonstration of our plan's intent than last week's announcement that the Palaszczuk government will deliver CopperString 2032. This is consistent with the Queensland Energy and Jobs Plan, which states—

Importantly, we will retain public ownership of our energy system, with 100 per cent ownership of transmission, 100 per cent ownership of deep storage, and majority ownership of generation.

CopperString 2032 will unlock the true potential of the North West Minerals Province. It will support development of the critical minerals needed for the technology of the future. It will make it more commercially viable for those minerals to be extracted and processed in Townsville, and CopperString 2032 delivers for regional Queensland with the reinvestment of \$500 million in coal royalties generated through our progressive coal royalty tiers—coal royalties earned in regional Queensland delivered back to regional Queensland. CopperString 2032 is exciting for mineral companies. It is exciting for the companies that will process and refine those minerals and it is exciting for the big industrial energy users that will be able to access more renewable energy being generated along CopperString's 1,100-kilometre length. Our publicly owned energy company Powerlink will progress a package of early works to support construction activity commencing in 2024. Building our transmission SuperGrid, including CopperString 2032, is a vital part of the transformation of our energy system and of Queensland's decarbonisation needs, delivering investment, jobs and growth for Queenslanders wherever they live.

Equity and Excellence; NAPLAN




Hon. G GRACE (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for Education, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing) (9.56 am): The Palaszczuk government is committed to giving our youngest Queenslanders the best start in life, preparing them for a great future. That means supporting our students, teachers and school staff every single day, which is at the heart of our new education strategy, Equity and Excellence. Twelve months in the making, Equity and Excellence sets a new direction for Queensland's state schools focusing on educational achievement, particularly literacy and numeracy; wellbeing and engagement; and culture and inclusion. As we embark on this new strategy, it is fantastic to see already the statewide improvements in student outcomes over the past 12 months. The results include improvements in A to E report cards in English and maths across all year levels, including our First Nations students. We have seen both an increase in the proportion of students getting a C or higher and an increase in the proportion of students getting an A or B in English and maths.

In the latest national Closing the Gap data released last week, we saw Queensland improving our results at a faster rate than the rest of the nation. While there is clearly more work to do, I was particularly encouraged to see the proportion of First Nations students in Queensland attaining year 12 or equivalent increase more than five percentage points to 75 per cent in 2021. That is above the national average of 68 per cent. That is what our Equity and Excellence education strategy is all about—maximising attendance and engagement, lifting student outcomes and ensuring no student is left behind.

I want to give a shout-out to the nearly 300,000 students across years 3, 5, 7 and 9 who will start sitting their NAPLAN tests from tomorrow until 27 March. This year NAPLAN is being held earlier which means earlier results in four new achievement standards—exceeding, strong, developing and needs additional support—which replace the previous 10-band reporting structure. This reduction to only four levels will help simplify the data so parents and carers can look forward to earlier and clearer reports. My advice to all students is stay calm and focus on doing your best.

Smoking

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Minister for Health and Ambulance Services) (10.00 am): Over the past 20 years the number of Queenslanders who smoke daily has halved, but smoking remains the biggest cause of preventable death and disease in Queensland. The decrease in smoking rates over the past 20 years is a great public health success story and has relied on a mix of strategies, including increased public education about the harms of smoking, increased support to help people quit, making it more difficult to promote and advertise tobacco products, using price levers, increasing smoke-free places and stronger regulation.

This journey will continue this week when I will introduce the Tobacco and Other Smoking Products Amendment Bill. The bill will strengthen, modernise and futureproof the requirements, restrictions and safeguards in our tobacco laws. The bill will improve monitoring of the smoking products industry and enable more effective enforcement of existing tobacco laws. It will also assist smokers to quit, discourage youth uptake of smoking and further protect the community from exposure to second-hand smoke.


Key measures in the bill include establishing a licencing scheme for the sale of smoking products; ensuring there are effective deterrents against supplying illicit tobacco, including stronger penalties; expanding smoke-free public places, including community spaces for children; and stronger measures to protect children from the dangers of smoking.

An emerging threat to the health of Queenslanders, particularly young Queenslanders, is the increasing use of e-cigarettes which heat liquids with unknown ingredients into a vapourised mist which is inhaled into the lungs. With colourful labels and sickly-sweet flavours, these products are clearly marketed to young people. The evidence shows that people who take up e-cigarettes are three times more likely to take up smoking.

The Palaszczuk government has heard the concerns of parents, teachers, health practitioners and advocates about these products, which is why the Premier will be moving to have the Health and Environment Committee inquire into the prevalence and use of e-cigarettes and measures to prevent the uptake and continuing use of e-cigarettes.

This work will complement work being undertaken nationally, given the critical role of the Commonwealth in regulating these novel and dangerous products. When I hosted the nation's health ministers in Brisbane last month we agreed to establish a national e-cigarette working group aimed at reviewing and advising on measures to protect young people from the harms of e-cigarettes by addressing the increasing availability, appeal and uptake of vaping products. This government is committed to protecting the health of Queenslanders and to reducing the harms posed by traditional smoking products and novel untested technologies like e-cigarettes.

Bruce Highway

 **Hon. MC BAILEY** (Miller—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads) (10.02 am): The Palaszczuk government is delivering a record \$18.1 billion worth of road and transport infrastructure projects in regional Queensland, supporting more than 16,000 good jobs. This record investment is headlined by our work on the Bruce Highway. Right now, 106 Bruce Highway projects are funded and underway, including 45 in construction, as part of a massive \$13 billion pipeline of joint funding locked in over the next 15 years. We have now completed 447 Bruce Highway upgrades since our election.

In recent weeks I have driven from Brisbane to Rockhampton on the Bruce Highway and the level of work is truly phenomenal. Heading north, stop one was the \$163 million Deception Bay Road interchange, championed by the members for Bancroft and Kurwongbah and on track to open in coming months. Stop two was straight onto the Caboolture-Bribie Island Road to Steve Irwin Way six-laning championed by the members for Pumicestone and Morayfield—with much more flood resilient bridges right along this extra capacity, including at King John Creek. Stop three was the recently completed

Caloundra Road to Sunshine Motorway six-laning and the Mons Road and Maroochydore Road interchange upgrades—both championed by the members for Caloundra and Nicklin, and aren't they doing a great job!

Stop five was the \$1 billion Gympie Bypass project: 26 kilometres of new duplicated four-lane highway, cutting travel times between the Wide Bay and Sunshine Coast and knocking out one of the most flood-prone parts of the Bruce Highway—done and dusted. Look at the smile on the face of the member for Gympie! He is loving it. He is not saying anything, but he has a big smile. Stop six was at Tiaro where today I can announce a contract has been awarded to do the final design for the \$336 million Tiaro bypass championed by the member for Maryborough.

Mr Perrett interjected.


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

Mr BAILEY: He was smiling for a little while there! The design will be done by a joint venture of Arup and SMEC and be complete next year. Stop seven was the recently opened \$103 million upgrade at Saltwater Creek north of Maryborough, another flood resilient section, a project we completed one year early. Let me say that again: one year early! Stop eight was a \$10 million upgrade at Torbanlea, which I visited with the member for Maryborough and assistant minister, setting up the connection for the Queensland-made train manufacturing program. Stop nine was a huge package of works being delivered from Gin Gin to Benaraby, before a trip through the recently completed works at Mount Larcom, which I know the member for Gladstone is very pleased about. Stop 10 was the massive Rockhampton Ring Road where early works are getting underway—so strongly championed by the member for Rockhampton and the member for Keppel.

Our government has delivered more than 447 upgrades. How many have those opposite delivered? They delivered four when they were in power and two of those were studies. On the Bruce Highway the count is 447 to two. On that 600 kilometres of Bruce Highway I saw upgrade after upgrade after upgrade. It is not just that stretch that we are delivering upgrades on, of course. Today I can update the House that more than \$15 million worth of upgrade works at Clemant between Townsville and Ingham have been completed more than three months ahead of schedule.

Our thoughts are with those in Far North Western Queensland, in particular Burketown, which is experiencing devastating flooding right now as outlined by the Deputy Premier. To the people of the Far North West, Transport and Main Roads has been working hard on the ground and we are ready to assess the damage as the water goes down and to get repairs underway as soon as possible for the members of that community.

Energy Supply


 **Hon. MC de BRENNI** (Springwood—ALP) (Minister for Energy, Renewables and Hydrogen and Minister for Public Works and Procurement) (10.07 am): The Queensland Energy and Jobs Plan will deliver a future of cheaper, cleaner and secure energy for Queenslanders. It is a plan to tackle global energy prices head-on. Global fossil fuel price rises are the result of the illegal war in Ukraine. As a result, the World Economic Forum has found that household energy costs worldwide have nearly doubled. In the UK, they are up 164 per cent in two years. In Germany and Denmark power prices are double ours. Here in Queensland, the fact is that household energy will always be more affordable under Labor. We do that with rebates off bills, we deliver renewable energy that is cheaper and we retain public ownership of Queensland's energy system.

Right now, Queensland households pay amongst the lowest in the nation because this financial year every Queensland household received a \$175 cost-of-living rebate, the sixth we have delivered since 2018, totalling \$575 in support. If you are one of our 900,000 seniors, or a pensioner, veteran, or low-income Queenslander, you could be eligible for a further \$372. If you are one of the 620,000 households in regional Queensland we reduce your bill automatically so that all Queenslanders benefit from public ownership. In New South Wales that money goes elsewhere: it goes to executives and shareholders, many of them overseas based.

The data is settled: it is a fact that renewables are the cheapest form of energy generation, even accounting for transmission and storage. Under our plan Queensland will be 70 per cent renewable by 2032. They will be firmed by our big pumped hydro energy storage schemes in regional Queensland, right down to our neighbourhood batteries here in the south-east storing cheap, renewable energy produced during the day and deploying it at peak demand to keep costs down. That is why we committed to deliver CopperString 2032, a big project to deliver clean, cheap energy to 1.8 million homes.

Finally, thanks to public ownership, our last budget delivered a cost-of-living rebate to households that exceeded the bill impact of the Ukraine war. Since then, we have also partnered with the Albanese government to put a cap on record coal and gas prices. Those caps triggered a 40 per cent reduction in our wholesale electricity prices. By providing relief through bill rebates, renewable energy that is cheaper and retaining public ownership of our energy system, energy prices will always be more affordable under Labor.

CopperString 2.0


 **Hon. SJ STEWART** (Townsville—ALP) (Minister for Resources) (10.09 am): The North West Minerals Province is home to rich deposits of critical minerals from copper through to vanadium. These are the minerals the world needs to produce batteries and renewable energy in the quest to decarbonise. One of the biggest hurdles that the north-west faces in opening new mines to unlock the region's critical minerals is the lack of energy infrastructure to provide secure, reliable electricity rather than their own isolated generation. The 1,100 kilometre CopperString 2032 project changes all of that. The Palaszczuk government's record \$5 billion investment to build CopperString and the renewable energy SuperGrid is a major turning point for Queensland's growing critical minerals sector. It is a game changer not only for North Queensland but also for the entire world.

CopperString is the most significant investment in economic infrastructure in North Queensland in generations. It will create opportunities for resource companies to develop critical mineral projects in the broader North West Minerals Province. I cannot think of a better present for Mount Isa's 100th birthday than this record \$5 billion investment. CopperString 2032 will ensure Mount Isa remains the beating heart of the North West Minerals Province for centuries to come.

By unlocking affordable renewable energy and our critical minerals, this government is creating more good jobs and investment from Mount Isa to my electorate in Townsville. CopperString and the Townsville critical minerals demonstration plant will go hand in glove to act as a magnet for clean energy investment in North Queensland. Townsville will become a renewable manufacturing epicentre, sitting right at the doorstep of the largest renewable energy zone in the nation and the world-class North West Minerals Province. Our Queensland SuperGrid, the nation's largest, allows Queensland to produce, use and export the next era of high-value extracted minerals. Together with our 100 per cent government owned investment in CopperString and our Townsville critical minerals demonstration plant, the Palaszczuk government's plan for North Queensland to become a global renewable energy powerhouse is certainly well underway.

MOTION

Referral to Health and Environment Committee

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Olympic and Paralympic Games) (10.12 am), by leave, without notice: I move—

That the Health and Environment Committee (the committee) inquire into and report to the Legislative Assembly by 31 August 2023 on reducing rates of e-cigarette use in Queensland.

In undertaking the inquiry, the committee will consider:


1. the current status in Queensland relating to the:
 - (a) prevalence of e-cigarette use, particularly amongst children and young people;
 - (b) risks of vaping harmful chemicals, including nicotine, to individuals, communities, and the health system; and
 - (c) approaches being taken in Queensland schools and other settings relevant to children and young people to discourage uptake and use of e-cigarettes.
2. opportunities to increase:
 - (a) the effectiveness of preventative activities; and
 - (b) accessibility and effectiveness of services and programs to prevent uptake and continuing use of e-cigarettes.
3. consideration of waste management and environmental impacts of e-cigarette products.
4. a jurisdictional analysis of other e-cigarette use inquiries, legislative frameworks, policies and preventative activities (including their effectiveness in reducing e-cigarette use).

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

REPORT

Office of the Leader of the Opposition


 **Mr CRISAFULLI** (Broadwater—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (10.13 am): I lay upon the table of the House the report of expenses for the Office of the Leader of the Opposition for the period 1 July 2022 to 31 December 2022.

Tabled paper: Public Report of Office Expenses for the Office of the Leader of the Opposition for the period 1 July 2022 to 31 December 2022 [[283](#)].

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Mr SPEAKER: Honourable members, today question time will conclude at 11.14 am.

Youth Crime, Cost of Living

 **Mr CRISAFULLI** (10.14 am): My question is to the Premier. Has the crime crisis contributed to a higher cost of living for Queenslanders?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I think that is an opinion. I think also there are a lot of factors at foot here and I will deal with them in two separate points. In relation to youth justice issues, there is a bill before the House. I am not going to comment on that. However, it is great to see that the opposition is finally supporting our stronger laws after three months.

Mr Crisafulli interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Leader of the Opposition, you have asked your question. I would like to hear the answer.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Secondly, this government has invested over \$1 billion in youth justice. Millions of dollars are going into early intervention programs. It is great to hear firsthand from the people involved about how those programs are changing young people's lives—unlike those opposite who cut youth justice conferencing, cut the drug courts, cut the Murri courts and cut police numbers just to name a few. I can also say this—

Mr Crisafulli interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Leader of the Opposition, I have already cautioned you. You have asked your question. There is no need for the commentary.

Ms PALASZCZUK: In relation to cost-of-living pressures, we acknowledge that these are issues being felt by families not just in Queensland but right across Australia. This is something that we are hearing—

A government member: Inflation is up by miles.

Ms PALASZCZUK: That is right. This is something that we hear. We know that there are pressures on families when it comes to housing. We know that there are pressures on renters. We know what they are facing. Some renters are having to move out of their houses. The government is working very closely with stakeholders through the housing round table to address those issues.

We on this side of the House are providing over \$6 billion worth of concessions to vulnerable Queenslanders, including electricity rebates for families. The only reason we can do that is because we own our assets and the money is going back into Queensland families' pockets. Under those opposite there would be no rebates because they determined to sell off those assets.

(Time expired)

Youth Crime, Insurance Costs

Mr CRISAFULLI: My question is to the Premier. In the space of one year, Lauren from Cairns had her car stolen and then rammied. On both occasions she had to pay a \$500 excess and now her insurance premium has jumped by nearly 50 per cent. Does the Premier take any responsibility for rising insurance costs because of the crime crisis?

Ms PALASZCZUK: In relation to insurance, that is for the individual companies and is regulated by the federal government.

Opposition members: Oh!

Ms PALASZCZUK: That is a fact. I take this very seriously, having sat down and spoken directly to victims of crime—

Mr Lister: You didn't come to my crime forum in Goondiwindi. You sent no-one.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Southern Downs, this is becoming a very bad habit. You are warned under the standing orders. You are lucky you are not leaving the chamber immediately. Such interjections are not called for.

Ms PALASZCZUK: In answer to the member's interjection, Minister Ryan did meet with the mayors about issues in Goondiwindi. That is not—

Mr Lister interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Southern Downs, you are on a warning. There is no requirement for interjection. You can leave the chamber for one hour under standing order 253A.

Whereupon the honourable member for Southern Downs withdrew from the chamber at 10.19 am.

Ms PALASZCZUK: What I have heard loud and clear is that we need to do more to assist victims. Having sat down with people and heard their—

Mrs Frecklington interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: This is a serious issue.

Mrs Frecklington: It is serious.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Yes, so listen to the answer.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Pause the clock. Member for Nanango, it is not time for a debate. You will cease your interjections.

Ms PALASZCZUK: We will be adopting the committee's recommendation about referring to the committee an inquiry into what more we can do to assist victims. I think that is something that the whole parliament should support. It is not just about the people who have had the trauma of having either their cars stolen or their homes broken into but also about improving police engagement with the victims of serious crime. That is something that our government takes seriously. Of course, that came out of the committee and I thank the committee for its work. I do not want to pre-empt the debate so I will leave it at that.

These are serious issues. We do understand what victims feel when these issues happen. People should not think for one moment that everyone in this House has not had a story told to them or met with someone who has faced these issues. Unfortunately, these issues are not unique to Queensland; they are happening around Australia.

Mr Crisafulli: Insurance premiums.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Yes, and those insurance premiums are in other states as well.

Government members interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: That is right. While we are putting more money into early intervention and prevention, those opposite are saying nothing. Do they support these programs or not?

Mr Crisafulli: No remorse. No responsibility.

Ms PALASZCZUK: So rude and always whingeing and always whining. That is what people are telling me! It is great to see that the opposition is finally supporting our stronger laws.

(Time expired)

CopperString 2.0

Mr HARPER: My question is of the Premier and Minister for the Olympic and Paralympic Games. Will the Premier please update the House on the transformational benefits of the CopperString project in North Queensland, and is the Premier aware of any alternatives?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the member for Thuringowa for his question. I also acknowledge Minister Stewart and the member for Mundingburra for their strong support of this project. I also acknowledge the member for Traeger, who has been a strong supporter of CopperString. We know that this project will deliver jobs. This is exactly the kind of news that Townsville and the regions of North Queensland need. When the nickel refinery in Townsville was shut, unemployment rose to over 13 per cent. Do members remember those days? The supply chains in Townsville were shattered. Now, the unemployment rate is around 2.3 per cent. We know that the future for regional Queensland is bright.

CopperString provides not only jobs but also certainty for the town and the region, all the way out to Mount Isa, for the next 100 years at least. It is bold; it is visionary. Unfortunately, we still do not know the position of those opposite. My understanding is that when the member for Broadwater was asked about CopperString he said, 'Speak to the shadow energy minister.'—deflected. I am not quite sure who the shadow energy minister is, but on such a large project—\$5 billion—there was silence from those opposite. Of course, we made a \$500 million down payment that has come from the royalties—the royalties going back into the regions. Do those opposite support that or not? We still are yet to hear. We do know that when the member for Broadwater was a member representing that region he said that there was nothing wrong with Ergon Energy planning for privatisation.

Government members interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: That is right. He said, 'I believe some private investment will help the long-term viability of things like the Townsville port.' That is right: they wanted to sell off the Townsville port—not just Ergon. This is when he was a member representing the region around Townsville. Privatised Ergon: that is what those opposite wanted to do. Perhaps that is why they do not want to commit to the project, because at the first opportunity they want to sell it off.

(Time expired)

Victims of Crime, Support

Mr BLEIJIE: My question is to the Premier. I have received correspondence from a Queenslander who was a victim of a vicious knife attack one year ago. He has received correspondence from the state government's Victim Assist that his application could take two years to process due to the high volume of applications in Queensland right now. Can the Premier explain why offenders receive legal aid quickly but victims of crime are left waiting years for financial support?

Ms PALASZCZUK: Perhaps the member was not listening to my earlier answer. I said that we are supporting the recommendation from the committee to do a further inquiry into—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Members to my left.

Ms PALASZCZUK: This has actually come from the victims. This is from the committee listening to victims, and we are acting on that recommendation.

Mr Bleijie: Another inquiry.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Well, the option is: will you support it or not, because we will refer it? We are listening to victims and we are responding to their concerns. As part of our youth justice measures, we announced a \$9 million investment to respond better to victims of property crime where violence or a threat of violence has occurred—\$9 million. It also included—

Ms Bates interjected.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order, members to my left! The Premier is being responsive to the question asked. I would like to hear the answer.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I find the member for Mudgeeraba's comments absolutely offensive and I ask them to be withdrawn.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Mudgeeraba, the Premier has found your comments offensive. Will you withdraw?

Ms BATES: I withdraw.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you.

Ms PALASZCZUK: We are providing on such a serious issue, including \$3 million to boost counselling capacity and support non-government organisations. We know that the opposition cut a lot of funding to non-government organisations—

Mrs Frecklington: Eight years.

Ms PALASZCZUK: People still remember, member for Nanango. It is great to see support from the police, with more high-visibility patrols. That will also go a long way in keeping communities safe. There is extra funding that is going out and of course that recommendation from the committee that the government has accepted and on which we will be moving this week.

Central Queensland, Infrastructure

Mr O'ROURKE: My question is of the Premier and Minister for the Olympic and Paralympic Games. Will the Premier update the House on the solutions that the Palaszczuk government has for Central Queensland infrastructure, and is the Premier aware of any alternative approaches?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the member very much for the question. I was delighted to join the member at the announcement of the Browne Park refurbishment. It is going to be a great stadium. We cannot wait to see the early works and construction getting underway. I know that the member is a proud supporter of Browne Park, as is the member for Keppel. The Treasurer joined us at the announcement as well. It has been the home of Rugby League in Rockhampton for over 100 years, so it is about time. Browne Park hosted three NRL games in 2021. It will soon have a brand new, modern 3,500-seat grandstand—an increase of over 2,500 seats, boosting capacity to 7,500. Construction will begin this year and, importantly, this project will create 170 jobs. We also have the Rookwood Weir and Rockhampton Ring Road projects happening. There has been strong advocacy from the member.

We know that on the other side they are not keen on solutions; they are keen on whinging and whining. To have a solution you might need to have a plan or an idea. There are no policies on that side. They have come up with their new fundraising plan. It is called 'Queensland solutions'. What are the solutions they are going to come up with when they cannot even come up with a plan? It says in part of the—

Mr Crisafulli interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Don't worry, I have documentation here; it makes for fascinating reading. It says that people will be able to go along to a state and federal budget lunch or dinner with those opposite. There is just one problem: they are not in government, so I do not know what they would be talking about when it comes to the budget at the state level and I certainly do not know what they would be talking about when it comes to budget at the federal level. To me it sounds like a big waste of money. I would be surprised—

A government member: A whinge fest.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I take that interjection. It would be a whinge fest. I doubt businesses will take up that offer. I cannot see why businesses in this state would want to engage with people who do not have any ideas, do not have any policies and all they do is whinge and whine. They have no solutions. Look at their track record—sacking, cutting and selling.

Ambulance Service, Dispatch System Outage

Ms BATES: My question is to the Premier. Paramedics have leaked to the opposition details of the massive dispatch system outage they believe put Queenslanders at risk with unanswered and lost calls. Why did the Premier not inform Queenslanders the ambulance dispatch system was down?

Ms PALASZCZUK: My understanding is that this issue is for QFES. I was advised of it this morning.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. I cannot hear the Premier. I need to hear the answer. I would ask that you cease your interjections.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I am advised that there was an outage on Friday. The system is managed by the Queensland Police Services' Frontline Digital Services Division. The Ambulance Service incident management—

Mr Crisafulli interjected.

Ms Bates interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Leader of the Opposition, I give you latitude because of the position you hold, but I am asking you to cease your interjections; they are consistent and constant. Member for Mudgeeraba, you are warned under the standing orders.

Ms PALASZCZUK: The Ambulance Service incident management team—

Mr Power interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: We do not need anything from you, member for Logan.

Ms PALASZCZUK:—was established to oversee operations. I am advised that manual operations are practised every month to prepare for such a circumstance. I note that there were delays in calls being answered but that the QAS Clinical Hub provided oversight to help manage and prioritise patients. Early Sunday morning QAS returned to using the computer dispatch system. QPS is working with vendors.

Olympic and Paralympic Games, Infrastructure

Mr SKELTON: My question is to the Deputy Premier, Minister for State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning and Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympic and Paralympic Games Infrastructure. Could the Deputy Premier outline the legacy benefits the 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games will bring to Queensland and is he aware of any other approaches?

Dr MILES: I thank the member for Nicklin for his question. I know that he knows that there has never been a more exciting time to be a Queenslanders. We are absolutely determined that the benefits of Brisbane 2032 will not just be for Brisbane but for the entire region—in fact, the entire state. We are at the beginning of a golden decade for all of Queensland.

We are absolutely determined that Brisbane 2032 will not just be about 2032; it will be about every year in the lead-up and for the decades to come. It will deliver more affordable housing, fantastic sporting infrastructure, transport to get around our region and our state and more open spaces. It will build on the massive Cross River Rail investment led by this government which will deliver more heavy rail and transport services right throughout the south-east, making it easier to get around and easier to get to our brand new stadium at the Gabba where it will come together with the Brisbane City Council's flagship transport project, the Metro.

There will be another new station at Albert Street so people can get to Queen's Wharf Brisbane—that fantastic development we have also led. There will be a new station at Roma Street where there will be the arena as well as the iconic Suncorp Stadium. People will be able to walk between all of those places. There will be a new active transport corridor from Roma Street all the way to the Gabba. There will be thousands of more affordable homes throughout those precincts from Kurilpa to the Gabba, making sure teachers, nurses and police officers can live affordably in our city.

By having the Olympic coordination office in the Queensland government we are avoiding duplication and bureaucracy, but we are also making sure that those assets are owned by Queenslanders and will always be owned by Queenslanders. The only reason Scott Morrison and the LNP wanted them owned by a delivery office is that he and those opposite never believed that Queenslanders should own those assets. They always wanted the delivery authority to be able to sell them off. The only solution they ever have is to privatise things that should be owned by Queenslanders.

I have bad news for those opposite: since the change of government, the new Australian government has required that those assets never be sold; they will always be owned by Queenslanders. They will never ever get their hands on the Gabba and they will never get to sell it off.

(Time expired)

Ambulance Service, Dispatch System Outage

Ms SIMPSON: My question is to the health minister. Since the QAS dispatch system went down the health minister has done two press conferences but chose not to disclose the issue. Queenslanders have contacted the opposition saying that the government should have told them about the failure. Can the minister explain why she did not tell Queenslanders or the Premier?

Mrs D'ATH: As the Premier said, she received a briefing on this yesterday—this morning—

Opposition members: Oh!

Mrs D'ATH: My God, how childish are they—seriously. The Premier received a briefing this morning. I had the opportunity to mention this to the Premier on Sunday morning as well. This is a system that is overseen by—

Opposition members interjected.

Mrs D'ATH: They clearly do not want to hear.

Mr SPEAKER: Members to my left, the minister is answering the question. I would like to hear the answer.

Mrs D'ATH: This is a system that is managed by QPS, but I want to acknowledge that QPS, QFES and the Queensland Ambulance Service worked cooperatively through Friday evening into Saturday morning to rectify this issue. This is something that QAS trains for on a regular basis. When I have been out to the centre in Kedron they certainly want the backups—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Members to my left, if you have questions you can rise to your feet and ask a question. You do not ask questions whilst the minister is answering the question.

Mrs D'ATH: This is a system that they train in. If the system fails they have a backup manual system that they operate. I was assured by QAS that that system kicked in straightaway. Although there were some delays, the system was being managed, calls were being responded to and people were getting ambulances dispatched to them.

I have to say, it is incredible they can switch over to that system so quickly. They managed it well. They got this system operational again in the early hours of this morning, and I want to thank them for the great work they do.

Regional Queensland, Payroll Tax

Mr SMITH: My question is of the Treasurer. Will the Treasurer please inform the House whether the Palaszczuk government will continue the one per cent discount on payroll tax for businesses based in regional Queensland?

Mr DICK: I am very pleased to take a question from the member for Bundaberg because the member for Bundaberg is a fierce champion for small and medium-sized business in Bundaberg and the Burnett region. I have had the opportunity to visit a number of those business with him, particularly in the agribusiness space. Can I say that those agribusinesses in Bundaberg have never had better representation than they have had from this member. Can I also say to the member for Bundaberg that of course that discount will continue, because when the Leader of the Opposition stood up last week to whinge and whine again—

Ms Palaszczuk: Yes.

Mr DICK:—Premier, and to start another one of his scare campaigns, he knew it would continue because it had been published in the newspaper. That is why he knew that. It had been published online in the *Courier-Mail*.

Mrs Frecklington interjected.

CHAIR: Member for Nanango!

Mr DICK: If he knew how to read the budget papers as well as an online newspaper, the Leader of the Opposition would know that none of that money, that discount, was factored into forward estimates—none of it. Can I say that the revenue forward estimates contained in the budget have at no time indicated that that revenue would be included.

Mrs Frecklington interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Member for Nanango, you are warned under the standing orders for two reasons: interjecting consistently and not using persons' correct titles. There is a reason we have these rules in place.

Mr DICK: The member for Nanango was in Bundaberg perpetrating that falsehood when she knew it was not correct when it had been published in the newspaper. Can I say that the Leader of the Opposition has never seen a revenue measure he did not want to remove. It means nothing to the Leader of the Opposition that those revenue measures deliver for regional Queensland. It means nothing to the Leader of the Opposition that the new progressive coal royalties are delivering the Fitzroy to Gladstone Pipeline. It means nothing to the Leader of the Opposition that \$500 million in progressive coal royalties are going to help deliver the most transformative energy project in the history of North Queensland—the most transformative project since the arrival of the steam locomotive in the 19th century—but of course the Leader of the Opposition does not support CopperString because he does not support progressive coal royalties.

The LNP has said it is unsustainable. The LNP has said those progressive control royalties are objectionable, and they say they will sit down with the coalmining lobby to talk about it. Well, they are not talking about it to increase it: they are talking with the coal lobby to reduce them and remove them, and that means regional Queensland will suffer. Regional Queensland will not get the Fitzroy to Gladstone Pipeline and they will not get CopperString. If you are not going to back the royalties, Leader of the Opposition, tell Queenslanders what you will back—

Mr SPEAKER: Through the chair, Treasurer.

Mr DICK: The Leader of the Opposition needs to be up front with Queenslanders. What other projects apart from CopperString and the Fitzroy to Gladstone Pipeline will you cut? Will you cut the Moranbah Hospital? Will you cut the upgrade to—

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order!

Mr DICK: Will you cut police like you were going to do in the last election—

(Time expired)

Mr SPEAKER: Can I just provide some guidance to all ministers. I need your comments directed through the chair, not at other members. It is important for the functioning of the House.

Ambulance Service, Dispatch System Outage

Mr BOOTHMAN: My question is to the Minister for Health. Can the minister confirm how many triple 0 QAS calls have gone unanswered or unlogged due to the dispatch system failure?

Mrs D'ATH: I thank the member for his question. I am happy to go back to the QAS commissioner to get a correct response to those questions. I will say that, taking on board the question I was asked previously, the QAS commissioner himself stood up yesterday and addressed questions around the outage and the response that was taken by the Queensland Ambulance Service. I was assured on Friday evening and Saturday morning that ambulances were still dispatched, calls were received and taken, and that although there were some delays the systems were operating well due to the outage that was occurring.

State Schools, Renewable Energy

Ms McMILLAN: My question is of the Minister for Education, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing. Can the minister advise how our state schools are playing their part in powering Queensland's renewable energy future, and is the minister aware of any alternative approaches?

Ms GRACE: I thank the member for Mansfield for the question. With over 1,700 solar panels installed on the rooftops of the schools in her electorate, I know the member is very supportive of our ACES Program and the benefit it is bringing, such as powering all of the air conditioners in every school around the state. Queensland is the only state in Australia to have air-conditioned every single school. What a program! The students are learning about the panels, they are learning about renewable energy and they are linking in. I know how excited those opposite get when I talk about air conditioning because they love it.

Opposition members interjected.

Ms GRACE: Yes, you are welcome; I take your thankys. That is what we do in Queensland. We make sure that we are making schools a comfortable learning environment for our students. The Palaszczuk government stands on its record and commitment for a clean energy future, and our state schools are definitely playing their part. We have already announced the biggest commitment made to renewable energy in Australia's history, the Queensland Energy and Jobs Plan, and now the CopperString announcement will make North Queensland the epicentre for renewables, manufacturing, minerals processing and hydrogen during the clean energy industrial revolution.

When we were in Townsville it was fantastic to see five schools attend the Energy and Jobs Fair—Heatley, Pimlico, Garbutt, William Ross and Thuringowa. Those students were talking about the jobs of the future for them in renewables. They were learning all about them. They were keen and they were interested, which was absolutely fantastic to see.

Can I say that we put over 200,000 solar panels on schools, and that has taken the equivalent of 16,000 cars off the road? Can I also say that when it comes to alternative approaches I have absolutely no idea what those opposite want to do. It is amazing to think that the week before we went

to Townsville the opposition had a conference in Townsville. I asked around about any of the policies or any of the ideas that came out of the opposition while they were in Townsville. The business community was at the lunch in droves where the announcement was made, and not one of them could give me one thing those opposite pointed to that they would do for Townsville. In fact, when asked a question about CopperString the Leader of the Opposition just referred it to someone else. You can see it on his face. Already he is doing the business plan to sell CopperString.

(Time expired)

Ambulance Service, Dispatch System Outage

Mr STEVENS: My question is to the Premier. Will the government be open with Queenslanders, Premier, and tell them why the QAS dispatching system failed?

Mr SPEAKER: Member, you need to direct your comment through the chair and not at the Premier. I will give you one opportunity to reframe your question.

Mr STEVENS: My question is to the Premier. Will the government be open with Queenslanders and tell them why the QAS dispatching system failed?

Ms PALASZCZUK: As the health minister said, the commissioner addressed this issue yesterday. I want to clarify my earlier comments in relation to that. I received the briefing note today. The health minister is correct. We were doing the walk yesterday, we saw some ambulance officers, we went over, we said hello to them. She mentioned that there was an outage over Friday, but she had been advised that everything had worked well and been rectified on Saturday. I just wanted to clarify that for the House. As I said previously in my answer, this is managed by a division of Queensland police, and the commissioner has advised the health minister that there were no large-scale impacts in relation to this outage.

Pill Testing

Ms BUSH: My question is to the Minister for Health and Ambulance Services. Can the minister advise the House about plans to allow pill testing in Queensland, and is the minister aware of any alternative strategies?

Mrs D'ATH: I thank the member for Cooper for her question. I know that she is proud of being part of a government that actually develops policy based on evidence, and the evidence shows that harm minimisation works when it comes to dealing with drug taking. That is why we have drug diversion provisions being proceeded with, without anticipating debate, and also why we announced pill testing being allowed in this state at both festivals and fixed sites as a trial, and we will go out to providers to look at how that trial should work. What we do know from the ACT's trial that has just been extended and from what has happened in many places around the world is that this does reduce the take-up of drugs as well as allow people to engage with prevention services and intervention services.

This policy announcement has been universally praised by health groups, including the AMAQ, QNADA, the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners and the Queensland Mental Health Commissioner, who I know has actually provided briefings to all members about harm minimisation and these types of initiatives, and I know that some on the other side attended those. I do welcome the fact that it is not just people on this side who have previously said that pill testing is a good idea. On 30 December 2018 the member for Moggill, Dr Christian Rowan MP, acknowledged—

Whilst the availability of pill testing may not prevent such occurrences, it still needs to be considered as a part of comprehensive harm reduction public health strategies.

That was in response to a very distressing death at one of the festivals. Also back in 2019 the shadow minister for youth, Mr O'Connor, the member for Bonney, said—

Pill testing is one of the biggest issues young people raise with me. I think a trial should be considered for Schoolies and festivals. What do you think?

The reason I believe we need to look at this is because the data shows it can change behaviour. That's the ultimate goal, to stop young people taking these things.

...

It has a better chance of stopping drug use ...

The fact is the current messaging around illicit drugs is not working. We are seeing needless deaths of kids.

A government member interjected.

Mrs D'ATH: Yes, what does the Leader of the Opposition make happen? The poor members for Moggill and Bonney are forced to go out and deny their views and actually say, 'No, no, no. We don't support this'—because of the draconian views of those opposite. They would rather have politics instead of good policies.

Mr Janetzki interjected.

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

Mrs D'ATH: That is what they believe in. It is disgusting. They should be embarrassed by the position they have taken on this, and it puts people in harm's way.

(Time expired)

Affordable Housing

Mr BERKMAN: My question is to the Premier. Queensland is set to lose another 6,000 affordable homes in the next three years as the federal NRAS program winds up, but federal Labor's housing policy will not even replace those homes by 2028 let alone create any more. Will the Premier tell the federal Labor government to stop making the housing crisis worse and instead work with the Greens to start fixing it?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the member for the question. It is a serious issue with the ending of that program. It is something I know that the housing minister has been lobbying extensively about with the federal government. As I said in an earlier answer to this question, we recognise the housing stress that is on families across Queensland. That is why we held a housing round table, a Housing Summit, and that round table will meet again later this month to see how the actions are going from the document that we released.

Unfortunately, the former Morrison government had cuts to housing, especially the remote housing. It was absolutely disgraceful. What we have seen from our government is a key investment of billions of dollars into housing—whether it is the buildings we are putting in place for making more affordable renting, the social housing that we are building that the minister is constantly opening right across Queensland or what we are also seeing now with the production of more affordable homes. It is wonderful to see that companies are out there in this space. We will continue to update the House later this month with the results of those housing initiatives.

Brisbane North, Transport Infrastructure

Mr MELLISH: My question is to the Minister for Transport and Main Roads. Can the minister update the House on the government's transport infrastructure investment in Brisbane's northern suburbs, and is the minister aware of any alternative approaches?

Mr BAILEY: I thank the member for Aspley for his question and his interest in transport infrastructure across north-west Brisbane and in his electorate. I was recently at the Beams Road level crossing—where more than \$200 million worth of transport infrastructure is going in—with the member for Aspley and the member for Sandgate. That is part of our commitment to better transport infrastructure in the north and north-west of Brisbane. We are not only doing that. We have completed the Linkfield Road connection, which was a \$31 million commitment in the member for Everton's electorate. We are also doing the Northern Transitway for bus priority along Gympie Road. That is a substantial public transport investment in terms of traffic up there. We are doing a \$20 million study in terms of working with the Moreton Bay council on transport through that whole corridor and that big growth area up there. We are doing a substantial amount.

I want to commend the member for Aspley for working with us. We have \$2.1 billion coming in on the Gateway from Pine Rivers down towards where we completed the previous upgrade. There are substantial levels of commitment by this government to the north and north-west of Brisbane, and that is in stark contrast to the record of those opposite who savagely cut road funding when they were in power. It is also in contrast to the Lord Mayor of Brisbane and his shady deal with Scott Morrison, where he got \$10 million out of the Morrison government to do a study on a corridor that is actually owned by the state government and goes across two council areas. If ever there was a bit of a pong, then this is one of them. We said to them that they should not do it, but they proceeded to do it. It was a political stunt and I have called the Lord Mayor out on it over the last week or so because the study that the Lord Mayor did came out with a motorway option and it lasted 24 hours. It lasted 24 hours because it was annihilated by the local people who do not want a motorway through this area.

Mr Mander interjected.

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

Mr BAILEY: The only studying on the North West Transport Corridor in recent times has been the Brisbane City Council, not by us. For the Lord Mayor to try to scare people about suggesting that we are resuming homes or knocking down bushland is a disgrace. It is one of the lowest acts I have seen from a Lord Mayor in my adult lifetime. It is as likely as us building a tunnel to Auckland or a monorail out to Birdsville. It is a ridiculous thing. Even the engineers of Australia—

Mr Mander interjected.

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

Mr BAILEY: Even the engineers of Australia have panned it and so did RAIL Back on Track. Our record is very strong in terms of transport infrastructure in this part. The council need to start spending some money in north-west Brisbane, instead of spending all their money in the inner city.

Native Title

Ms BOLTON: My question is to the Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships. Can the minister advise what the government is currently doing to foster transparent and effective communications between Indigenous factions and non-Indigenous Queenslanders and communities, especially with regards to current projects and procedural concerns relating to native title, which is vital to be resolved as we head into Path to Treaty?

Mr CRAWFORD: The Queensland government ensures all relevant parties asserting an interest in land that is the subject of native title claim are afforded procedural fairness and natural justice before the Federal Court of Australia. The Department of Resources is actually the one responsible for overseeing and progressing native title matters through the court, and obviously the responsible minister is my colleague the member for Townsville.

Any concerns arising from factions within the First Nations community are matters for the community itself to resolve, not the Queensland government. To add a bit of context to the member for Noosa's question, when the Federal Court grants native title, native title holders must establish a registered native title body corporate or a prescribed body corporate. That entity then manages all native title matters. Only the registered native title body corporate has that official role. Other entities that may establish have no official registered authority in native title matters, even though some of their membership may include individual native title holders who themselves are family members, elders and other parts of community.

I think the best place for any members of the House, if they have complaints about the operation of registered native title body corporates and the like, is they should go through the office of ORIC, the Office of the Registrar of Indigenous Corporations, however I am also very happy to speak to individual members if they have concerns or inquiries about native title matters in their electorate. Some electorates in the state are relatively simple, but in other parts there can be many native title holders across that area. I give that opportunity not only to the member for Noosa but also to other members in the House.

CopperString 2.0

Mr HEALY: My question is to the Minister for Energy, Renewables and Hydrogen and Minister for Public Works and Procurement. Can the minister advise the House about Labor's plan to build publicly owned CopperString 2032, and can the minister advise if there are any alternative approaches?

Mr de BRENNI: I thank the member for Cairns because as everyone on this side of the House know, the member for Cairns is a champion for good regional jobs in Queensland. The member knows that the Queensland Energy and Jobs Plan is our plan to unleash the potential of regional Queensland through constructing the Queensland SuperGrid. The member for Cairns has been out with me to inspect the construction of the North Queensland SuperGrid link, the link between Townsville and Cairns, and now he is very pleased to hear that we will build CopperString 2032—up to 20,000 megawatts of clean renewable energy unlocked in the north. It will be delivered by our publicly owned utility, Powerlink, which will lead the project, and early works will get underway soon. This is the biggest infrastructure project in northern Australia for generations.

Our plan has made CopperString even bigger. Townsville to Hughenden will be upgraded from 330 kilovolts to 500 kilovolts. Our towers will be 15 metres high—25 tonnes of extra steel, double the size of each substation footprint. As the Premier said when we were talking about CopperString in Townsville, it is a super grid, not a mini grid.

There was a lot of talk about CopperString in Townsville, but who did not say anything? Who did not want to say anything about CopperString in Townsville? The whole shadow cabinet was in Townsville meeting with the Leader of the Opposition. What did he have to say about their plan for energy in Queensland? He said nothing. What does that mean to Queenslanders? Either they have no plan or they have a secret plan. No plan or a secret plan. The *Townsville Bulletin* reported on our plan. Here is our plan: 'Energy locked in', they reported. \$500 billion of opportunity in new critical minerals, 800 construction jobs, tens of thousands more mining jobs—that is our plan, locked in under Labor for every Queenslander to see.

Where is the Liberals' and Nationals' plan on energy? We know that under Labor energy is locked in—it is front page of the paper—but Queenslanders appear locked out. They are locked out of the LNP's secret plan. Regional workers who want jobs in delivering the SuperGrid are locked out from the LNP's secret energy plan. Regional businesses who want clean power have been locked out. Even the Queensland press gallery was locked out. When they asked reasonable questions of the Leader of the Opposition, he locked them out.

Queenslanders are locked out of their secret energy plan for a reason. We all know what it is because we know what is in their secret energy plan for Queenslanders. It is the same old plan. It is to cut, it is to sack and it is to sell Queenslanders' assets.

M1, Flood Mitigation

Mrs GERBER: My question is to the Premier. It has been revealed that M1 works contributed to the flooding of homes in my area. Has the Premier asked the transport minister why the independent hydraulics report was conducted in secrecy, why he failed to consult with local flood victims, and then held onto the report for months?

Mr BAILEY: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The question had clear imputations and I do not believe it is within the standing orders.

Mr SPEAKER: The question does contain assertions. If you remove the assertions, I would like to have the question put.

Mrs GERBER: My question is to the Premier. It has been revealed that M1 works contributed to the flooding of homes in my area. Has the Premier asked the transport minister why the independent hydraulics report was not consulted on with locals and why he has held onto the report?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I am advised by the minister that we saw a record level of rain last February that led to widespread flooding. In response to community concerns, TMR engaged an independent hydraulics specialist to investigate any possible flooding impacts from construction works associated with the upgrade. The independent specialist review determined that 25 properties may have been impacted due to the temporary construction works. TMR is now in the early stages of liaising with these directly affected property owners, and I am advised further that the content of the report has been made available to the public via the TMR website on the Pacific Motorway M1, Varsity Lakes to Tugun upgrade project update.

Community Safety

Mr HUNT: My question is of the Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services. Will the minister update the House on the investments the government is making in Queensland corrective services and community safety?

Mr RYAN: I thank the member for the question. As a former custodial officer, he will know how this government's commitment to community safety is recognised in the stronger laws that we have that ensure that offenders are held to account for their offending. When you have stronger laws, you need to build more custodial capacity. As the former custodial officer who is now the member for Caloundra knows, our investment is a record, unlike those opposite who must have had weak laws because they had to close prisons; who must have had weak laws because they sacked custodial officers and other correctional staff. Our government is fully committed to ensuring that Queensland Corrective Services is fully resourced to deliver on our government's commitment of community safety.

We have the biggest prison in Queensland history being built right now at Gatton. It is a huge investment of an \$861 million state-of-the-art correctional centre, with a therapeutic operating model to deliver better rehabilitation outcomes for prisoners. It will deliver 1,500 extra beds. I am told that it is progressing well with major works due to be finished at the end of the year and commissioning to then start early next year. This is a massive commitment, not only to community safety but also to jobs.

Hundreds of jobs in Gatton will be created to work in that new correctional centre, in addition to the more than 1,000 jobs involved in the construction. I am told that we are getting close to the one million-hours mark of work on site. This is a significant investment. In addition to the million hours, there has been almost 100,000 apprenticeship hours, giving opportunity to the builders of the future.

We are up-front with Queenslanders about our community safety plan, delivering new infrastructure and delivering stronger law, unlike those opposite who, when last in government, sought to privatise prisons—sought to sell off those prisons. At the last election, though, they did fess up and they did say that privatisation of prisons was part of their policy. We are always clear and we are always committed when it comes to community safety. We are investing in the front line, investing in the resources that support them, and investing in safety, unlike those opposite who go on their tour of terror around the state. I see just last week the Leader of the Opposition tried to scare people, but not even the journalists would turn up to some of his press conferences. They are not even scared anymore! We are always committed to community safety. We will always deliver for Queensland.

Emerald Hospital, Renal Dialysis

Mr MILLAR: My question is to the Premier. Can the Premier explain why the people of Emerald and the Central Highlands are now publicly fundraising to get renal dialysis chairs for the Emerald Hospital after years of being denied this service by the government?

Ms PALASZCZUK: Can you please repeat that question? There was an attendant talking to me.

Mr SPEAKER: That is completely fair. Member, can you please repeat your question?

Mr MILLAR: My question is to the Premier. Can the Premier explain why the people of Emerald and the Central Highlands are now publicly fundraising to get renal dialysis chairs for the Emerald Hospital after years of being denied this service by the government?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the member for his question. It is a serious question and I am happy for the health minister to get back to him about that. I do know there is a progressive rollout of renal dialysis chairs across the state. I have actually visited places where I have seen this happening. I am happy for the member to receive a response from the health minister.

Women and Girls

Ms PUGH: My question is to the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, Minister for Women and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence. Can the Attorney-General please inform the House how the Palaszczuk government is creating a better Queensland for women and girls, and is the Attorney-General aware of any alternative approaches?

Ms FENTIMAN: I thank the member for Mount Ommaney for her question—a wonderful role model for young women in her community, someone they can look up to with pride. We have just celebrated Queensland Women's Week. It was a really busy week but it was wonderful to engage with so many women and girls in Queensland, acknowledging all the great work that has been done before us and all of the work still yet to do.

We know that a stable job and economic security is key for successful, safe and prosperous lives for women, which is why we have put economic security at the heart of our Queensland Women's Strategy. We also know that organisations thrive when they have diversity in decision-making, which is why back in 2015 we reinstated the targets under the Cabinet Handbook for Women on Boards. We met the target early. We went from 31 per cent when we came into government to now 54 per cent women on government boards and bodies because this government values and celebrates women's voices.

When honourable members look at this side of the chamber they will see just how many women we have in leadership positions led by our Premier. However, it is a very different story when we look across that side of the chamber: just six women, only 17 per cent. How can they hope to represent modern Queensland with only six women in their parliamentary caucus? This is a test of the Leader of the Opposition because all the way back in 2021 he said he staked his reputation on getting women into winnable seats, but two years later we have not seen much action at all.

The Leader of the Opposition travelled 1,400 kilometres from Townsville down to Broadwater to knock off the youngest woman ever elected, clearly because he felt he was entitled to the seat. Since then he has had an opportunity to demonstrate just how much he wants to get women into winnable seats, and that was the member for Callide. That is his record of getting women into winnable seats.

A government member interjected.

Ms FENTIMAN: That is right; there was also Stretton. I just cannot believe those opposite are serious about getting women into this place. This is a test of the Leader of the Opposition's leadership. They must double—at least double—the number of women in their parliamentary caucus. They have 17 per cent; on this side of the House we are proud to have 40 per cent women and a woman Premier.

Police Resources

Mr LAST: My question is to the police minister. The opposition has been informed police communication centres in Rockhampton, Gladstone and Mackay could be closed and all calls transferred to Townsville. Can the minister assure the people of Central and North Queensland they will not be disadvantaged and the safety of the public and police officers will not be put at risk?

Mr SPEAKER: The period for question time has expired. I ask any members who are leaving the chamber to please do so quietly.

MOTION

Business Program



Hon. YM D'ATH (Redcliffe—ALP) (Leader of the House) (11.14 am): I move—

1. That the Strengthening Community Safety Bill will be considered this sitting week, to complete all stages by 5.55 pm on Thursday, 16 March 2023, with the minister to be called on in reply by 4.25 pm on Thursday, 16 March 2023.
2. If the nominated stage for the bill has not been completed by 5.55 pm on Thursday, 16 March 2023, Mr Speaker:
 - (a) shall call on the minister to table any explanatory notes to their circulated amendments, any statement of compatibility with human rights or any statement of exceptional circumstances;
 - (b) shall put all remaining questions necessary to either pass that stage or pass the bill without further debate;
 - (c) may interrupt non-specified business or debate on a bill or motion to complete the requirements of the motion; and
 - (d) will complete all stages required by this motion notwithstanding anything contained in standing and sessional orders.

In moving this motion, it is clear from this motion that the Strengthening Community Safety Bill has been allocated the entire week for debate. I ask that members support the motion.



Mr POWELL (Glass House—LNP) (11.14 am): In the interests of allowing members to very quickly get on to debating the Strengthening Community Safety Bill we will also be allowing this business motion to pass today.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

TOBACCO AND OTHER SMOKING PRODUCTS AMENDMENT BILL

Introduction



Hon. YM D'ATH (Redcliffe—ALP) (Minister for Health and Ambulance Services) (11.14 am): I present a bill for an act to amend the Forestry Act 1959, the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000, the Recreation Areas Management Act 2006 and the Tobacco and Other Smoking Products Act 1998 for particular purposes. I table the bill, the explanatory notes and a statement of compatibility with human rights. I nominate the Health and Environment Committee to consider the bill.

Tabled paper: Tobacco and Other Smoking Products Amendment Bill 2023 [\[284\]](#).

Tabled paper: Tobacco and Other Smoking Products Amendment Bill 2023, explanatory notes [\[285\]](#).

Tabled paper: Tobacco and Other Smoking Products Amendment Bill 2023, statement of compatibility with human rights [\[286\]](#).

The Tobacco and Other Smoking Products Amendment Bill 2023 delivers on key government election commitments. The reforms in the bill respond to ongoing and emergent public health concerns and will ensure Queensland's health legislation remains contemporary and effective. In Queensland, the effects of smoking are a significant public health concern. It is the No. 1 risk factor contributing to preventable death and disease. The annual cost of smoking to Queensland, including hospital and other medical expenses, has been estimated at \$27.4 billion. Smoking also contributes to health inequity. Higher smoking rates, and therefore poorer health outcomes, are more common in First Nations people and in low socio-economic and regional or remote communities.

Over the past 25 years, concerted public health efforts have more than halved the adult smoking rate in Queensland. This includes measures implemented under the Tobacco and Other Smoking Products Act 1998. However, this progress is threatened by aggressive new marketing of smoking products to young people. This includes using social media to promote allegedly safer new smoking products, such as e-cigarettes. Unethical new business practices have also emerged, designed to circumvent the protections in the act. Some of these issues will be canvassed in the vaping inquiry referred to the Health and Environment Committee earlier today. However, that inquiry will not delay us taking action to address the harms of smoking.

The community is also concerned about the increasing trade in illicit tobacco. These are smoking products that do not comply with Commonwealth requirements for plain packaging and health warnings and that circumvent excises and duties. As these products are often illegally imported or manufactured in unsafe or uncontrolled conditions, they are also unlikely to meet Australian safety standards in relation to ingredients and concentrations and may contain dangerous toxins.

In 2016, the Health, Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee conducted an inquiry into tobacco licensing arrangements in Queensland. The committee's report recommended that a wholesale and retail licensing scheme be considered. Then, in 2020, the Palaszczuk government made two significant election commitments: firstly, to strengthen the retail supply, advertising and promotion provisions in the act and take direct action on illicit tobacco; and, secondly, to increase smoke-free public places. To demonstrate how the bill responds to these public health challenges and gives effect to the committee's report and the government's election commitments, I shall now explain the key amendments in the bill.

There is no requirement for sellers of smoking products in Queensland to be licensed. This has limited Queensland Health's ability to effectively identify and monitor the number, type and location of businesses selling smoking products. In turn, this has impacted the department's ability to engage with the industry and design targeted compliance programs. The bill introduces a licensing scheme for wholesale and retail sales of smoking products. Both types of licenses authorise sales at one physical premises and one online shop, with additional premises or online shops requiring separate licences. The licenses must be renewed annually. Before granting a licence, the chief executive of the department must be satisfied the applicant is a fit and proper person to hold the licence. This includes consideration of any criminal history and the applicant's compliance with smoking product laws in Queensland and interstate.

Where the holder of a liquor licence applies to sell smoking products at their premises, they will automatically be granted a retail licence (liquor); however, their licence only allows sales from the premises, not from an online shop. There will be a fee charged for obtaining and renewing a licence. These fees are intended to ensure full cost recovery of the licensing infrastructure and delivery, and to fund additional compliance activities throughout the state by Queensland Health.

The licensing scheme will provide a strong incentive for industry to maintain compliance standards. Where a licensee breaches the act or otherwise ceases being a fit and proper person, the chief executive may take disciplinary action. This includes suspending or cancelling their licence. The chief executive may also impose conditions on a licence, and these may be listed on the register of licences to be published online.

Implementing a licensing scheme will align Queensland with other Australian jurisdictions. South Australia, the Northern Territory and Tasmania license retail suppliers; Western Australia and the ACT license both wholesale and retail suppliers; and New South Wales has a registration scheme for retailers. It is expected that the application portal will go live on 1 September 2023, and suppliers will then have 12 months to become licensed.

The absence of a licensing scheme in Queensland has contributed to a proliferation of retail shops trading in illicit tobacco. By seeking to profit from the evasion of standard retail requirements, this growing trade in illicit tobacco is causing significant detriment to compliant businesses and to public health. To provide more effective deterrence and enforcement, the bill makes it an offence under Queensland law for a person to supply smoking products not complying with Commonwealth requirements. Because the covert nature of the illicit tobacco trade may make it difficult to obtain evidence of an actual supply, it will also be an offence to store illicit tobacco at a retail premises as it presumes this product is intended as stock rather than for personal use. The bill also allows the illicit tobacco offence to be extended by regulation to include any new Commonwealth smoking product laws. This futureproofs the bill and anticipates the possibility of tighter national requirements being introduced, for example in relation to e-cigarettes.

Authorised persons are appointed under the act to monitor and enforce compliance with its provisions. To ensure they can effectively discharge this function, the bill provides authorised persons with expanded powers. This includes powers to make additional inquiries; issue improvement notices to immediately prohibit an activity; and remain at premises for a reasonable period to check compliance with an improvement notice. To prevent seized illicit tobacco being used to commit further offences, the chief executive will be empowered to seize these products without first taking prosecution action. The chief executive will also be able to share intelligence with other state or Commonwealth law enforcement agencies.

To assist Queensland Health to enforce the new offence of supplying illicit tobacco and the related offence of unlicensed sale of smoking products, the bill deems police officers to be authorised persons. Where police take compliance action using these new powers, Queensland Health will still be responsible for commencing any subsequent prosecution. While police officers are authorised persons, it is intended that Queensland Health officers will have the primary and predominant role of enforcing the provisions of this act. These additional powers will not divert police officers from their usual duties, including to protect the community from serious crime. Instead, this important amendment will clarify and formalise the role that police already perform in assisting, at both state and Commonwealth levels, with combating high-level smoking product offences.

The bill similarly deems conservation officers under the Nature Conservation Act 1992 to be authorised persons for the purpose of monitoring and enforcing compliance with the prohibition on smoking in a national park. The bill introduces significant maximum penalties for noncompliance. This will deter the unlawful supply of smoking products and send a clear message that selling smoking products must only be entrusted to legitimate businesses. For example, the maximum penalty for unlicensed wholesale or retail sale of smoking products is 1,000 penalty units, which equates to \$143,750. The same penalty applies where a wholesaler sells smoking products to an unlicensed retailer. For supplying illicit tobacco, the bill prescribes a penalty of up to 300 penalty units, which equates to \$43,125. For being in possession of illicit tobacco at a retail premises, the maximum penalty is 140 penalty units, which equates to \$20,125.

The bill modernises the act to strengthen and clarify existing restrictions on the advertising of smoking products. The restrictions will now specifically apply to online shops. They will also capture the use of colloquial names of smoking products and the display of multiple business names which each reference smoking products. The bill ensures the existing restrictions on the display and promotion of smoking products keep pace with emerging business practices. The restrictions will now specifically apply to any fixed or moving image promoting use of a smoking product, and to packaging of hookahs and non-tobacco substances which may be smoked in a hookah. These restrictions will also be extended to capture the supply of a smoking product for a nominal fee and the practice of displaying multiple mandatory or permitted signs to indirectly draw attention to the fact that smoking products are available for sale.

The bill includes new restrictions to further protect children from exposure to smoking, smoking products and second-hand smoke. Employees under the age of 18 who sell smoking products may grow to view smoking as normal behaviour. They will also become familiar with brand names and be exposed to the variety of smoking products available, including the multiple flavours of e-cigarettes.

The bill prohibits the supply and handling of smoking products by children; however, the offence for contravention will be committed by the employer, not the child employee. The act already prohibits the supply of smoking products to children; however, it is not an offence if the supplier is a responsible adult for the child, such as a parent or guardian. The supply of smoking products to children by family and friends contributes to smoking initiation, experimenting and progression to regular smoking. No other jurisdiction in Australia provides such an exemption. Although the bill will remove this exemption, Queensland Health's intended enforcement approach will focus on monitoring, prevention and education rather than prosecution. Also, to protect children from the dangers of second-hand smoke, the bill prohibits smoking at or near organised children's outdoor activities, such as Scouts or Girl Guides, and at car parks adjacent to a school.

The act already allows liquor licensed premises to have a designated outdoor smoking area, otherwise known as a DOSA. To protect patrons from exposure to second-hand smoke, the bill requires a no-smoking buffer zone between the DOSA and any enclosed area of the premises. The bill also requires the liquor licensee to ensure that no child is allowed to remain in a DOSA.

Smoking and drinking are often paired behaviours. To prevent recent quitters from relapsing and social smokers from increasing their smoking, the bill restricts the supply of smoking products at liquor licensed premises to a service area. This will mean that smoking product vending machines at premises must not be accessible directly by patrons.

The act already prohibits smoking at an outdoor eating or drinking place, such as an agricultural show where food or drink is provided from an onsite food service. To protect persons entering or passing by the place, the bill introduces a requirement for a no-smoking buffer zone around its perimeter.

Outdoor markets are becoming increasingly common across Queensland. To protect patrons and vendors, the bill introduces specific smoking rules for this type of outdoor place. Smoking will be prohibited at an outdoor market and within a buffer zone from any clearly defined entrance or exit to the market.

The bill does not take away a person's choice to smoke; however, it does introduce restrictions to balance this right with the public health imperative to protect the community at places where families gather. Accordingly, the bill allows the person in charge of an outdoor eating or drinking place or outdoor market to set aside a smoking area; however, the smoking area must be clearly signed and surrounded by a buffer zone, and no food or drink may be served within either the smoking area or the buffer zone. As an added safeguard, where the person in charge elects to create a smoking area, they will be held liable for any persons found smoking in the buffer zone.

To improve the operation of the act, the bill makes several technical amendments. These include renumbering the act to make it easier for the community to understand and law enforcement agencies to apply.

The bill was developed with extensive input from industry and the community, including through a formal regulatory assessment process and targeted consultation on the draft legislation. Organisations such as Cancer Council Queensland, the Heart Foundation, the Public Health Association of Australia and the Lung Foundation of Australia have provided positive feedback on the reforms to protect public health. Retailers agree with introducing the licensing scheme as a means of keeping unscrupulous suppliers from entering or remaining in the industry and to reduce the trade in illicit tobacco.

To give affected stakeholders sufficient time to make the structural and operational changes needed to comply with the new requirements before they become law, some of the amendments in the bill commence on a later date. For example, the new prohibition on smoking at outdoor markets commences on 1 September 2023, some of the changes at liquor licensed premises commence on 1 July 2024 and unlicensed wholesale or retail sale becomes an offence on 1 September 2024. The prohibition on child employees supplying smoking products also commences on 1 September 2024, with small businesses having a further 12 months in which to comply.

The Palaszczuk government is committed to ensuring that Queensland's health legislation meets the needs of Queenslanders, both now and into the future. This bill will modernise Queensland's tobacco and smoking products legislation, fill gaps in the existing legislative coverage and increase regulatory oversight and deterrent measures to keep the smoking product industry honest and transparent. Above all, the bill strengthens public health protections for Queenslanders and particularly for families and children. I take this opportunity to thank the stakeholders who engaged in Queensland Health's consultation processes and most recently provided feedback on the draft bill. I commend the bill to the House.

First Reading

Hon. YM D'ATH (Redcliffe—ALP) (Minister for Health and Ambulance Services) (11.29 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 Health and Environment Committee

Mr SPEAKER: In accordance with standing order 131, the bill is now referred to the Health and Environment Committee.

LEAVE TO MOVE MOTION

 **Mr LAST** (Burdekin—LNP) (11.30 am): I seek leave to move general notice of motion No. 1 standing in my name.

Division: Question put—That leave be granted.

AYES, 37:

LNP, 33—Bates, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Camm, Crandon, Crisafulli, Frecklington, Gerber, Hart, Head, Janetzki, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Lister, Mander, McDonald, Mickelberg, Millar, Minnikin, Nicholls, O'Connor, Perrett, Powell, Purdie, Robinson, Rowan, Simpson, Stevens, Watts, Weir.

KAP, 2—Dametto, Knuth.

PHON, 1—Andrew.

Ind, 1—Bolton.

NOES, 49:


ALP, 49—Bailey, Boyd, Brown, Bush, Butcher, Crawford, D'Ath, de Brenni, Dick, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Furner, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Healy, Hinchliffe, Howard, Hunt, A. King, S. King, Lauga, Linard, Lui, Martin, McCallum, McMahon, McMillan, Mellish, Miles, Mullen, O'Rourke, Palaszczuk, Pease, Power, Pugh, Richards, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Scanlon, Skelton, Smith, Stewart, Sullivan, Tantari, Walker, Whiting.

Pair: Madden, Molhoek.

Resolved in the negative.

MOTION

Suspension of Standing Orders

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Leader of the House) (11.35 am), by leave, without notice: I move—

That, with respect to the Strengthening Community Safety Bill, standing orders 87 and 150 be suspended to allow the bill and any amendments circulated by the minister to be moved and considered.


Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

STRENGTHENING COMMUNITY SAFETY BILL

Resumed from 21 February (see p. 40).

Second Reading

 **Hon. MT RYAN** (Morayfield—ALP) (Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services) (11.36 am): I move—

That the bill be now read a second time.

On 10 March the Economics and Governance Committee tabled its report on its examination of the Strengthening Community Safety Bill 2023. The committee made one recommendation—that this bill be passed. I thank the committee for its timely consideration and support of the bill. Queensland has some of the strongest, toughest and most comprehensive youth justice laws in the nation. This bill builds on those laws to ensure serious repeat youth offenders are held accountable for their actions and that there are swift and serious consequences for criminal offending. This is what Queenslanders expect. They have asked for additional action, and that is what this bill provides. Innocent law-abiding Queenslanders have lost their lives. Victims are left traumatised, scared and angry, and yet those serious repeat offenders continue to commit serious offences despite having been given every opportunity to participate in intensive rehabilitation and reform programs.

As mentioned in my introductory speech, the legislative reforms in this bill are accompanied by an additional investment package of more than \$332 million, building on the \$800 million already invested by this government to tackle the complex causes of crime. This additional investment package includes \$66 million for the Queensland Police Service to extend the work of the Youth Crime Taskforce led by task force commander George Marchesini and to support extreme high-visibility police patrols, among other things. I am pleased to inform the House that the Queensland Police Service launched

the extreme high-visibility police patrol operation, Operation Victor Unison, on 1 March which has already seen almost 4,000 proactive police activities conducted resulting in over 100 youth offenders being charged with over 200 offences.

I note the committee's comments in relation to further enhancing assistance for victims of crime. As announced in my introductory speech, this government has invested additional funding of \$9 million to enhance assistance for victims of crime, including expediting financial assistance and improving responses to victims of property crime where violence or a threat of violence has occurred. This includes \$3 million to increase counselling services and boost funding for community services and more than \$5 million to increase resources at Victim Assist Queensland. The government is committed to putting victims first and has supported recommendations from the Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce and the Independent Commission of Inquiry into Queensland Police Service Responses to Domestic and Family Violence to establish a victims' commission in Queensland. Additionally, the government will progress a review of the legislative financial assistance available to victims of property crime to ensure it is meeting the needs of victims of violent crime.

I note the opposition's statement of reservation indicating its view that there should be additional consultation on the proposals contained in the bill. This is at odds with the public statements made by the Leader of the Opposition and, quite frankly, it is at odds with the views of Queenslanders. This is an important matter and the government makes no apology for progressing the passage of this bill as a matter of priority this week. There has been an opportunity for people to have their say during the committee's consideration of the bill. The committee has conducted public briefings at Brisbane, Cairns and Townsville and considered over 70 written submissions from a broad and diverse range of Queensland stakeholders. In addition, following the Premier's announcement on 29 December, comments were invited from members of the public to assess community views about the changes and seek views about how to further protect the community by an online survey. A draft version of the bill was also shared with relevant departments, heads of jurisdiction and others for comment prior to the bill's introduction.

I would also like to note the safeguards in place to monitor the bill's efficiency and effectiveness, along with the efficiency and effectiveness of other initiatives which were announced as part of this reform package. The amount of \$10 million has been allocated to evaluation and reporting over three years to ensure that investment continues to be made in the rehabilitation and reform programs that are proven to reduce offending, like the Queensland Police Service's award-winning Project Booyah.

I note that last week the Leader of the Opposition stood up and announced that his team had had a win on evaluating youth justice intervention programs. What the Leader of the Opposition forgot to mention was that the Queensland Audit Office had already announced this review on 23 May 2022, some eight months ago. Gee, they are good—they are really good! Then again, that is to be expected from an opposition that continues to recycle policy positions from the Newman government. The Leader of the Opposition is like the schoolboy who would peer over at your schoolwork during class just to make his workload a little bit easier.

The Youth Justice Cabinet Committee will also monitor progress of the reforms and reporting on the impact of the new initiatives will be publicly reported through the budget process. As emphasised in my introductory speech, this government is invested in strengthening the bail framework for youth offenders and this bill aims to do just that. One of the tough stances this bill is taking is expanding the application of section 29 of the Bail Act, 'Offence to breach conditions of bail', to young offenders. This means a young offender who breaches any conditions of their bail undertaking may be liable to this offence and the penalty that accompanies it. I acknowledge the committee's support for this change. I note this amendment is different to the former LNP government's 'finding of guilt while on bail' offence in section 59A of the Youth Justice Act.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Lister): Order! Minister, would you resume your seat, please. I am sorry to interrupt you mid speech. I am hearing constant interjections from my left and I note that there are a number of members to my left who are already on a warning from during question time. I will not be giving further warnings to any of those members if I catch them interjecting. The minister will be heard in silence. Please proceed, Minister.

Mr RYAN: It is a fact that the LNP never legislated for a breach of bail offence for young offenders. This was confirmed during the committee process.

Mr Hart interjected.

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

Mr RYAN: I acknowledge that some stakeholders expressed the view to the committee that the causes of young people breaching bail conditions may be due to circumstances outside their control or that arise from a failure of a young person to understand their bail conditions. As previously mentioned, the government has committed to investing more than \$100 million in extra diversion and rehabilitation services. These include the expansion of the intensive bail initiative, intensive case management, youth co-responder teams and the expansion of early action groups to assist young people in complying with their bail conditions.

I also note that section 20(5)(a) of the Bail Act provides a safeguard for some of the issues raised with the committee, requiring that the person before whom a bail undertaking is entered is to be satisfied that the person understands the conditions of bail and the consequences for failing to comply with those conditions. This applies to both adult and youth offenders. Where some bail conditions may be onerous, the Bail Act also has existing review mechanisms. Section 11 of the Youth Justice Act continues to apply, requiring police officers to first consider alternatives to proceeding against a child for a breach of bail offence. Defences under Chapter 5 of the Criminal Code will also remain available.

In 2021, amendments to the Youth Justice Act introduced a presumption against bail for young offenders charged with a prescribed indictable offence while on bail for an indictable offence. In these circumstances, the court or a police officer must refuse to release the young offender from custody unless the child shows cause why their release is justified. The current definition of prescribed indictable offences includes offences which could attract a life sentence or maximum imprisonment of 14 years if committed by an adult, for example, grievous bodily harm, robbery and burglary. It also includes specified offences such as assault occasioning bodily harm, wounding and certain unlawful use of motor vehicle offences.

To further the scope of the presumption against bail provision, this bill inserts a new definition of 'prescribed indictable offence' in the Youth Justice Act. The new definition retains the existing prescribed indictable offences and adds additional offences to provide that the presumption against bail also applies to being a passenger in a vehicle the subject of an unlawful use offence and to the offence of entering premises with intent to commit an indictable offence. The definition will also apply to new provisions introduced in the bill including the Serious Repeat Offender Declaration Scheme.

To facilitate greater operation of the current electronic monitoring device provisions in the Youth Justice Act which allows courts to impose an electronic monitoring device as a condition of bail for a young person in certain circumstances, the bill extends the duration of the trial to 30 April 2025 and the eligibility criteria to young people over the age of 15 years.

As highlighted in my introductory speech, an independent peer review of the current trial of electronic monitoring devices in the Townsville, North Brisbane, Moreton, Logan and Gold Coast areas has been conducted and published online. The review found that while there are some benefits associated with electronic monitoring, a larger sample size is needed to determine its effectiveness in deterring offending behaviour. The extension of the trial to April 2025 and expansion to include young people 15 years and over will provide a bigger sample size to support decisions on the future use of electronic monitoring devices. If the bill is passed, there will be a further review in the lead-up to the new expiry date.

As announced in my introductory speech, this government also intends to extend the trial to Cairns, Toowoomba and Mount Isa. Additionally, and subject to further detailed work occurring on the resourcing of the extension of the trial, the scheme may be expanded to include electronic monitoring on sentenced young offenders in the community as a tool to assist with their supervision. The bill further takes measures to strengthen the bail framework applicable to youth offenders by amending the Youth Justice Act to remove the requirement for a police officer to consider alternatives to arrest for contraventions, or likely contraventions, of bail conditions where the child is on bail for a prescribed indictable offence or where a child is on bail for an offence against sections 177 and 178 of the Domestic and Family Violence Protection Act 2012.

In accordance with this government's announcement on 29 December 2022, the bill amends the Criminal Code to increase the maximum penalty for unlawful use or possession of motor vehicles, aircraft or vessels from seven to 10 years imprisonment. A new circumstance of aggravation, with a maximum penalty of 12 years imprisonment, for the offence of unlawful use or possession of motor vehicles, aircraft or vessels where the offender has published material advertising their involvement in or of the offending on social media is also introduced. This is aimed at sending a clear message to all offenders that the re-traumatising and glorification of crime through these social media posts will not be

tolerated. The maximum penalty for unlawful use, where the offender uses or threatens to use the motor vehicle, aircraft or vessel for the purpose of facilitating the commission of an indictable offence under section 408A(1A) of the Criminal Code is also increased from 10 to 12 years.

The bill further introduces new circumstances of aggravation, with a maximum penalty of 14 years imprisonment, for the offence of unlawful use of a motor vehicle where the offending occurs at night or where the offender uses or threatens violence, is or pretends to be armed, is in company, or damages or threatens to damage any property. The bill amends the Criminal Code to provide that offences of unlawful use of a motor vehicle with circumstances of aggravation of violence or threatened violence must be heard on indictment by a District Court judge or Childrens Court judge.

The purpose of the increased penalties is to reflect the seriousness of this offending, the too-often fatal outcomes involved with this offending and the community's and parliament's denunciation of such conduct. I also note the committee's comments and support in relation to this amendment sending a clear message that these criminal acts are not acceptable.

I note that an amendment, to be moved during consideration in detail, will be directed at rectifying a minor drafting error relating to this clause. The reference to section 3 of the bill in section 758(2) of the Criminal Code, which provides a transitional provision for the amendments to section 408A, should be a reference to section 8. The amendment will ensure there can be no uncertainty regarding the operation of this section of the Criminal Code. This government is also invested in ensuring that we have the right sentencing framework for serious youth offenders: one that aims to ensure the punishment fits the crime and meets community expectations, but that is fair and provides access to rehabilitation and supports.

The bill provides that, when sentencing a child, a court must take into account their relevant bail history. Some stakeholders expressed the view to the Economics and Governance Committee that the interpretation and application of this amendment is unclear. However, I note the committee's support for the amendment as is not new law but rather is a clarifying provision. It has always been the practice of the courts to consider any information about recent compliance with bail provided by the prosecution or defence when considering the appropriateness of a non-custodial sentence order and the conditions of such an order.

Good compliance with bail conditions may indicate a non-custodial order may be very effective in achieving the objectives of sentencing, including the protection of the community and rehabilitation. Poor compliance may indicate that detention might be the only viable option. This is about community safety. It is what Queenslanders and the government expect.

In their statement of reservation, the LNP is seeking the reintroduction of another element of their failed youth justice laws introduced in 2014, namely, removing the principle of detention as a last resort. Quite frankly, that is a nonsense proposal. It is not a new idea. It is the same policy moved by the member for Kawana when he was Queensland's worst ever attorney-general and was on the treasury benches. After waiting more than 790 days for a crime plan, this is the only thing the shadow minister and the opposition can come up with.

The principle of detention as a last resort does not mean that young people are not detained or sentenced to a detention order when the court deems that is the appropriate course of action. On the contrary, Queensland has among the toughest youth justice laws in Australia which, since their introduction two years ago, have seen more young people detained and for longer periods. In addition, the bill's introduction of the new Serious Repeat Offender Declaration Scheme will ensure that the courts have primary regard to the need to protect the community when sentencing a serious repeat offender. This will ensure that serious repeat offenders are held to account and will likely receive longer periods in detention.

In relation to achieving community safety whilst helping maximise the opportunity offenders have to complete rehabilitation programs, this bill introduces a new and separate sentencing scheme for serious repeat young offenders in the Youth Justice Act. For young people declared to be serious repeat offenders, the courts will be required to ensure community safety is the paramount consideration during sentencing. A declaration will be available upon application by the prosecution where a child has been previously sentenced to detention for a prescribed indictable offence. The bill sets out other eligibility criteria courts must be satisfied of before declaring a serious repeat offender, providing necessary safeguards to ensure the fairness and considered approach to making the declarations.

As a result, a declared serious repeat young offender will be subject to specific sentencing considerations that focus primarily on protecting community safety, will enable the application of longer periods of detention and, where appropriate, youth offenders will have the opportunity to complete necessary rehabilitation programs identified in presentence reports. If the child subsequently offends, the declaration may have an effect on a sentencing court of like or higher jurisdiction for a relevant period of 12 months.

To further maximise community safety whilst ensuring offenders have the opportunity to complete rehabilitation programs to address the causes of their offending, the bill strengthens conditional release orders under the Youth Justice Act. The proposed amendments remove the current show-cause provision for a young person when they breach a conditional release order for a prescribed indictable offence, ensuring they serve the suspended term of their detention unless there are special circumstances.

A further amendment to be moved during consideration in detail will be made to the conditional release order amendments regarding the availability of review under new section 246A of the Youth Justice Act. The amendment will confirm that the court's decision in relation to special circumstances is a sentence order whether the court finds there are or are not special circumstances and, therefore, is reviewable under section 118 of the Youth Justice Act.

As noted in my introductory speech, the bill increases penalties and strengthens the youth bail and sentencing frameworks, which may likely increase the number of children held on remand and in detention. To assist detention centres to accommodate the anticipated increase, the bill enables the transfer of persons who have turned 18 years on remand and the earlier transfer of persons who have turned 18 years serving a sentence from a youth detention centre to an adult correctional centre, subject to eligibility criteria and safeguards to ensure procedural fairness and natural justice. I acknowledge some stakeholders expressed the view to the Economics and Governance Committee that more needs to be done to reduce the delays in criminal proceedings so they are finalised before the person becomes an adult and to reduce the time young people are spending on remand in inappropriate settings such as police watch houses.

As part of its package of youth justice reforms, this government has invested almost \$15 million in a fast track sentencing program in Southport, Brisbane, Townsville and Cairns. This program enhances interagency coordination to finalise matters as soon as possible to reduce the time young people spend on remand and more time serving their sentences, as well as providing earlier access to intervention and rehabilitation programs.

The government has also recently established the Criminal Justice Innovation Office. This dedicated multidisciplinary office aims to modernise Queensland's laws, reduce demand on courts and prisons, enhance diversionary programs and help break the cycle of reoffending, ultimately improving community safety. Similarly, the First Nations Justice Office has been tasked with co-designing a whole-of-government and community justice strategy to address the over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the criminal justice system, which will significantly contribute to the achievement of the government's commitments under the National Agreement on Closing the Gap.


As stressed since the introduction of this bill, the government recognises and understands the importance of building on prevention and early intervention to achieve better outcomes for children engaged in the youth justice system and break the cycle of offending. That is why the final amendments the bill introduces are to ensure the continuation of multiagency collaborative panels also known as MACPs. MACPs have existed since 2021 to ensure a collaborative response to the needs of young offenders through a multiagency and multidisciplinary approach. They have proved effective in bringing together relevant government agencies and non-government service providers to ensure timely and coordinated assessments of the needs of serious repeat offenders and responses to those needs. This includes providing access to mental health programs, drug and alcohol programs, enrolment into education and connecting children to culture and healthcare providers. The bill prescribes the MACP system's purpose, membership and the responsibilities of core members.

In relation to this bill's compliance with human rights, a statement of compatibility and statement of exceptional circumstances has been tabled. The statement of compatibility identifies that three amendments are incompatible. Those are the amendments to introduce a breach of bail offence for children, the new Serious Repeat Offender Declaration Scheme and the requirement for a child convicted of a prescribed indictable offence to serve a period of detention when they breach certain conditional release orders. The government is of the view that these amendments are reasonable and entirely justified in the circumstances.

This bill upholds the human rights of law-abiding Queenslanders. They have asked for additional action and the government is responding decisively to address the often violent, frightening and dangerous offending being undertaken by a handful of serious repeat offenders whose behaviours persist despite having been given the opportunity to participate in intensive rehabilitation and reform programs.

As well as the two mentioned previously, I will move two further technical amendments during consideration in detail to correct minor technical errors arising from the renumbering of section 246 of the Youth Justice Act. These amendments will replace the reference to section 246(1) and 246(2) in section 243 of the act with the correct section numbers.

This government is committed to ensuring our community is kept safe and that serious repeat youth offenders are held to account. The vast majority of young people who come into contact with the criminal justice system do not go on to offend again following diversion and rehabilitation programs. However, for those who do, impacting on community safety, this bill gives the police and the judiciary the tools to target those offenders and protect community safety. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr LAST** (Burdekin—LNP) (11.59 am): I rise to contribute to the Strengthening Community Safety Bill 2023. Let me say at the outset that, from the opposition's perspective, this is all about consequences for actions—consequences for those juvenile offenders who are ripping this state apart, who are breaking into houses and stealing cars at levels never seen before in Queensland and thumbing their noses at the law. Isn't it ironic that, as we stand here debating this bill, right now on the streets of Townsville a stolen vehicle is attempting to ram police vehicles. Whilst those opposite might have us believe that this bill will address juvenile crime in this state, we now know that it falls well short of the mark.

The Premier did not turn up in January when Queenslanders needed her and she has not turned up to parliament with the laws that Queenslanders need now, let alone the ones that she promised to Queenslanders. On 29 December the Premier stood up and trumpeted the government's 10-point plan. Who could forget the Premier's comment on Twitter—

Violent criminals should receive harsher punishments.

The community must be protected.

We've announced one of the most comprehensive packages ever seen in Queensland.

Violent juvenile car thieves will face 14 years' jail.

I will have more to say on that shortly. We now know that the plan has more holes in it than Swiss cheese. It does not hold water. Queenslanders should be outraged that the Premier and the police minister tried to pull the wool over their eyes. This government has failed victims across Queensland at a time when they were looking for hope, real action and changes to youth justice laws. They have been let down. The Premier's much vaunted 10-point plan, like all the plans before it, fluffs around the edges. Queenslanders are right to be sceptical that this latest plan will make a difference.

This bill aims to respond to serious offending relating to motor vehicles and to strengthen youth justice laws, mirroring the calls of community members across the state that for far too long fell on deaf ears. The explanatory notes state that strengthening youth justice laws will be achieved by strengthening the youth justice bail framework and the youth justice sentencing framework, by expanding the list of offences included within the definition of 'prescribed indictable offence', by transferring 18-year-olds out of youth detention centres and into adult correctional centres and by the continuation of multiagency collaborative panels. The implementation of these changes will be achieved by amendments to the Bail Act, the Criminal Code, the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act and the Youth Justice Act.

The transfer of 18-year-olds out of youth detention centres and into adult correctional centres is a change that has been a long time coming. When the legislation that facilitated 17-year-olds being transferred out of adult centres back into youth detention centres was introduced, the then attorney-general and now health minister said that one of the reasons for the change was to ensure juveniles were not exposed to adult offenders. For quite some time now, that is exactly what this government has allowed. It has allowed young offenders aged 10, 11, 12 and 13 to be exposed to these 18-year-olds, and that is a recipe for disaster. As the member for Morayfield said when he introduced this bill—

The Youth Justice Act 1992 does not currently contain provisions for the transfer of remanded young people into adult custody.

That is an admission that this government's legislation was erroneous. In reality, those errors meant that we did not just have offenders turning 18 in youth detention centres; we had 18-year-olds being admitted to those centres on remand. We only have to talk to the staff who work in those centres to know that this amendment is long overdue. The minister would not even need to travel to Townsville to hear the concerns of staff there. He could simply go to the airport and ask the staff who have to be flown in because this government cannot properly resource the Cleveland Youth Detention Centre.

The LNP supports the concept of multiagency collaborative panels because we know that the youth crime epidemic cannot be addressed solely by police, by Youth Justice or by any one particular department. While protecting the community from offenders is and always has been our No. 1 priority, we know that a concerted effort is needed to address the underlying causes of this crime. Yet again, we have seen this government drag its feet when it comes to youth justice. I doubt it was the first time we have spoken about it. I remember the member for Morayfield attending a crime forum in my electorate, where he spoke about the importance of departments working together and even referred to some government departments as 'not pulling their weight'. That was almost five years ago—five years of those opposite turning a deaf ear to the victims of youth crime; five years to take action while the long list of victims of youth crime grew longer by the day. Whilst it has taken too long to implement, it is essential that we get it right when it comes to a multiagency response.

At the committee's hearing in Cairns there was evidence given of two young offenders who had been released from the Cleveland Youth Detention Centre and put on a plane back to Cairns, but no-one was there to collect them. They were returned to Cairns with the clothes on their backs and nothing else. There was evidence of a 12-year-old being dropped off at his grandparents' house after being released from detention. The only problem was that his grandparents were in Brisbane! This child was left to fend for himself unsupervised for three days. These are but some of the glaring omissions that, at least five years after the minister spoke about the importance of cooperation, have still not been addressed. Those of us on this side of the House would like a commitment from the minister that there will be regular reporting on the effectiveness of MACPs to ensure the issues that have been raised are addressed and to ensure the offending is reduced.

I note the amendment to section 221 of the Youth Justice Act, specifically the extension of the maximum period for which a conditional release order can be imposed and the amendments to consequences for breaching a conditional release order. With regard to the latter, there are many in the community who would agree that where an offender is offered an alternative to detention and the offender breaches that order they should be returned to custody, but what those opposite have failed to notice is the failings within the wider youth justice system. Away from the detention centres there is a considerable amount of work when it comes to preventing offending and to rehabilitating offenders that falls at the feet of both government and NGOs. Sadly, there are too many examples of where this system is also failing, and that is why the LNP repeatedly called for a full audit of early intervention programs. We know how crucial those early intervention programs are and we know the shortcomings in that space at the present time. If, following the passing of this bill, we are to extend the period for which a conditional release order can be imposed and to ensure we prevent crime wherever possible, we need to ensure these systems are working optimally.

Throughout the committee process there was evidence of intervention failing. Ms Zoe Ellerman of the Cape York Institute spoke of her support for early intervention. The committee chair is on record as saying that 'early intervention is better than getting serious repeat offenders'. Don't we all know that?

The increase in the period for which an offender can be ordered to participate in a program at face value makes sense, but very little is achieved if the program itself is not appropriate. It should be ringing alarm bells in this government that, for example, we have two well-respected Indigenous elders at the point of sheer frustration when it comes to support services, some of which are included in the programs that young people can be ordered to participate in.

Alfred Smallwood has, by his own admission, been involved with helping his community for over 20 years. It is completely unacceptable that we face the situation where a traditional owner in Townsville does not know who is running On Country programs that are designed to help youths from Townsville. It is equally disheartening to hear Linda Janetzki, who I know very well, question how certain groups get their funding and where are the KPIs or the outcomes associated with those funding agreements.

Alfred worked in the watch house and Linda was the coordinator of Townsville's police liaison officer unit for 23 years. These are people who understand the challenges and people who have incredibly strong connections to their community. Their concerns must be not only heard but also acted

on. Perri Conti, who joins us in the gallery today, at the committee's hearing in Cairns made an extremely important point with regard to conditional release orders and the lack of mental health programs and counselling. This, too, must be addressed.

I turn to amendments contained in clause 21 of the bill; namely, the introduction of two new sections into the Youth Justice Act that seek to, according to the explanatory notes, 'provide a separate sentencing regime for serious repeat offenders'. Just as we saw in 2021, these amendments aim to protect members of the community. Who could forget those 2021 amendments? We saw the member for Thuringowa, for example, extolling their virtues and telling all who would listen that community safety was the No. 1 priority. In reality, we have seen more crime, more victims and more lives lost.

What is different this time? This time, we are told, community safety must be the court's primary regard. The offender's history of offending, the impact on public safety and the nature and extent of violence must also be taken into account, but only if the offender is declared a serious repeat offender. Those considerations of community safety must be taken into account alongside sentencing principles that include that a detention order should be imposed only as a last resort.

Is it any wonder that we see a legal system in disarray when it comes to youth justice. While senior members of this government publicly challenge the judiciary, those same members support legislation that restricts the judiciary in doing their job. While the community is expected to believe that their safety is paramount, those charged with administering justice are told that detaining an offender is the last resort.

It is this error that is just one of the reasons I moved the motion earlier today. This government cannot have it both ways. If community safety comes first, which is what we are being told again, they must unshackle the judiciary and let them do their job. It is now on the record that those who voted against my motion have sent a clear signal. Despite what they say in this place and on Facebook, they have voted to ensure the rights of the offender outweigh the rights of the victim. They cannot have breach of bail and tougher penalties on the one hand and then restrict the judiciary by leaving detention as a last resort in the sentencing principles within the Youth Justice Act. They are not compatible.

When we are talking about a bill that is supposed to tackle crime that has resulted in the deaths of Queenslanders, there is usually very little to make us laugh. But, the explanatory notes surrounding the proposed expansion of electronic monitoring are possibly the most hypocritical I have seen. Again, we cast our minds back to 2021 where, according to the member for Morayfield's media release, courts would 'get more powers allowing them to require fitting of electronic monitoring devices'—empowering the courts to deal with young offenders. What a noble thing to do, but it was a flop. According to the explanatory notes for this bill, the 'uptake was low'. In fact, eight of these young offenders have been fitted with a GPS monitoring bracelet.

'Low' is an understatement. According to former police commissioner Bob Atkinson, there was 'insufficient evidence and data from this review or other comparable jurisdictions to make definitive, evidence-based conclusions'. That is not true according to the explanatory notes which suggest that 'there are some penalties associated with electronic monitoring'. Clearly, the only benefit was to offenders who could, and still can, basically decide not to be subject to monitoring by refusing to charge the device. Again, the rights of the offender outweigh the rights of the victim.

Of course, I am referring to the amendment to the Bail Act. This is an amendment that I have advocated for repeatedly in this place. Those opposite said we wanted to reintroduce a former section of the Youth Justice Act—an accusation that was, and still is, completely baseless. It was in this House in April 2021 that I moved an amendment to omit section 29(2)(a) of the Bail Act. It was an amendment supported by all members on this side of the House. Every single member on the other side of the House voted against it, including the members for Thuringowa, Townsville and Mundingburra.

The three members on that side of the House who represent Townsville voted against it. It came as no surprise because, after all, the member for Townsville spoke against the breach of bail provision the very next day. The member for Thuringowa was vehemently opposed to breach of bail as an offence for juveniles. He spoke against it in this House in June 2020, July 2020, April 2021, May 2021, June 2021, March—

Mr HARPER: I rise to a point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker. I find the member's remarks offensive and I ask him to withdraw.

Mr LAST: I withdraw. He spoke against it in March 2022 and in May 2022, but on 8 March I guess the penny finally dropped for the member for Thuringowa when he posted on Facebook that he would support the proposed amendments.

Despite all his big words in this House, I guess the fact that charges for unlawful entry against juveniles have more than doubled in the northern police region under his watch finally hit home or maybe it was the fact that unlawful use of motor vehicle charges against juveniles has almost tripled. It is undeniably a backflip to speak against something seven times in this House and then back it publicly. Even the member for Thuringowa's backflip does not compare to the member for Morayfield's backflip. He not only voted against my amendment and now supports it but has copied my amendment word for word.

When it comes time for this bill to be voted on we will see the hypocrisy of the member for Thuringowa and the member for Morayfield etched in stone. We will also see that almost two years after they had the chance to do so they have finally put Queenslanders ahead of their own egos.

Mr HARPER: I rise to a point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker. Again, I find the member's remarks offensive and I ask him to withdraw.

Mr LAST: I withdraw. I will also be interested to see how members from the Far North vote on this bill because they too voted against my motion. They too have stood by while unlawful entry offences against juveniles in the far northern police region have double and unlawful use of a motor vehicle charges against juveniles have almost tripled.

I move on now to the amendments to the Criminal Code. While the amendments I have mentioned earlier feature a backflip, these amendments illustrate a perfect belly flop. It is the Premier who supposedly said that social media is now the media, and many would agree. As the use of social media and youth crime has increased, we have seen two distinct groups emerge on social media platforms. We have seen groups that advocate for victims and share information that may prevent someone from becoming a victim. They are the people who are welcomed with open arms by a community living in fear and the people derided by people like the member for Thuringowa who, ironically, uses social media to accuse them of dividing the community.

Then there is the second group. Make no mistake, these are offenders who gloat about their crimes and thrive on the pain felt by others. It is undeniable that for the victim of a crime being forced to relive that crime or to see someone boasting about it is a traumatic experience. I have spoken with many victims of crime who have seen the vehicle that they worked so hard to buy being driven erratically on the streets or set alight on social media. I have been contacted by people whose homes were broken into and who have seen the offenders post photos to social media wearing items stolen from their children's bedrooms. It is confronting and it is unnerving.

I note the amendment that advertising an offence will be considered a circumstance of aggravation, but I ask how this will be monitored. We have all heard of people being exposed to offensive and illegal material online. Right here in Queensland we have one of the world's leading groups in the fight against child pornography. Yet, despite the efforts of law enforcement throughout the world, this barbaric trade continues.

If the minister thinks that these young offenders are going to hand over the passwords to their social media accounts, he is sadly mistaken—not to mention the fact that these young offenders share phones between themselves at will. Recently we heard the Premier speak about giving police extra resources for intelligence gathering, including on social media, but just days later senior police admitted to needing to use overtime to facilitate high-visibility patrols in a Townsville shopping centre.

Let me be very clear: the LNP supports any action taken against offenders who choose to brag about their crimes. The question that needs to be answered, however, is how these laws will be enforced. The emotional and financial pain that young offenders have caused across this state justifies in itself these offenders being held to account. For years now the LNP has talked about consequences for action, and that is not just about locking offenders up.

Let us be very clear: there are offenders who after one interaction with police commit no further offences. There are offenders who go to detention and are rehabilitated. Then there are the tough nuts. It is well publicised that this group commit a disproportionately high number of offences. Just a few years ago this group was 10 per cent and now it is 17 per cent. Why? This government failed to implement consequences for actions.

In this House back in 2016 I shared the story of a young offender I had mentored at Cleveland. That person went on to become a valued member of our community. He got a job, had a family and bought a house. You can rehabilitate these young offenders, but as I said then—and I will repeat it now—you cannot rehabilitate these young offenders overnight. We also need to ensure community safety. The cold, hard facts as contained in the *Childrens Court Annual Report 2021-22* are that in that

year only six per cent of youth offenders who stole a vehicle went to detention and the average period of detention for offenders convicted of stealing a vehicle was—wait for it—3.6 months. That is right; 3.6 months. It defies logic to think that in under four months any system would be able to rehabilitate an offender convicted of stealing a vehicle, and these are not first-time offenders.

I remind members of the testimony of former police officer Geiszler to the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee hearing in Townsville in 2021. He said—

We are not talking about kids who have not been given a chance. As a police officer, I cautioned kids time and time again before I went to a power of arrest. Once they go before the court, they are then admonished and discharged once, twice or maybe three or four times before even a conviction is recorded.

The solution offered by those opposite, according to their advertising and media appearances, is to increase the maximum penalty for stealing a motor vehicle to 10 years or, with aggravating circumstances, to a maximum of 14 years. As the opposition revealed yesterday, that is simply not possible and it will remain impossible after this bill is passed. Let me explain why. Section 175(g) of the Youth Justice Act states—

- (g) order that the child be detained for a period not more than—
 - (i) if the court is not constituted by a judge—1 year; or
 - (ii) if the court is constituted by a judge and section 176 does not apply—the shorter period of the following—
 - (A) half the maximum term of imprisonment that an adult convicted of the offence could be ordered to serve;
 - (B) 5 years.

Section 176(2) states—

- (2) For a relevant offence other than a life offence, the court may order the child to be detained for a period not more than 7 years.

Hence, the amendments moved by this government and debated here today are flawed. It was this government that said they would increase the maximum penalty for unlawful use of a motor vehicle to 10 years—or 12 to 14 years with a circumstance of aggravation—but we now know that is not possible. If those opposite do not believe me, look up the sections in the Youth Justice Act which govern the terms of imprisonment a magistrate or a judge can impose. Even if found guilty of a crime—

Mr Crisafulli interjected.


Ms Fentiman interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Hart): Pause the clock. Attorney-General and Leader of the Opposition, you will not quarrel across the chamber.

Mr LAST: This should be called out for what it is. It is a sham, and the Premier and minister should hang their heads in shame at their attempt to mislead the Queensland public. They went out with this 10-point plan to get tough on juvenile crime in Queensland, and we now know it cannot work. The maximum penalty if you appear before the Magistrate's Court is one and if you are in a superior court, the District Court, it is seven, so the 10, 12 and 14 all of a sudden do not apply. We have already seen the Deputy Premier attack the judiciary, and Queenslanders would be right to think that by deliberately failing to amend other relevant sections of the Youth Justice Act and others this government is setting up the judiciary to be blamed for this government's failings when it comes to youth justice.

The LNP will not be opposing this bill; however, it is abundantly clear that it falls well short of what is required to address juvenile crime in this state. It is only right that we have asked questions, and it is only right that on behalf of the community and victims of crime we will call for improvements that benefit all Queenslanders. I look forward to hearing the minister address the concerns that I and others on this side of the House will raise. I mentioned earlier the importance of consequences for actions. This government is on notice from the people of Queensland, especially from victims of crime. For too long there has been inaction. For too long you have denied there is a problem. As a government it is your responsibility to ensure the safety of all Queenslanders, and if you fail to act the consequences will be felt by victims in the short term and by your government in October 2024.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Member for Burdekin, your comments will come through the chair, please—no 'you', no 'your'.

 **Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, Minister for Women and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence) (12.24 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Strengthening Community Safety Bill 2023. The amendments in the bill, along with our \$332 million investment into youth justice programs and police initiatives, send a clear message to all

Queenslanders that this government is committed to not only strengthening our laws by ensuring there are consequences for young offenders but also tackling the complex causes of youth crime. Because if we can prevent this crime from happening, that is how we best keep the community safe.

We are committed to reducing reoffending behaviour among children and to delivering evidence-based interventions that address a young person's individual risks and needs, because intervening early is proven to help break the cycle of reoffending. Last week the Queensland Sentencing and Advisory Council released a report examining the sentences of children under the age of 14. Significantly, since 2018 the number of children under 14 years who have been sentenced has decreased by 35 per cent. The continuing decline in young people being sentenced in the Childrens Court reflects the success of our diversionary options. There is, however, a small but high-impact number of young people who have ongoing contact with the criminal justice system, and youth justice resources must be targeted at these serious repeat offenders.

Strengthening our youth justice framework requires stronger bail laws, making it an offence for a child to breach a condition of their bail undertaking. This will mean that, like adults, children can be charged with an offence if they breach a condition of their bail and courts will be able to impose a penalty, including a detention order, for a child convicted of that offence. If a child is not complying with their bail conditions and disengaging from court ordered support, that means there is now more opportunity to intervene early to ensure we can take action before the child reoffends.

The bill increases the maximum penalty for the offence of unlawful use and possession of a motor vehicle, aircraft or vessel from seven to 10 years imprisonment. The bill also proposes the creation of a new circumstance of aggravation for unlawful use, with the maximum penalty for these circumstances up to 14 years. I note there has been some criticism from those opposite that the maximum penalty for children is not the same as for adults. That has always been the case. I am not sure why the opposition is now suddenly surprised.

Mr Power: It's what's in the report.

Ms FENTIMAN: It is in the committee's report; I take the interjection. What this means is if there is serious aggravated offending for unlawful use of a motor vehicle—

Mr Crisafulli interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Leader of the Opposition will cease his interjection. Pause the clock. Members, we will have no cross-chamber arguments. I am going to start warning people.

Ms FENTIMAN: What this means is if there is serious aggravating offending it is now seven years for unlawful use of a motor vehicle. For robbery, if there is a weapon or they are in company, it is 10 years or more if it is particularly heinous. These are significant increases. Judges and magistrates are required to consider increases in the maximum penalty when determining the appropriate sentence. If those opposite were more interested in the legislation and what was in the committee report rather than going around talking about things that failed when they were in government like boot camps, maybe they would not be surprised. I would love to hear more about how they think bringing back boot camps would work.

The LNP have circulated amendments seeking to remove the principle that detention be a last resort. Let me be clear. This is a longstanding principle in place in every Australian state and territory and is part of international law. It does not mean that young people are never given detention. We just heard from the shadow police minister about the Childrens Court and the sentences that they are giving. If those options are not considered suitable, then detention is ordered. The government is about targeting the small cohort of serious repeat offenders who commit serious crimes. We are requiring that, when the court sentences those serious repeat offenders, it must put victims centre and the primary consideration must be community protection and safety. That is what is going to get better outcomes.

We are also building on our \$800 million investment in responding to youth crime and tackling its complex causes. As the chair of the Economics and Governance Committee noted in his foreword—

... it is important to not see this Bill in isolation, but to recognise that a variety of other steps are being taken simultaneously.

We are funding a \$14.8 million fast-track sentencing pilot that will ensure faster finalisation of matters so young people are spending less time on remand and more time serving their sentences and completing programs.

Young people who are serious repeat offenders require specialist intensive and dedicated resources to manage their offending behaviour. Intensive case management has been purposefully designed to address these factors that impact on chronic juvenile offending. It is incredibly effective.


Last month the Nous Group released its evaluation of intensive case management and reported that: 40 per cent of children who completed their intensive case management have not reoffended at all—some for over three years; the six-month reoffending count was reduced by 51 per cent; and there was a reduction of 72 per cent in the proportion of crimes against another person. This is actually how we keep the community safe. We know it works, and that is why we have committed a further \$30 million to extend and expand intensive case management to priority locations.

It is also recognised that First Nations children and young people are over-represented in our system. We must continue to support investments into initiatives that promote community-led approaches and stronger links between the young person and the community. That is why we are investing \$5 million over two years to establish community-led place-based justice reinvestment that will address the upstream and underlying causes of youth crime.

We are also providing funding of \$15 million over two years to be allocated to support place-based initiatives targeting prevention, early intervention, rehabilitation and reintegration. Other initiatives include: Street University, which provides a safe space for young people to engage in vocational and educational workshops; Midnight Basketball, which gives young people the opportunity to spend their Friday nights in a healthy, safe and fun environment; and On Country, a program that allows young people to spend time with elders and traditional owners to rebuild cultural knowledge.

The Palaszczuk government also recognises that being a victim of crime can be incredibly traumatic and life altering, and that is why the Premier has announced \$9 million of additional funding to Victims Assist. This will ensure that victims of violent crimes receive timely assistance and support to help them recover from the physical and psychological impacts of crime and to make sure they feel heard and supported in the criminal justice system. I acknowledge the committee's comments in the report that the Victims of Crime Assistance Act should be reviewed with a view to considering enhancements to the act. As the Premier has announced today, we will be accepting those comments and referring that to the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee.

The Palaszczuk government is committed to supporting victims and is currently working with relevant stakeholders to implement a victims commissioner. This was a recommendation from the Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce, and I am looking forward to continuing those discussions with the community and stakeholders about establishing a victims commissioner here in Queensland. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr CRISAFULLI** (Broadwater—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (12.33 pm): For years Queenslanders have told their stories about youth crime and for years we have listened. We have listened to mums tell stories about having to try to ask their child to go to bed when they know that in the period leading up to that someone had been in their sacred space. We have listened to stories from tradies who have told what it is like to go to the front yard of their property and find the vehicle they need to make a living is not there because it was stolen overnight, and we have heard about the complications that come from not being able to earn a living, the rigmarole with insurance, the rising premiums and the inability to get to their next job. We have listened to small business owners—some of whom have been destroyed six times in two months—and the costs that come with having to have the disconnection, with their casual staff member not getting a shift and then they cannot provide for their family, and the rising cost of insurance to try to keep their business afloat. We have listened to parents and grandparents who have told us what losing a loved one is like.

I have been at events and listened to Queenslanders have an argument about whether the smart move is to hide their keys under their pillow so that maybe the person who is going to break into their home does not find them and moves on or whether the smart move is to leave their keys at the front door so the offender does not walk past their child who is asleep in the front room. They are the conversations that Queenslanders are having right now.

When we have listened to the government, the only thing we have heard is either it is a complex issue or it is happening everywhere. That is cold comfort to the person who had it happen to them, and there are thousands of them. It is happening in numbers that we have never seen before and there is a level of anger that we have never seen before. They want action and they deserve it. This government have repeatedly stonewalled every suggestion that has been put forward—every suggestion.

Then the rhetoric changed on Boxing Day—not because their heart was in it but because the community stood up as one and said 'Enough.' Only then did we hear anything about the need for stronger laws. However, it turns out this was not about the government doing what the community wanted; it was about relieving a political issue, and what we read in the greens proves that. Not since the asset sales of over a decade ago has a cabinet torn itself apart on an issue as much as it has on this one—

Ms Boyd interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Hart): Member for Pine Rivers!

Mr CRISAFULLI:—to the point that policy is being done on a trade-off.

Ms Boyd interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member for Pine Rivers is warned under the standing orders.

Mr CRISAFULLI: 'We'll give you breach of bail if you're willing to give us weakening drug laws.' That is what governing in this state has got to. It is transactional governance.

The proof is on breach of bail. For two years, a conga line of ministers lined up to say that breach of bail would never be on their agenda—the police minister, the Attorney, the Deputy Premier, the Premier. The one I feel most sorry for is the tourism minister who was wound up and set up the day before they caved like cannon fodder. Before the deal was done with the trade-off in cabinet, he got sent out like cannon fodder. The police minister said that the suggestion our shadow police minister put forward would not work, but then it was copied word for word. We were talking about breach of bail and we were talking about amending the Bail Act, which is word for word what the government is finally doing.

It does not change the fact that when we look in the greens we see that this is not an issue that the government believe in in their hearts; this is an issue the government want to somehow limp across the line with and convince Queenslanders they have listened. I am going to ask: has the Premier listened to the Queensland victims like we have? Has the Premier listened to the children who are scared to sleep, the tradies who cannot earn a living because their cars are gone, the husbands who have lost wives, the grandparents who have buried unborn children? We have listened to them. We have listened to all of them, and we have given them a voice and we are going to continue to give them a voice.

At the centrepiece of this legislation is this so-called lifting of maximum penalties. There is nothing that is changing in here at all. The question is pretty simple. What did the Premier mean when she said on 27 December, 'Violent juvenile car thieves will face 14 years jail'? That is not the case. That is just not the case. The Premier went missing in January when Queenslanders needed her and she has missed the mark with these laws. They are not even the laws that she promised Queenslanders. They are not—read them! There is a disconnect in what the government is saying in its media release and then what it is trying to dog whistle to other groups and what is in this legislation.

Here are some questions. How many repeat offenders will be sentenced to 10 years jail for car theft? How many will be sentenced to 14 years for offences committed at night? How many? How many engine immobilisers will be fitted by this time next year? How many young offenders aged between 15 and 16 years will be fitted with GPS trackers, because the legislation looks very similar to the one that has only delivered a handful so far? When will the two new youth detention centres open? When will kids no longer spend time in watch houses for weeks on end? When will we know the government's plan to overhaul early intervention? There are some questions that the Premier could outline in her contribution. I look forward to the Premier's contribution in this regard.

I am going to say one thing really clearly: the opposition is going to continue to fight for a balance when it comes to fixing the youth crime epidemic gripping this state. It looks like this: consequences for action, unshackling the judiciary and removing detention as a last resort, and gold standard early intervention. Right now Queenslanders are being failed at all ends of the Youth Justice Act. The kids who are holding a knife at someone's door and who are ramming police are being failed with the weak laws. But so, too, we are failing the pipeline of future crims by not getting in early and doing the proper gold standard early intervention that they deserve.

When the Premier talks about millions of dollars and the government—

Mr Harper interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Hart): Pause the clock. Member for Thuringowa, you have had a good run. You are now warned under the standing orders.

Mr CRISAFULLI: Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. I can assure you that 10 minutes is a special time. I will not be taking interjections from the member for Thuringowa, I can assure you, because the member for Thuringowa—

Mr Harper: I must be getting under your—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Member for Thuringowa, I am sure I just heard an interjection from you. You can leave the chamber for an hour. Sorry, hang on: member are you taking the blame for that?

Mr SULLIVAN: Yes.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I will take your word for it for the minute. Leader of the Opposition, you have the call. I am watching.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hold on. Hold fire. Member for Thuringowa, did you make an interjection then?

Mr HARPER: No.

Mr CRISAFULLI: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I believe the member for Thuringowa did make an interjection. I am going to be writing to the Speaker to review the tape because I do believe the member for Thuringowa not only made an interjection but does not have the ticker to—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Leader of the Opposition.

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

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hold fire, members! Member for Thuringowa, you have a point of order?

Mr HARPER: Yes. I consider the member's contribution and words just then offensive and I ask him to withdraw.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Members, hold fire for a second. Leader of the Opposition, two things: I ask you to withdraw the unparliamentary language and, two, the member has asked you to withdraw.

Mr CRISAFULLI: I withdraw on both fronts. Mr Deputy Speaker—


Mr Bailey interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Pause the clock. I had just given direction to the chamber. Given that you are acting leader of the House, I will give you one chance.

Mr CRISAFULLI: Queenslanders deserve action. Queenslanders deserve the government to listen to them. Queenslanders do not deserve to be some sort of pawns in a political game of trade-offs between different factions of a government at war with itself, a government whose backbenchers will sign a petition about breach of bail and then squirm out of it, a government whose backbenchers will say they are coming to parliament to take on the very laws that the government will be implementing, and a government whose own ministers are prepared to leak against the police minister for bringing PowerPoints into a cabinet meeting.

That is where we have got to in Queensland. We have got to the stage in Queensland where everything is about management of the media. This government has stopped listening. This government no longer sees the issue as an issue of law and order; they see it as a political issue because they are in survival mode. Do you know who else is in survival mode? Queenslanders—Queenslanders who just want to know that when they go to bed at night they have the right not to have someone climbing over the top of their children's beds, Queenslanders who have the right to know that the ute they worked hard for in order to get up in the morning to go and earn a living to keep a roof over their head might be there, Queenslanders who are paying higher insurance premiums, and Queenslanders who have never felt more unsafe because of the lazy government.

(Time expired)

 **Hon. LM LINARD** (Nudgee—ALP) (Minister for Children and Youth Justice and Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (12.45 pm): Plenty of slogans but no real solutions from those opposite. All politics, no plan, no policies; always just politics—

Mrs Frecklington interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Member for Nanango, return to your seat, thank you.

Ms LINARD: I rise to speak in support of the Strengthening Community Safety Bill. I want to thank the Economics and Governance Committee for its examination of this bill and recommendations that it be passed. I also thank the 87 members of the public and key stakeholders who made submissions, and all witnesses who presented to the committee at its public hearings across the state. Submitters and witnesses shared views across the spectrum, demonstrating once again the complex nature of youth offending and the divergent views from the community on this matter.

From the outset, as I always do, I want to acknowledge the impact youth offending has on its victims. Whether the impacts are financial, physical, psychological or even result in the tragic loss of life of loved ones, these impacts can be significant and lifelong. That is why we are bringing forward the measures in this bill, to protect the community and tackle the behaviour of the small cohort of serious repeat offenders.

Overall, we know that the number of young people offending is decreasing; it is the lowest it has been for a decade. In fact, we have seen a 37 per cent reduction in the number of 10- to 16-year-old offenders over the past 10 years. While this is encouraging, it is of little comfort to Queenslanders personally affected by youth crime. This reduction in the number of young people offending affirms our approach to youth justice under the Working Together Changing the Story: Youth Justice Strategy. It demonstrates that the government's significant investment of \$1.2 billion in services and programs delivered across government to prevent and address offending and reoffending is having an impact.

We have also seen an increase in the number of serious repeat offenders. These offenders represent 17 per cent of distinct young people with a proven offence, which has increased. It is this cohort that is committing a large number of offences, and these offences can be serious and sometimes violent. Community safety is paramount and must be any government's first consideration. We have listened to the community and are taking tougher, targeted action at the serious repeat offenders to hold them accountable for their offending behaviour.

The bill includes a suite of new measures to break the cycle of offending by serious repeat offenders and increase community safety. These measures include amending the Criminal Code to increase the maximum sentence for unlawful use of motor vehicle offences and introducing new circumstances of aggravation.

The bill also includes measures to strengthen the youth justice bail framework, including: making breaching a condition of bail a criminal offence; extending and expanding the electronic monitoring trial; clarifying that the police are not required to consider alternatives to arrest if a child on bail for a prescribed indictable offence or certain domestic violence offences has contravened a bail condition; and expanding the offences to which the current presumption against bail provisions apply.

In relation to strengthening the current youth justice sentencing framework, the bill includes provisions which: require the courts to take into account a young person's previous bail history when sentencing; empower a court to declare a child offender a serious repeat offender to enable considerations such as community safety to be paramount when sentencing; enable conditional release orders to operate for six months instead of the current three; and ensure certain child offenders are more likely to serve their suspended term of detention if they breach their conditional release orders.

The bill also ensures the continuation of multiagency collaborative panels which provide intensive case management for young people identified as high risk or requiring a collaborative response. Multiagency collaborative panels currently function in 18 locations with a specific emphasis on addressing the needs of serious repeat young offenders. These panels coordinate access for young people to services such as mental health, drug and alcohol programs, reconnecting with school and school engagement support, cultural connections, and connecting with doctors and allied health providers. They have proven effective in keeping the community safe by disrupting offending behaviour and coordinating cross-agency wraparound services.

We know that legislation alone will not solve the issues we are facing with serious repeat offenders. Youth crime is complex and requires a multifaceted approach, early intervention and the delivery of support to young people and their families. Interventions that are proven to reduce contact with the youth justice system and reoffending rates and provide opportunities for young people to turn their lives around are vital. That is why, alongside these legislative reforms, the government is investing an additional \$100 million in existing and new diversion and rehabilitation services. These programs and services are evidence based and we know they achieve results. The highly effective joint Queensland Police Service and youth justice co-responder teams are being expanded to Mount Isa, Hervey Bay, Darling Downs, South Brisbane and Ipswich. This initiative has already completed 45,000 engagements with young people, including checking they are complying with bail and ensuring they are accessing the right services.

Our government is investing an additional \$18 million to expand intensive case management. This service targets serious repeat offenders aged 13 to 17 and their families. The service aims to reduce the frequency and severity of offending by working with families to address risks such as substance abuse and disengagement from education. Case managers work intensively with a small number of serious repeat offenders who undertake cognitive behavioural therapy sessions each week and family sessions and youth work which is ongoing for about nine months.

The program provides individual sessions for young people to both help them understand and develop skills to change their behaviour and assist family and parents to develop stronger parenting skills and interventions. The intensive case management program is seeing real results with a 51 per cent reduction in offending frequency and a 72 per cent reduction in the severity of offending. The program is currently funded to work with 134 young people. It will be expanded to an additional 180 young people and families across Queensland.

We are investing \$25 million in intensive bail support for young people and families. These services provide support to high-risk young people on bail and their families, practical assistance to ensure young people comply with bail to improve stability and safety at the home so that they are not getting involved in reoffending. The initiative is currently available in Brisbane North, Caboolture, Redcliffe, Gold Coast, Logan and Townsville and will be expanded to Toowoomba and other locations. We are investing a further \$4.1 million in On Country programs to provide cultural rehabilitation services for First Nations young people including supervision by on-country elders.

We are also continuing to invest in early intervention community-based initiatives targeting at-risk young people. We will invest in Townsville's Street University to provide—

Mr Harper: Hear, hear!

Ms LINARD: I acknowledge the member's interjection. He was a very strong advocate for this. It will provide a safe space for young people aged 12 to 25 years to engage—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Hart): Pause the clock. Member for Thuringowa, I remind you that you are on a warning.


Ms LINARD: We will work with 12- to 25-year-olds to engage in vocational and education workshops, drug and alcohol treatment services, life skills training and mentoring with pathways to employment because we know the community wants to see young people involved in education and employment; it is the most powerful way to stop offending and reoffending and keep the community safe.

The government also recognises the need to plan for future detention centre infrastructure, and we have committed to building two new centres in Queensland. My department is committed to strengthening our research and evaluation approach to build evidence that can directly inform decision-making, contribute to effective policy and practice, and understand how our youth justice strategy and action plans are achieving intended outcomes. The department regularly undertakes reviews to identify what is working, who it is working for and when we need to evolve our program evaluations.

Our government's top priority is community safety. All Queenslanders have the right to feel safe and that is what this bill is about. Our investment in evidence-based programs and services will help to stop young offenders from becoming repeat offenders and keep the community safe.

I again acknowledge the voices of victims in bringing about these reforms and the ongoing expertise and partnership of organisations such as PeakCare Queensland, Youth Advocacy Centre, Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Protection Peak and the Australian Workers' Union and Together Queensland, who represent the front line in my agency in delivering the evidence-based initiatives of frontline programs I have spoken about today.

I would like to finish by acknowledging all who work so tirelessly in my department in this important policy and service delivery space and thank them for their service to community safety and breaking the cycle of offending. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr NICHOLLS (Clayfield—LNP) (12.55 pm):** This arrogant and out-of-touch Labor government is taking Queenslanders for granted. Weak on crime and hopeless on the causes of youth crime, this Labor government is failing Queensland families in so many ways. It is increasing the cost of living with an ever-expanding list of new taxes like the patients tax it tried to impose on GPs, which would have made a visit to the GP more expensive, the renters tax it backflipped on or the punters tax it imposed on the simple pleasure of putting a bet on a race.

Mr BAILEY: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. Clearly the member is not addressing the bill before the House. I ask him to come back to what we are actually debating.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Hart): I ask you to return to the long title of the bill.

Mr NICHOLLS: Indeed. When it comes to youth justice Labor failures are legendary, like its failures to provide adequate medical and health services, including maternity units, in regional and remote Queensland where it is also failing Queenslanders, or the secrecy and confusion over the

ever-expanding list of wasteful and expensive over-budget projects. Over and above these and all the other failures that I have mentioned, the out-of-touch Labor government is failing in its most basic and fundamental obligation to protect Queensland families and businesses from the scourge of crime being experienced in towns and cities the length and breadth of Queensland.

It is a failure that started in 2016 with the systemic weakening of LNP laws designed to protect Queenslanders—and they were working. Statistics prove that there are far more young offenders because of the ALP government's changes. The Government Statistician's 2019-20 report highlights the total number of young offenders since 2020, and it is revealing. In 2011-12, the first year of an LNP government, the reduction in young offenders was 175 and every year thereafter till 2014-15 the number of young offenders decreased. However, here it is, the first year of the Labor government; the number of young offenders increased by 393. It reached a peak in 2018-19 of 3,498 and in 2020-21 there was a total of 9,749 offenders; that is almost 2½ thousand more than the 2014-15 year. I table a chart showing just how abject Labor's failure has been.

Tabled paper: Document, undated, titled 'Under Labor youth criminal offences are soaring: Queenslanders deserve better' [\[288\]](#).

Of the offences, 45.8 per cent were for robbery, unlawful entry and theft and deception. These figures put the sword to the Premier's claim this morning about youth justice. Under the LNP the laws were working and crime was down. Under Labor crime is up. It is a failure that all too sadly has led to far too many deaths and injuries for both victims and young people. There is a 17 per cent rate of recidivism, up from 10 per cent a year ago—and we just heard the youth justice minister brush over the top of it as if it was a nothing. That is not a seven per cent increase; that is a 70 per cent increase in youth justice recidivist offenders since June 2022 after the government's last attempt in 2021 to address youth crime. It was after they made those changes.


Over the past 12 months, car thefts in Townsville totalled 1,181 and in Cairns they totalled 1,182. That is 100 cars a month—three a day—being stolen in each of those two cities. In my own electorate of Clayfield, juvenile offending has spiked from just over 210 offences each month, which is bad enough, in August, September and October 2022 to over 320 per month in November and December with a slight reduction in January 2023. It is no wonder more than 2,000 people, frustrated with this Labor government's failures, signed an e-petition that I sponsored calling for breach of bail to be an offence—a petition promoted on the local community Facebook page and presented just this morning. The experience is similar in the youth justice minister's electorate of Nudgee, which is just next door to mine.

Debate, on motion of Mr Nicholls, adjourned.

Sitting suspended from 1.00 pm to 2.00 pm.

MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST

North-West Queensland, Weather Events; Cost of Living

 **Mr CRISAFULLI** (Broadwater—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (2.00 pm): I want to use my contribution today to highlight the significant and serious situation that is unfolding in parts of our state's remote area. I refer to areas in the Far North, the north-west and the Gulf Country and the reports of rainfall approaching a metre in the month of March alone. This has resulted in scenes the community believe are unprecedented—damage to homes and businesses, the loss of livestock and reports of riverbanks breaking in places that locals have not seen before. I want this House to know that we are serious about this part of the state and we believe that they are great Queenslanders who need our help. They need our help in spirit, and they will need our help in the weeks and months ahead.

We have seen the isolation of these communities for an extended period of time. In a moment I will recount some of the conversations I have had with the mayors in that local area. Shortly, our shadow minister for disaster recovery, the member for Warrego, will make a contribution about some of her findings in that area. I want Queenslanders to know just how serious the situation is. It could be weeks before evacuated residents can return home. It could be months before roads are open again.

I will relate some of the conversations with and feedback received from mayors. For the mayor of Burke, Ernie Camp, it is very personal because he, like many of his community, is a victim of the flooding. Ernie, along with his family, has been seriously impacted. I know that the community will be rallying behind him personally as he seeks to rebuild his shire. One dark cloud he is dealing with at the moment is the level of vitriol from a small amount of people who are using social media channels during his shire's darkest hour. My message to those people is to cut it out. Now is not the time for people to be engaging in keyboard warfare. Now is the time to bandy together; now is the time to be united and

to ask the rest of Queensland to take their problem seriously. Playing one resident off against another and attacking the decision-makers in the community certainly will not achieve that. We want the mayor and his community to know that we stand shoulder to shoulder with them in their hour of need.

I have spoken to the mayor of Doomadgee, Jason Ned. That community has been isolated for some time. I know that the member for Traeger visited there the other day to express his concerns about the lack of access for that community. We share those concerns and we seek to advocate on their behalf.

I want to take the opportunity to explain how much isolation means to these communities and the real impacts on their cost of living through the eyes of the mayor of Carpentaria shire, Jack Bawden. Many of their communities have not reopened since 5 January—that is over two months. The incredible rain they are experiencing now is just the latest blow after two months of isolation. In the mayor's words, this impacts them every day. It impacts their ability to access goods and services, and the cost of freight coming into that community is massive. It severely impacts any ability for them to do well out of tourism. I am talking about places like Karumba and Normanton, which have been cut off since the start of the year. He made the point to me that if this were to happen in a more populated area there would be truckloads of people there looking to give moral and financial assistance, and he is right. We need to let them know that just because they are remote it does not mean they do not count. To the contrary, they certainly matter.

The mayor's comments about the cost of living come at a time when the issue has never been more important for Queenslanders. In a moment, the deputy leader is going to make a contribution around the blowouts in infrastructure costs, the shambolic nature of what we are seeing unfold when it comes to Olympics infrastructure and the dysfunctionality in what has become a very tired third-term government, but we have to do it through the prism of what that means to Queenslanders and the costs they are experiencing.

In recent weeks and months, the desperation of everyday Queenslanders regarding their cost of living has reached levels the likes of which we have not seen before. Sadly, it is only going to get worse. The level of government that can do most to ease the cost of living for people is the state government. It is the state government that can do the most to make things affordable for Queenslanders. The No. 1 cost that a Queenslanders experiences every day is either the rent they pay or the repayments they make on their house. Housing supply—the delivery of infrastructure, partnerships with council, good planning, unlocking land opportunity, supplying social housing for the least fortunate, partnering with the community housing sector and making sure there is available stock—rests with the state government. When state governments cannot plan and deliver, it creates a feeding frenzy, particularly at the lower end of the market, and everyday Queenslanders pay the price.

Queenslanders want their electricity to be affordable, reliable and sustainable. They want to know that the assets they own are well maintained and can lower costs for them. They want to know that the government is serious about doing what it can.

Today, to see the Premier completely and utterly oblivious about the cost of insurance and what it means to Queenslanders was troubling at best. It is always someone else's fault: 'It's happening somewhere else'; 'It's complex'; 'I'd love to get onto it but I don't have the time'; 'We'll look into it: we'll have an inquiry, an investigation'; 'I'll ask the minister about that'; 'I have to go.' There is always a reason the Premier cannot answer something. Householders do not have that ability. When the bill's due date comes, they are not able to defer it and say, 'Other households have big bills', 'It's a very complex issue, paying these bills' or 'The neighbour ran a lead from my yard to run their hedge trimmer.' They do not have the ability to blame others.

The cost of living is creeping up on people. We have spoken with Queenslanders who a year ago bought a block of land for their dream home but now cannot obtain a loan to build that home. That means they are paying rent where they are, paying repayments on a block of land, paying rates and paying insurance where they are, and they are unable to take the step of building their dream home.

Businesses talk to me about how tough it is at the moment with all of the rising costs. The cherry on the cake is smashed windows, stolen goods or an inability to attract staff because there are no houses. These are issues that Queenslanders are talking about and they are talking about it across the state.

In a moment the shadow health minister will talk about this government's culture when it comes to not wanting to reveal things publicly. What we have seen with the QAS dispatch system and a failure for, firstly, the Premier to be properly briefed about it and, secondly, the minister to confess it shows the culture that is permeating this government, but this government has its priorities warped and

increasingly Queenslanders are working that out. The priorities that Queenslanders want to see are an economy where small and family businesses and their staff can get ahead. They want service delivery so that when they pick up the phone an ambo can arrive and they are not stuck at the end of a ramp because of a hospital crisis, poor planning or poor resourcing. They want to know that the police can turn up when they need them, that there are the police that have been promised and that they have the laws to back them up. They want to know that the government values integrity, openness and transparency and they want to know that their cost-of-living pressures matter to the government.

(Time expired)

Leader of the Opposition, Performance



Hon. CR DICK (Woodridge—ALP) (Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment) (2.10 pm): This afternoon once again, yet again, we have heard from the Leader of the Opposition, and what have we heard from him? No plan for Queensland. What about the nauseating contribution about the costs of living in Queensland from the people who jacked up the costs of living on Queenslanders as soon as they got into government? Those opposite took a billion dollars out of the pockets of Queenslanders by jacking up stamp duty on insurance—insurance on your car, insurance on your home. They could not wait to steal money out of the pockets of Queenslanders when they were in government. It was \$990 million in the first budget that the member for Broadwater signed off on.

What else did those opposite do in that budget? Cut concessions to seniors. Remember that? On 3 June 2012 they took the concessions away and two days later they flipped and they restored them, because that is what they think about costs of living—taking money when they can and hurting the most vulnerable elderly in the community, because that is what the LNP does. The moral bankruptcy of the Leader of the Opposition to come in here and lecture about the costs of living is nauseating. We saw it again last week when he embarrassed himself in a campaign against an issue that did not even exist. So desperate is he without any plan or without any idea, there he was in Bundaberg running a campaign against something that did not even exist. No wonder the member for Burnett is looking down at his desk. The regional payroll tax has been in every Labor budget since 2019 when it was introduced by my predecessor Jackie Trad.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr DICK: Imagine that the Leader of the Opposition is so out of ideas that he is now advocating for measures introduced by Jackie Trad! What a sickening double standard when he leads the party that did a dirty deal and elected a Greens political party member for South Brisbane, and that was all the doing of the LNP's—

Mr SPEAKER: Sorry, Treasurer, to interrupt you. Member for Southern Downs, your voice is loud. Your interjections are not being taken. You are warned under the standing orders. Members to my left, I am having difficulty hearing the Treasurer.

Mr DICK: It is a total embarrassment for the Leader of the Opposition to be traipsing around Queensland advocating for Jackie Trad measures that are already in place. It is bizarre. His backbench does not understand the tactic.

Mr Janetzki interjected.

Mr DICK: The media is confused.

Mr Janetzki interjected.

Mr DICK: The people of Queensland have no idea what he is on about.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Toowoomba South!

Mr DICK: If you want to have a go, member for Toowoomba South, get on the speaking list. It is easy from the cheap seats. What about the member for Toowoomba South? What about him not backing the coal royalties? Indiscriminate, he called them. Offensive, he called them. Why is he doing that? Because he wants to cut them. This from a bloke who would benefit from coal royalties going to his own community to build a new hospital in Toowoomba, and yet he will not support them and is undermining them. In the pocket of their donors from the mining lobby: that is where they are—in the pocket of the mining lobby that pays the bills for the member for Toowoomba South and the Leader of the Opposition.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr DICK: I feel sorry for the member for Toowoomba South. Forget upgrades in Cairns, Townsville, Rockhampton, Hervey Bay, Sarina—all cancelled! Forget the hospital in Moranbah. They will all be gone—

Mr Crisafulli interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Leader of the Opposition, cease your interjections.

Mr DICK:—because when they cut royalties, when they cut revenue, what do they have to do? They have to cut jobs, services and infrastructure because that is their style. What a sad story—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Treasurer, apologies. Members to my left, I am obviously not impacting enough on you today. I can start listing names off—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: I can start rattling names off or you can start heeding my calls to have some order in the House. The choice is yours. Run the gauntlet.

Mr DICK: What a sad story for the member for Toowoomba South. He lost the campaign on regional payroll tax discount. He lost the deputy leadership. Now he is going to lose his new hospital in Toowoomba because he will not support progressive coal royalties but instead wants to give it to the mining lobby. That is what he wants to do. The member for Broadwater and the member for Toowoomba South and the LNP care nothing about regional Queensland. That is just the truth and that is no surprise.

Mr Crisafulli interjected.


Mr DICK: The only surprise is how willing—

Mr SPEAKER: Leader of the Opposition!

Mr DICK:—they are to show their willingness to cut and cut deep across the state.

Mr SPEAKER: Before calling our next speaker, Leader of the Opposition, four times you managed to directly address the person on their feet and I have given you some guidance. You are warned under the standing orders. Before anyone gets the idea to fill in the gap, people will be named.

Palaszczuk Labor Government, Performance

 **Mr BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (2.16 pm): The Deputy Premier let the cat out of the bag last week: there will be no independent Olympic delivery authority. They were taking it in-house to his own director-general who, incidentally, they have just appointed the Acting Coordinator-General. Funny about that. Who is it? Mike Kaiser—former Labor Party member and electoral fraudster, interestingly. The Premier tried to wash it all up today by saying, ‘There’s going to be this authority and all the other politicians are going to be involved in it.’ She said that Deloitte has done a report on it. Could members imagine the Queensland government’s instructions to Deloitte when it said, ‘We need advice. Can you advise how we can break this promise of having a body that’s not quite so independent? How can we include a red carpet coordinator in this body? How can the Premier maintain total control but still be perceived as independent of this body?’

The Deputy Premier said that they will deliver the infrastructure like they always have. That should send shivers down the spines of every Queensland taxpayer: Cross River Rail, \$5.4 billion to \$8 billion; Coomera Connector, \$600 million blowout; Gold Coast Light Rail, \$500 million blowout; Wellcamp—aka ‘Wastecamp’—\$220 million. The Deputy Premier says, ‘We’ll do the Olympic infrastructure just like we’ve done every other infrastructure.’ Blowout after blowout; that is what this government does. Even though the Prime Minister signed the deal he capped its funding, which means not even Albo wants to fund the blowouts. Albo does not even trust this state Labor government to deliver these infrastructure items.


This morning the Premier said that the state is best placed to build the infrastructure. On what planet does this Premier live? Really? She announced that the Gabba would cost \$1 billion a year and a half ago; it has now blown out to \$2.7 billion. The Premier was asked why. She said, ‘Commodity prices.’ She could not explain the commodity prices. Seriously? A 170 per cent increase and the Premier cannot explain it. Better still, yesterday the member for Burleigh asked the Auditor-General in a public hearing in this very chamber: ‘Auditor-General, can you please advise about the \$1 billion initial Gabba development Olympic infrastructure and the business case?’ The Auditor-General said, ‘Oh, there was no business case. There was just a media release from the government’—no business case, just a media release issued by the government! This is how they are planning it. The Labor government

has no concept of budget blowouts and how it impacts on Queenslanders' household budgets. People cannot afford to put food on the table, put fuel in their car or pay their mortgage, yet this government continues to spend money like drunken sailors. It is disgraceful. There must be openness and transparency with this Olympics expenditure.

This morning when I asked the Premier who will chair this body she said, 'Not you!' Well, guess what? I do not want to because we on this side know that the Olympic and Paralympic Games is not about our egos. It is not about the politicians, it is about the people of Queensland. That is why we want it to be an independent body, not through the eyes of the Premier who wants total control. We all saw the front page of the paper the other day: 'Hands off my Olympics'. I have a message for the Premier: this is not your Olympics, this is not the Labor government's Olympics, it is the Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games. It is there for all Queenslanders, not to stroke the ego of an arrogant Premier who thinks this is all about her. The 2032 Olympics will now not be known as the 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games, they will forever be known as the 'AAA Games'—the 'All About Anna Games'. Premier Anastacia Palaszczuk will not let an independent body deliver this infrastructure because she does not want to give up control over the expenditure.

We see the dysfunction in the government in the rebellious backbenchers: the Chief Government Whip, the member for Mansfield, and the member for Nicklin attacking the government on RI in schools, despite what the education minister said. Then the member for Cooper put in a submission on the youth crime bill, not even supporting breach of bail. This government is a rabble. The backbenchers are rebelling because the Premier said under her government no backbencher has any prospect of promotion. Looking at them I can understand why. I completely agree with the Premier on that, but I do not agree with not having an independent body to deliver the infrastructure for the Olympics.

International Women's Day; Queensland Women's Week

 **Mrs MULLEN** (Jordan—ALP) (2.22 pm): Last week we celebrated International Women's Day and Queensland Women's Week. It is always a wonderful opportunity to showcase the amazing Queensland women we have in our state, particularly those leading the way in business and trade. As the assistant minister for Treasury I have been working with our Trade and Investment Queensland team on highlighting some of the individual companies that are exporting their products and services to the world whilst creating good jobs for hardworking Queenslanders.

Last week I set TIQ a challenge. As we celebrated Queensland Women's Week, I sought out Queensland companies that were founded or led by Queensland women and I was not left disappointed. In two days, we visited nine amazing companies in South-East Queensland alone. The legal technology platform company Lawcadia is expanding into the UK under the leadership of Sacha Kirk. I met with Theodora Le Souquet, who is the director of Canara Technology, a recognised leader in the emerging field of predictive biometrics. Morlife, one of Australia's leading health food supplement companies, led by Cheryl Stewart, recently signed a superfood export deal with Cosco Korea. The amazing Deann Thomson, who is the founder of Diego's Authentic Foods—Queensland's only Australian-owned manufacturer of corn and flour tortillas—is now exporting Mexican products to Asia and the Middle East. Alison Atia, the creator of the incredible skincare range Skin 02—loved by a number of Hollywood celebrities—has entered several competitive markets in Korea, India, the UK and Gulf countries. I also met with the inspiring Dr Cori Stewart from the Advanced Robotics for Manufacturing Hub in Northgate; Joanne Barber, chief operating officer of Future Feed; and Dr Chamindika Konara, general manager of Qlicksmart.

I simply do not have time to cover all of the amazing companies I was able to visit and the inspiring women who lead them, but what is very clear is that Queensland has and continues to be an outward looking, export oriented state. In 2022 Queensland's exports hit \$137.2 billion, the largest ever calendar year total, but we are not resting on our laurels and we know the 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games will provide our state with one of the best opportunities in a lifetime to capitalise on significant international investment and greater export reach. That is why our government is investing an additional \$150 million over the next decade to deliver a new 10-year trade and investment strategy. This strategy will ensure Trade and Investment Queensland can continue to support our exporters to reach new markets and boost sales where they are already trading, as well as attract more overseas investment into Queensland, creating jobs and opportunities.


Why are these visits so important? Firstly, the truth is that every time the LNP talk down our state and our economy, they paint a negative narrative. When they do not offer any new ideas or plans for the future except to cut, sack and sell and when they attack our hardworking public servants, this impacts business confidence and creates a harmful impression of Queensland, both nationally and

internationally. This is why I will continue to visit amazing companies across Queensland, particularly in areas like the Gold Coast, Toowoomba and the Sunshine Coast, because businesses in LNP electorates deserve to know that the Palaszczuk government has their best interests at heart. A dynamic and stable economy, a pro-business environment and advanced infrastructure continue to offer the best climate to expand and grow jobs and prosperity across this great state.

Secondly, as a government we support women in our state, not by offering lip-service but real support. We want them to succeed in whatever industry or sector they choose to work in or pursue. This includes politics. The Leader of the Opposition has made it clear he is putting everything on the line to boost the diversity of his party room. He suggested he would be held accountable if party members failed to back what he was calling for. What is he calling for? He wants seven new women in his parliamentary team. Seven! Not eight, not 10, seven. That is it, people. The LNP state director has said people were banging down the door to run, but those seven women better get in quick before that door shuts.

An article in the *Australian* in January would suggest that the grassroots LNP members in the seat of Caloundra did not seem to get the Crisafulli everything-on-the-line memo. It speaks of preselection drama, massive disquiet on the gender push, a major test of Mr Crisafulli's leadership, and chaos if the Leader of the Opposition intervenes, with one LNP source indicating it is going to be a—I cannot say that, that is really unparliamentary. How will the Leader of the Opposition achieve his grand seven-woman plan? He refuses to say whether he personally supports female quotas, instead he offers these inspiring words to women everywhere: 'We are a grassroots party and how we get to where we need to get to I'll let the members debate.' Wow! Happy International Women's Day, LNP.

Ambulance Service, Dispatch System Outage

 **Ms BATES** (Mudgeeraba—LNP) (2.27 pm): Seeing as though no member opposite is willing to do it in an open, honest and transparent fashion, I want to address the outage of the Queensland ambulance dispatch system last Friday and over the weekend. It should irk every Queenslanders that the health minister and the Premier did not have the gall to stand up and tell Queenslanders that our ambulance dispatch system went into meltdown. Why? Because they were hoping it would never surface. They were hoping the greater Queensland public would never know. That is the playbook of this government: hide it; do not mention it; do not take questions; hope that Queenslanders will never know and it disappears. That is their modus operandi. I say this to the Premier and the health minister: Queenslanders know. They know because they lived it. Our hardworking QAS dispatchers and paramedics lived it. People looking for help after calling triple 0 lived it. This morning the minister said that on Friday last week calls were being taken and dispatches were occurring. Well, Minister, you might want to check those facts.

Mr SPEAKER: Through the chair, please.

Ms BATES: Sorry. Take Lyn and Lionel Morris from Cranley in Toowoomba. On Friday night Lyn had to phone triple 0 for Lionel following complications after his recent bowel surgery. The operator who took the call tried to connect Lyn to the Queensland Ambulance Service on several occasions. The call was never picked up. The Morrisses had to take matters into their own hands and phone their daughter to transport them to hospital. It was nearly two hours later—let me repeat that: two hours later—that Lyn got a call back asking if she had tried calling triple 0. As Lionel said, what if it had been a heart attack, what would have happened then? Those opposite might want to bury their heads in the sand to this scenario, but it could be a reality. I hope and I pray that every Queenslanders who called during the mass outage got the care that they needed.

I am less hopeful that we will ever know the true extent of the problem given this government's aversion to being up-front and honest with Queenslanders. Here is a case in point: the health minister and the Premier herself had the opportunity to tell Queenslanders about the issues plaguing the triple 0 dispatch system when they addressed the media over the weekend. They could have done it yesterday afternoon when they addressed the media. They both could have done it this morning in their ministerial statements. Did that happen? Did the people ultimately responsible for our health system choose to be open and transparent with the Queensland public? Did they explain that the ability for the Queensland Ambulance Service to dispatch and track their crews in a safe and timely fashion was compromised? Did they explain that people calling triple 0 were waiting with significant delays to have their calls answered? Did they explain that some triple 0 calls were not being answered at all? Of course they did not.

Those opposite have walked so far away from openness and transparency that they would not know what it looked like anymore. Accountability, integrity, openness and transparency are totally and utterly absent in the way that those opposite choose to govern. They could not even bring themselves to publicly thank our incredible Queensland ambulance staff for the way they dealt with the outage. Whistleblowers have told us that it was left to a phone, a radio and a whiteboard. Those whistleblowers described it as 'operational chaos which caused significant delays'. They were dumbfounded that nobody was willing to stand up to talk about what was unfolding and the potential risks to the public. Alas, those opposite could not bring themselves to talk about it either because, like I said earlier, that is their playbook.

We have a health minister who is so inept, incompetent and out of her depth that all she is able to do is lurch from crisis to crisis. Her only tangible action is hoping to sweep one or two of them under the rug. The minister is all but a political passenger now after suffering irreparable political damage. We know it, her cabinet colleagues know it, her backbench knows it and, boy oh boy, the Queensland public knows it. She is responsible for nothing and accountable to nobody. If she were, the Premier would have sacked her months ago.

What does that say about the Premier? The Premier is checked out, arrogant and detached from the reality that Queenslanders live every day. The Premier does not have a clue about how bad the problems are inside Queensland Health and Queensland patients and frontline health staff are paying the price for that. The Premier does—

(Time expired)

Townsville, Community Cabinet



Mr HARPER (Thuringowa—ALP) (2.31 pm): I can tell members that the Premier puts regional Queensland front and centre. Last week, Townsville hosted the regional cabinet. The Premier and her ministers came to our city with exceptional news and we welcomed them with open arms. They know that North Queensland is the economic powerhouse of Northern Australia and the Premier came with some very exciting news.

On day 1, regional cabinet met at the TAFE Queensland Bohle campus where the Premier announced \$17.2 million for the two renewable and advanced manufacturing skills centres. The new \$12.45 million hydrogen and renewable energy training facility will be a first for TAFE Queensland. It will support the training needed for Queensland's hydrogen industry, anticipated to be worth \$1.7 billion a year in exports by 2030. The new \$4.74 million advanced manufacturing skills lab will support the high-end manufacturing of tech like augmented reality, automation and robotics.

The new facilities are expected to be built in the second half of 2023, supporting local jobs during construction. They will allow TAFE to offer more than 20 new skill sets and certificate and diploma qualifications. The training hub will train our local young people who will be needed to provide the skilled workforce that our region will need to deliver in the renewable energy space and, boy oh boy, we are going to need them. Of course, that is in complete contrast to the LNP who wanted to sell and close down our TAFEs.


On day 2, one of the most significant announcements in North Queensland's history was made. The Premier announced \$5 billion to deliver the publicly owned CopperString 2032 project. I acknowledge the advocacy of the member for Traeger and recognise John and Joseph O'Brien for the work they have done behind the scenes for CopperString. Our government will deliver CopperString to provide affordable renewable energy to open up the North West Minerals Province. The 1,100-kilometre, \$5 billion expanded CopperString project will be 100 per cent government owned.

This is nation-building infrastructure that will create thousands of jobs for generations to come. It is one of the most significant investments in economic infrastructure in North Queensland since the railways were built. It will connect the North West Minerals Province with national electricity markets. From the country to the coast, from Mount Isa and Cloncurry to the city, we will provide one of the largest infrastructure projects ever seen, delivering 800 jobs during construction and thousands of jobs for the next generation's generation in the renewable energy space. The project will have estimated benefits of an additional \$133 billion in mining production and thousands of jobs in North-West Queensland will be created. There will be a resources boom with the mining of critical minerals that will be processed with renewable energy. Of course, Lansdown, just outside of Townsville, will be the hub for local manufacturing using minerals such as vanadium from the Julia Creek area.

However, where is the Leader of the Opposition in regards to CopperString? From him we hear absolute silence! He threw it over to his shadow minister. All they could do was talk about blowouts in costs. Clearly the Leader of the Opposition is silent when it comes to backing North Queensland. He lacks the intestinal fortitude to back in the largest infrastructure project our Queensland community has ever seen. The Leader of the Opposition is a lightweight. The true measure of leadership is when you back in significant infrastructure projects such as CopperString. As we all know, the Leader of the Opposition has gone missing, just as he did when he cut and ran from Townsville for Broadwater to take out a female sitting member of parliament. The Leader of the Opposition is nowhere to be seen in Townsville. He could not even talk about the \$5 billion investment in our city. He was silent on it because he does not back it. He does not back North Queensland. We have seen it time and time again. What a weak and limp-wristed approach to backing in the most significant infrastructure project North Queensland has ever seen.

Our Labor government is backing it in. Our Labor government is proud to back in the thousands of jobs that will be created right across North Queensland and right out to Mount Isa. It was one of the proudest days we have ever had. Our local businesses back it in. Over 100 local leaders joined us for the Premier's announcement at the Townsville Enterprise luncheon. They are backing it in and we are backing it in. Labor is delivering for North Queensland.

Pioneer-Burdekin Pumped Hydro Project

 **Mr ANDREW** (Mirani—PHON) (2.36 pm): I have the great honour of representing an electorate that is home to one of the most beautiful regions in Queensland, Eungella National Park and the lovely Pioneer Valley. The people who live there had their world turned upside down on 28 December 2022 when the Queensland Premier announced the government's plan to build the world's largest pumped hydro scheme right on their doorstep. To my knowledge, not a single minister or anyone else connected with the government bothered to visit Eungella or the proposed location of that project—not even the Yuwibara people, the traditional owners of that area—before committing \$12 billion to tear up the whole area. If they had, they would have seen the lush rolling fields and precious subtropical rainforest. The fragile ecosystem is home to many of Queensland's endangered species. This morning I asked the environment minister about the project. I will be writing to her to ask her to come and look at just what they propose. She will see the majestic mountain that will have its top blown to smithereens, its insides hollowed out for giant pipelines and its vegetation cleared for the network of roads needed to service that gigantic project.

Eungella National Park is one of the jewels in the crown of Queensland's beauty, biodiversity and tourism. Now the whole community is being hit with a swarm of Queensland Hydro bureaucrats from Brisbane who are trying to tell them what to do while refusing to answer any of the residents' most basic questions about the project. People are being pressured to sell their homes. The deadline for acquisitions is this month. Many have been threatened with compulsory acquisition if they refuse to sign.

This needs to stop now and so does the whole project, frankly. Has the government even bothered to look at the alternatives? We have cogeneration. Pumped hydro is old technology. Australia's three biggest pumped hydro plants were built over 40 years ago. They have operated only infrequently and sometimes not at all for years at a time.

What was really shocking to me was when we last went to the meetings with Queensland Hydro and they presented maps with a lower reservoir marked as plan B. It was another area—another valley—that they planned on damming and making a part of this whole system. There is a reason for that. No-one is being straight or up-front about it. When you put transmission lines and so on into an area and you spend that much money to transmit that much power then you are going to use the rest of those valleys to transmit more power and to use that infrastructure.

Someone is not telling the truth here. Why were those maps just about dragged out of my hands? Why were they taken off the table so that the locals could not take them home to scrutinise and see what is going on and what the government has planned? 'No, they're the wrong maps', we were told. What a shame! It is an absolute shame for the people. First we were not told at all. Now they are introducing stuff and we do not know what is going to happen. It is a disgraceful way to treat those people.

Experts I have spoken with have said that there are a number of insurmountable environmental and technical issues with this project. They say that the cost alone will be astronomical. No doubt, it will blow out. Even Rod Welford, the former Labor minister for natural resources and the environment, has

issued a warning on the scale of investment and the significant risks of cost blowouts. Rod was there when everything was happening in the Finch Hatton Gorge. The proposed lower reservoir B is actually in Seninis Road, which goes into one of our other little areas called Kowari. Then right next door to that is Finch Hatton Gorge. These places are known throughout the world. They are beautiful ecosystems with rare birds, rare frogs and naturally occurring platypus. They are looking at sticking all their infrastructure up in these beautiful areas while the city folk do not understand exactly what this means and what cost it will have. Offset documents do not offset the cost of what is there. These places have their own personality, just as we do. You can offset as much as you like, but you will never replace what you take away in terms of what we are about to do. Trust me on that. I know; we grew up there.

There is a lot we do not know about this project. What is the exact footprint of this infrastructure and what is the size of the power stations, the cables and the infrastructure? I know one thing: you do not put something in there and spend that much money without a plan to expand on it later, because you will not build two or three of them in that area. That area has the ability to support expansion. Trust me: when the government sees that, generally it goes about doing that. That is the sad part of it. The map I have seen with lower reservoir B tells me that something more is going on. The people of Eungella want to know. They want their future secured.

International Women's Day; Women in Manufacturing



Ms LAUGA (Keppel—ALP) (2.41 pm): Last week we celebrated the achievements of women and girls on International Women's Day and Queensland Women's Week. I wish all of the women in this place a very happy International Women's Day and thank them for their sisterly solidarity as women who are standing up for a brighter future for everyone in our state. It is not easy being a woman in politics, but together we are making a difference in our communities for all Queenslanders and making it easier for the women and girls who will come after us in here.

It was a privilege to attend the Rockhampton Women's Shed inaugural International Women's Day event. It was a really lovely way to kick off Queensland Women's Week. The positive speeches and discussions about prevention of domestic, family and sexual violence, pay equality, health, community safety, mental wellbeing and education all left me feeling grateful to have such generous, kind-hearted women in our community who want to make a difference. Thank you to fellow panellists Tracey Bob, Christine Brown, Jenny Corn and Ashleigh Saunders, who all brought together their own stories, experiences and knowledge. Thank you to emcee Beck Agius and the entire Women's Shed committee and membership for the invitation to be part of the morning. The Rockhampton Women's Shed is smashing glass ceilings by offering women and girls the opportunity to develop new skills, new friendships and opportunities with car and yard maintenance workshops, trying new sports like shooting and bowls, and self-defence lessons. I look forward to seeing this great new cooperative go from strength to strength.

During the week, I was also very proud that the Palaszczuk Labor government officially launched the Women in Manufacturing Strategy. The aim of the new strategy is to attract and retain women in the industry, with particular focus on increasing participation in traditionally male dominated roles. Four priority areas have been identified to help women get good manufacturing jobs in Queensland including (1) supporting diversity, equity and inclusion in the manufacturing industry; (2) building on our existing capabilities and skills to further women's leadership and development; (3) boosting women's participation in vocational education and training, building the STEM pipeline and promoting advanced manufacturing capabilities throughout secondary and tertiary studies; and (4) celebrating and showcasing the women in Queensland's manufacturing industry.


Manufacturing has consistently contributed more than \$20 billion per annum to the state's economy over the past decade, and that number continues to grow. Increasing women in manufacturing by promoting an inclusive culture makes employees feel that they belong and contributes to a more diverse, robust industry. An advanced manufacturing sector that is innovative, diverse and agile presents many opportunities for women including exciting new career pathways. We know that having a bigger workforce of people with a broad range of lived experiences will help Queensland cement its reputation as a world-leading manufacturing powerhouse. I visited a large number of Central Queensland manufacturers where women are working in a diverse range of roles—from the shop floor to CEO—and there is no doubt that the diverse working culture leads to better outcomes. I give a special shout-out to Adnought Sheet Metals' very talented tradeswoman Megan Byrne. I look forward to seeing her soon to talk more about the Women in Manufacturing Strategy.

The Palaszczuk government remains focused on creating a better, fairer and safer Queensland for women and girls. It was great to see that the federal LNP member for Capricornia has finally worked out that supporting women and girls in our community is an important part of her job as an elected representative. Only a few years ago the member for Capricornia stood by then prime minister Tony Abbott—he was minister for women at the time—when he cut the young mums program at Girls Time Out, a local women's health and support service in Rockhampton. This is a program that provides support to young mums as they navigate parenthood. It supported some of the most vulnerable women and children in our community but, in a cruel blow, Tony Abbott, Michelle Landry and the LNP cut the funding. I fought side by side with the young mums of Girls Time Out to stop their funding being cut, and we won. The Palaszczuk and Albanese Labor governments back Girls Time Out, which is why a few eyebrows were raised last week when Michelle Landry was spruiking the Albanese government's funding of Girls Time Out, the very program that she and Tony Abbott cut.

Ms Pease: An absolute disgrace.

Ms LAUGA: It is an absolute disgrace. I thank the women and girls at Girls Time Out for always supporting our community. The Palaszczuk and Albanese Labor governments support women and girls in Queensland. We know—unlike those opposite, Tony Abbott and Michelle Landry—that when women support women everyone wins.

North-West Queensland, Weather Events; Betterment Funding

 **Ms LEAHY** (Warrego—LNP) (2.46 pm): I rise to extend my thanks to those emergency volunteers and workers who have helped—and in many cases are still helping—with the flood situation in the Burke shire and other surrounding areas. I want to acknowledge the work of the mayors and councillors in the north-west for their leadership in this event, especially Ernie Camp, the Mayor of the Burke Shire Council. Ernie has had a personal battle with these floods. He was evacuated from his home. He had to travel through crocodile infested waters for 12 kilometres to an area where a helicopter could actually land to evacuate him. In 2019 Ernie said that the effects of that disaster, in 2019, may last for generations—even though they had had a dry flood. His region did not need another wet flood such as this just four years later.

Some of the north-west communities have been cut off since January this year. They are hurting. Hurting most is the community of Burketown. We heard that from LNP leader David Crisafulli earlier. Rural stations and roadhouses are completely underwater. Communities like Urandangi, Doomadgee and Camooweal are also battling against these floods. The rebuild and recovery will be complicated by so many factors. The cost of materials and the accessibility of tradesmen will be a real challenge. Simply getting machinery into the region will be a significant cost. With an already high cost of living, these north-west communities will struggle even more to provide for their families, the people who live there and the small businesses. I urge both state and federal governments and the not-for-profit agencies to not allow these communities and the region to become the forgotten region in the gulf.

This brings me to Australia's first betterment fund, established by the LNP in 2013 by the then minister for local government and community recovery and resilience, David Crisafulli. At the inception of this fund the LNP spent \$80 million on projects around the state. Contrast this to the Labor state government, whose members took to the airwaves last week to talk about the 10 years of betterment funds—talking up a program initiated by the LNP. We learned from the minister's release, commemorating the member for Broadwater's initiative, that this government has not matched the LNP's commitment of \$80 million per year of betterment funding. Sadly, the Labor government has managed on average only \$23 million per year. Councils would do much more if only the Labor government would help them. In the past eight years, the Palaszczuk Labor government has not completed one levee bank and not one detention basin; however, it has spent \$237 million on a white elephant at Wellcamp. It spent nearly as much money on Wellcamp as it spent on betterment over the past 10 years.

It is up to the Queensland government, through the Reconstruction Authority, to drive the delivery of betterment projects across this state. Clearly from the minister's press release we see that they have not been doing this and they have been letting Queenslanders down, particularly those who are flood-prone and disaster-prone.


This Labor government is always slow to act. After the South-East Queensland floods last year the Labor government set up the Resilient Homes Fund. As well as home buybacks, this fund was to raise and retrofit flooded dwellings. Since the establishment of the program in May last year, 5,552

registrations of interest have been received for raising or retrofitting. Home owners then had to have an assessment and on receipt of the assessment and approved scope of works they could proceed to get a quote from contractors.

In December last year 72 applications for funding had been received—56 for refit and 16 for home raising. As at January this year two applications had been approved for works to commence under the home raising program. Seven months after the flood only two home owners have had assistance from this program. At the rate of two per seven months, it will take over 100 years for families who are displaced by flood to receive any funding from this program. It is not good enough that they have to suffer under this government which is slow to act.

The legacy of this Labor government in one of the most disaster-prone states is they cannot drive up betterment funds and they are slow to act on funds from the Resilient Homes Fund when it comes to home raising and retrofitting. Queenslanders deserve better.

Women

 **Ms KING** (Pumicestone—ALP) (2.50 pm): Queensland has so many brilliant, passionate, talented women. I was pleased to join the Attorney-General at the Queensland Women's Week reception last night to celebrate the impressive women in so many of our communities. I say a special thankyou to Barbara Grey of the Caboolture Older Women's Network for being my guest at the event.

As the oldest state electorate in Queensland, older women in Pumicestone do so much heavy lifting to support our community. They could be putting their feet up but they are organising community groups, leading beach clean-ups and working to prevent domestic and family violence. I also pay tribute to our Pumicestone women who are working into their 60s and 70s. When I go to our local aged-care centres sometimes there are more silver heads amongst the workers than there are amongst the residents. I also pay tribute to the women raising grandkids, giving kin care or providing care to foster kids.

Our government makes a big deal of Queensland Women's Week because we believe in women and we back women old or young. Our latest gender equality report card was released last week and it showed that there is still some work to do. The gender pay gap is slightly lower at 15.6 per cent. The number of female magistrates and judges increased by 2.8 per cent. We absolutely smashed our 50 per cent target for the number of women on government boards at 54 per cent, but sadly the number of women CEOs and managing directors in the private sector was down 6.3 per cent to 17½ per cent.

Our government will keep working for better outcomes on issues that matter to women, whether it is supporting more women into full-time work with our free and cheaper kindy program or getting more women elected to parliament. Women tell us all the time that they want to see more women in their parliaments. Labor has been working on this for the last 30 years because we know that diverse parliaments make for better governments.

With women making up over half of all voting Queenslanders, people would think it would be a priority for all political parties. What do women in Queensland see when they look at the tired, third-term LNP opposition? They see a group of blokes who overwhelmingly voted for it to be a crime for women to make their own decisions about their pregnancies. They see a so-called leader who travelled 1,500 kilometres to knock off the then youngest woman ever elected in Queensland. To this mob, a woman in a safe seat is an opportunity. They smell blood and the sharks start circling.

The women of the LNP can fit into a maxi taxi, but we constantly hear that the good old boys of the LNP are looking to roll their female shadow ministers. When Queensland women look at the LNP they see a 83 per cent male party room who refuse to take real action to get more women elected. When the LNP had the chance to get a woman into a safe seat—a woman who might have been a future leader of their party for decades to come—they chose the member for Callide.

The LNP pretend it is about merit, but international research proves that affirmative action raises the quality of political candidates by giving great women a chance ahead of mediocre men. There is a real reason the LNP is so scared of endorsing affirmative action. It is because so many of their men are mediocre; they are just not up to the job. The LNP's 'Queensland Solutions' whingefest is coming up so maybe instead of inviting businesses and trying to squeeze them for money, they should invite Queensland women to sit down and tell them how they can resuscitate the failing LNP brand.

Likely it is too late. Queensland women know exactly what the LNP stand for. The LNP showed us when they cut funding to NGOs that provide domestic and family violence services. They showed us when they would not speak up against the appalling Morrison government. They showed us when

they teamed up with Cherish Life to run a cynical campaign to strip women's rights. Women in my community were devastated and hurt by that LNP campaign. They showed us and keep showing us with their nasty, misogynistic attacks on our hardworking Premier. The LNP is dead in the water when it comes to women. Women do not like the cuts, they do not want to get sacked and they do not want to see Queensland assets sold.

At the end of the day, it is not just women that the Queensland LNP have alienated; they have alienated young people with their cuts to the Barrett centre when they threw young people with terrible vulnerabilities when it comes to their mental health out on the street. Just today Peter Dutton is out calling for cuts to the NDIS so they are alienating people with disability. They are alienating public servants that they attack time after time. They alienate people who believe in public ownership. The list goes on and on and on. When we add up all the groups the LNP have alienated—women, young people, people with disabilities, public servants—all we can see is the tired LNP opposition sitting opposite us.


(Time expired)

STRENGTHENING COMMUNITY SAFETY BILL

Second Reading

Resumed from p. 350, on motion of Mr Ryan—

That the bill be now read a second time.

 **Mr NICHOLLS** (Clayfield—LNP) (2.56 pm), continuing: Before the lunch break I was relaying the issues in relation to my seat of Clayfield and saying that the experience is similar next door in the youth justice minister's electorate of Nudgee. In fact, Clayfield and Nudgee are two of the areas with the highest levels of youth crime. It is no wonder when, at the beginning of February this year, the Hendra division was actually under strength by nine officers. If a government is measured by its willingness and its ability to protect its law-abiding citizens then this Labor government clearly fails to measure up and Queenslanders are paying the price.

The LNP will support this bill. At least this time it includes the LNP's breach of bail amendment—exactly the same wording as the amendment my friend the member for Burdekin moved in April 2021. That support does not mean the uncritical acceptance or the fawning obeisance that we will no doubt hear from Labor members. We have also offered an amendment to give courts the capacity to deal with youth offenders in the manner that the court thinks best. We support the magistrates and judges, unlike those opposite, including the Premier and the Deputy Premier who have both shamefully sought to shift blame for their own failed policies onto the judicial officers whose duty it is to apply the law and who cannot defend themselves.

My fear is that this bill and this government's actions will still not solve the problem of youth crime. That is because we know this Labor government's heart is not in these laws. This government does not really believe in this latest plan and it does not really believe in the solution it is trying to sell Queenslanders.

How do we know this? Clearly, these laws are not what the Premier promised Queenslanders on 29 December last year in her media release. Let us have a look at that. 'Increasing the maximum penalty for stealing a car,' screams bolded headline. 'A more severe penalty of 14 years,' says the next. 'The increased penalties apply to adults as well as juvenile offenders,' says the press release. The only problem is they do not.

The government's statement of compatibility reveals the duplicity of the Premier and this government. On page 5 it clearly says, 'The size of the impact on children is reduced by important existing safeguards.' What are those safeguards? They are limitations. They are: one, Childrens Court magistrates can only impose a detention order for a maximum of one year; two, judges in the Childrens Court can only impose detention for a maximum of five years; and, three, the sentencing principles in the Youth Justice Act continue to apply, including detention as a last resort for the least amount of time possible. Labor's heart is not in these amendments. This is a political fix like all the other so-called plans and actions we have seen in the last eight years.


We have had four youth justice action plans with 26 points in total plus a 47-point youth justice strategy, all seemingly to no avail. Labor fails on early intervention as well. Take the case of a young girl who recently appeared in the Mount Isa courthouse in February. The case is reported as *Re Isla Johnson*. It is a pseudonym. Here is her story: Magistrate Mac Giolla Ri relates the story of her trials

and tribulations and the fact that her life of youth crime began only after being placed in a government care home full of known juvenile property offenders; that is, she was placed there by the state. She stopped living with her mother because she and her siblings, all under eight, were often abandoned. When that happened, this 14-year-old girl had to look after herself and her siblings. She had no money or food. The relatives she lived with for a time were sent to prison for domestic violence. She then personally went to Child Safety to ask for help, and she went into the care of the department.

After going into care in September 2022 Isla had four different Child Safety caseworkers—four different caseworkers—one every six weeks. She was placed in a care home with girls who were known juvenile property offenders. Not unsurprisingly, she bonded with those girls. Not unsurprisingly, she started on a life of crime. Magistrate Mac Giolla Ri then acknowledged there was no space in youth detention centres in Queensland, and if he remanded Isla in custody she would be spending the time while she was in custody in the Mount Isa watch house. That is no place for a 14-year-old girl who is missing her siblings to be sent while on bail. Given this failure, is it any wonder kids like Isla end up committing crime?

That is not a gold standard of early intervention designed to prevent juvenile crime; that is a failure of this government and it is guaranteed to increase juvenile crime. It is not going to fix it. Despite all the pleasant sounding words churned out on reams of paper from the department, the minister, the Premier and the Attorney-General, that is the reality of what happens in Mount Isa and that is the reality that is reported.

In conclusion, this legislation does not deliver what the Premier promised. It almost certainly will not improve community safety. While the government has finally begrudgingly adopted breach of bail as an offence, I suspect it is not because it wants to but because the force of public opinion was simply overwhelming. Labor does not really believe in these changes. Their heart is just not in it. We know that no one single action will change the course of youth justice, but we must unshackle the judiciary. We must ensure consequences for actions and do more at the earlier stages to help prevent young people like Isla becoming another statistic—a statistic we see all too frequently. When it comes to weakening our laws and failing at-risk kids there is only one guilty party, and that is the Labor Party.

 **Mr POWER** (Logan—ALP) (3.02 pm): Recently I spoke to a woman from my electorate in Regents Park who, over a year later, still clearly feels the trauma of her house being forcibly entered while she slept. A young person armed with a knife took her means of transport and connection—her car. Shockingly, the same person tried to return the next night to do the same thing to her neighbour, but a struggle ensued until the police arrived. Recent events meant that she had to relive that trauma. I know that everyone on this side of the House wants to protect her and work towards ensuring that we never see another one of our residents experience that trauma ever again.

We know that strong, stable families who provide love and direction can intervene in the early stages to help reduce the number of crimes committed by young people in the first place. Young people who make errors can recognise those errors and go on to become adults who never interact with crime and/or police again. We also know there should be consequences for those who persist in criminal acts. That is why, after listening to victims and experts, we focused on the serious repeat offenders who do so much repeated damage in our community.

The Economics and Governance Committee is lucky to have not one but two former police officers on our committee. The committee has previously looked at a number of police and justice bills. I want to recognise the member for Macalister for her help and insight on these complex issues.

Mr Krause: And the member for Ninderry!

Mr POWER: Do you reckon Dan did a good job too? Yes, I recognise the member for Ninderry, who also provided his insights as a police officer. The bill was referred to the Economics and Governance Committee. We received over 87 submissions and held hearings in Brisbane, Cairns and Townsville. We also had witnesses online from Toowoomba, Ayr and Mareeba, and we were open to hearing from witnesses throughout the state. For some considerable time members on this side have been discussing and working on the new issues we are seeing with youth crime, especially with regard to the repeated trauma, damage and loss caused by a number of serious repeat offenders.

This bill strengthens our youth justice laws and aims to keep our communities safer, but these changes should not be seen in isolation. Submitters recognised the need for wider measures outside of the legislation. Witnesses before the committee in Brisbane, Cairns and Townsville were asked if this was a good first step. That is an excellent question. It is really worthwhile recognising that, in response to listening to Queenslanders, both through the committee process and before, important other steps are also being taken simultaneously. Those other steps include: more than \$100 million in extra

investment in diversion and rehabilitation; expanding the positive results of intensive case management; youth co-responder teams; expanding the Stronger Communities initiative; On Country programs with elders; and investment in grassroots early intervention.

I recognise that some of the submitters felt these steps would play a bigger role in reducing youth crime. I agree they do have an important role, but I also think it is important that there are consequences for serious breaches of the standards we set in our community where others have been hurt or suffered fear and loss. That is why this bill has community safety as its primary goal when sentencing repeat youth offenders. It recognises that the conditions set for bail must be respected. Often those very conditions are aimed at ensuring that young people do not associate with those who have encouraged them to commit criminal acts. They must be respected. While police may consider alternatives, offenders can now also be charged with breach of bail. We recognise that, because of additional vehicle security, the nature of vehicle theft is changing. There are more incidents of violence and threats to gain access to keys. This bill quite rightly increases penalties for theft of a motor vehicle.


This bill amends the Youth Justice Act to require the court to take into account bail history—both positive bail history where a young person has respected bail conditions and negative history where they have breached bail and not respected the court. This bill transfers 18-year-olds from youth detention to adult custody recognising that, as those in youth detention become adults, it is about the safety of others in detention and workers who are trying to create a stable place for younger people. The bill recognises that we need to tackle the complex nature of inequality and other causes of youth crime, expand intensive case management and youth co-responder teams, and build on the positive work of the early intervention action group in Townsville by bringing together police, youth justice and other representatives to intensively case manage and coordinate services for young people.

The Economics and Governance Committee examined the issue of fundamental legislative principles in the Human Rights Act. We recognise that any issue where a Queenslanders is facing a stronger sentence of detention is a serious issue. The minister recognised this by tabling a document in accordance with the Human Rights Act which recognises that, in order to protect community safety, the act is overwritten and its application is excluded. Make no mistake: this is a serious action to address the serious issue of community safety and it is not taken lightly.

We as a committee recognise it is difficult to balance the rights of those who have been hurt by crime against the measures in this bill. To quote a submitter on this issue, 'Governments have a duty to protect citizens. The rights of victims of crime, particularly their right to life, is a critically important consideration for government, and everyone in Queensland has the right to feel safe in their community.' We should recognise that serious repeat offenders are not just hurting their victims; they often induce and pressure others to engage in dangerous and hurtful acts. Other young people deserve the right to be free from these pressures. The committee agrees and recognises the difficult balance between the competing rights the minister is managing.

From listening to Queenslanders, we know that the Youth Justice Act changes are an important part of reducing the pain of victims that I spoke about in the beginning of this speech. We recognise that this government is separately investing \$9 million in new funding to better assist, including essential funds for counselling support and community support in supporting victims. We are also sensitive to the experiences of those who are victims and we seek the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee to further look at these complex issues.

However, we also know that each community has their own specific challenges—town by town and in some cases even street by street. We are working together to stop crime through tackling its causes and ensuring there are consequences for those who repeatedly and seriously hurt other Queenslanders. Having spoken to locals in Cairns, I know that their challenges are different to those in Logan and require local work. I have spoken to locals in Ayr and Townsville, in Mareeba and Toowoomba, and all are passionate and have their own local additional approaches about addressing the local causes of crime. The Economics and Governance Committee unanimously agrees that the bill be passed. I endorse the bill to the House.

 **Mrs GERBER** (Currumbin—LNP) (3.10 pm): No-one should feel unsafe in their community. Locals deserve to be able to go about their lives without the fear of being robbed, assaulted or even murdered. For too long now, regular hardworking Queenslanders have been facing violence in their local communities, on the streets and in their own homes. People across the Gold Coast—and, frankly, right across the state—are feeling desperate and scared. They are fed up with the lack of action from the Palaszczuk Labor government.

This should not be a controversial issue. Innocent people are fearing for their safety because youth criminals are not facing consequences for their actions. That is why the LNP have been putting forward real solutions for Queenslanders. We have been calling on the Palaszczuk Labor government to embed consequences for actions in the Youth Justice Act. One element of this is breach of bail as an offence in the Bail Act. We have been calling on the government to unshackle the judiciary. Judges and magistrates should be free to be able to hand down the sentence that best fits the circumstances of the offending, but the only way they can do that is if they are not shackled by detention as a last resort.

Why are they shackled by this? It is because eight years ago the Palaszczuk Labor government watered down the Youth Justice Act and made detention a last resort. Today, despite promises of a bipartisan approach to fixing the youth crime epidemic, the Palaszczuk government has blocked our proposal to remove detention as a last resort from the Youth Justice Act. The Palaszczuk government has refused to debate the issue, despite adopting our breach of bail policy word for word. Why have we put this on the table? It is because it works hand in hand with breach of bail.

The other aspect of our policy that works hand in hand is delivering gold standard early intervention. It is a very important part of the plan to tackle youth crime. We must have early intervention programs that are working and making a real difference. The only way to ensure this is to analyse the benefits or failings of each of these intervention programs and identify opportunities to break the cycle of crime, but this tired, third-term, lazy government is not prepared to do the work. When I asked the youth justice minister to break down each of the programs to work out which ones are working, the minister said it was too labour intensive. Well, now we see that the Auditor-General is doing the work of this tired, lazy, third-term Labor government. The Auditor-General is now auditing the early intervention programs of the Palaszczuk government—

Government members interjected.

Mrs GERBER: And they think it is funny. Today we are debating the extraordinary backflip of the Labor government. After years of denying there is a problem, after years of saying, 'Breach of bail won't work,' after years of saying, 'We are not in a crime crisis,' they have finally come to the table and are making breach of bail an offence.

Let us look back on what government members said to Queenslanders when we asked for breach of bail to be made an offence in the Bail Act. The Attorney-General said, 'We know what does not work when it comes to young people—and that is called the breach of bail offence.' Then she doubled down on it a couple of months later saying, 'Breach of bail did nothing to reduce crime.' The Minister for Youth Justice said, 'We don't want something that didn't work,' when answering a question without notice about breach of bail. This is the same minister who three days before the Palaszczuk government's breach of bail backflip was still criticising breach of bail, saying that it was 'ineffective'.

For too long, this state government have put their heads in the sand when it comes to youth crime. They have not been up-front with Queenslanders. They have not been up-front with Queenslanders about the content of this bill. This bill proposes to increase maximum sentences for stealing a car to 10 years or with aggravated circumstances to 14 years, but what this government are not telling Queenslanders is that this proposal is completely redundant if it is not coupled with changes to the Youth Justice Act because there are provisions in the Youth Justice Act that put a cap on maximum sentences. Magistrates can only sentence a youth to one year and superior courts are limited to five years.

This did not stop the Premier from promising on 29 December last year that 'Violent juvenile car thieves will face more jail time' and that they were 'increasing the maximum penalty for stealing a car from 7 to 10 years' imprisonment'. I put these questions. How many repeat offenders do you think will be sentenced to 10 years for stealing a car? How many will be sentenced to 14 years for an offence committed at night? Labor cannot deliver on this promise, and they cannot deliver on this promise because they know that the Youth Justice Act limits the sentences.

Labor are misleading the people of Queensland, and once again this Premier has failed to show up for victims of crime in their hour of need. Moreover, they have failed a generation of children. If the Premier is looking for someone to blame, she need look no further than in the mirror because the reality is that this youth crime epidemic is a result of failed legislation and failed leadership. Where we are today is a consequence of the Palaszczuk Labor government watering down the laws eight years ago.

One of the Palaszczuk Labor government's first orders of business when they came to power in 2015 was to dismantle our youth crime legislation. They abolished breach of bail as an offence, they shackled the judiciary by making detention a last resort and they closed the Childrens Court so that

no-one could see or report on what was happening. This is not even scratching the surface of the Youth Justice Act. It has been stripped back so much that we now have a generation of repeat youth offenders who have no consequences for their actions and they know that is the case. They are brazenly flirting with the law and flaunting it. This state government continue to put the rights of criminals above the rights of victims.

In my electorate of Currumbin, I have been speaking with a huge number of constituents who are really concerned with the rising crime in the area. I have residents calling me and emailing my office about youth car thefts along with break-ins. The number of young people reoffending on the Gold Coast has skyrocketed 91 per cent since 2017, and almost 70 per cent of juveniles who completed a youth justice program in 2021 went on to reoffend. That is a damning indictment on this government. Our communities are being terrorised and we have a generation of young repeat offenders who are breaking into people's homes, who are stealing cars, who are armed and who are posting about it, and in the worst and most horrific circumstances, Queenslanders are dying as a result.

I know that in my Currumbin community we have a number of Neighbourhood Watch groups working overtime to try to do their bit to help our community because this state government is not stepping up. I would like to acknowledge Victoria from Currumbin Waters who has been working hard to set up another Neighbourhood Watch group in the area. Victoria and many like her have a passion for our beautiful area and want to do all they can to protect our way of life. Neighbourhood Watch groups work closely with local police who are desperately under-resourced right across Queensland. While youth crime has risen, police resources have remained stagnant and in some cases have gone backwards.

I also want to acknowledge the incredible work that community groups and charities are doing in my local area. I have spoken in this place before about Fight 4 Youth, a fantastic local charity which operates in my electorate of Currumbin. Leisa and the team have partnered with local schools to support suspended students, vulnerable youth and young offenders with the early intervention programs she runs. She receives no state government funding. Her objective is to strengthen their relationships, to inspire them and to keep them out of detention centres. Fight 4 Youth is doing what this state government cannot do. She is not funded by the government, yet she is doing her best to try to help the youth in our community.

The track record of the Palaszczuk Labor government on law and order is horrific. For years, they have viewed this as a political problem. They are more concerned with announcements and how things look than actually stopping the cycle of crime and protecting our communities. The fact that it has taken this long for the Palaszczuk Labor government to consider meaningful action on this issue is a really sad testament to their style of government. Even then they had to copy and paste from LNP policy. Our breach of bail amendment—straight up copied and pasted—is exactly the amendment that is proposed in this bill.


Let me be clear, I will support the amendments proposed in this bill, but I give this warning to the state government: this bill falls well short. It falls well short because it leaves so many questions unanswered, questions like: when will we know the government's plan to overhaul early intervention? We know that the government is not looking at early intervention in the way it should. We know that the Auditor-General is having to do the job of this state Labor government and do an audit on early intervention programs because this government will not do the work to find out what is working and what is not working. That is the only way we stop the cycle of crime. This bill falls well short as we need to unshackle the judiciary in order to achieve outcomes. We need gold standard—

Honourable members interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Bush): Pause the clock!

Mrs GERBER: This bill is failing to deliver both of those.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Before I call the next speaker, member for Thuringowa and member for Everton, I will counsel you to cease interjecting and quarrelling across the chamber.

 **Mrs McMAHON** (Macalister—ALP) (3.20 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the Strengthening Community Safety Bill. We are here speaking to a bill such as this because something has gone wrong with a small number of our young people. Something has gone terribly wrong. We could have a philosophical debate on the history of juvenile offending. Juveniles have been committing offences for centuries. Here in Australia our foundations were built on the transportation of criminals. Of the 160,000-odd convicts that were transported here, 25,000 of them were juveniles; in fact, some of them

under the age of 10. But before I start sounding like the member for Clayfield, I would like to talk about modern Australia. Today we are dealing with some thoroughly modern problems with a mix of colonial hangovers.

Every child that commits a crime against another community member is an indictment not only on the individual concerned but also the parents and the extended family, and it says much about the failures of a community because it does take a village to raise a child. It takes all of us. Where does it go wrong? When does a child become so removed from a collective humanity as to not care about the damage they cause, the hurt and fear that they spread or the lives that they take? More chillingly, at what point do they choose to seek out such damage, fear and mayhem? Where is the value of life and respect for others? I hear this a lot from community members and from those opposite. Perhaps another rhetorical question is: if someone does not respect themselves, how do you expect them to respect others? I do not seek to find excuses. I do not seek to point blame; there is enough finger-pointing going on in this debate.


We know that young people who have a childhood exposed to trauma, addiction, crime and parental neglect are much more likely to come into contact with the criminal justice system. This is not in dispute. It is a life that starts with the worst possible beginnings, and the pathway from there is as tragic as it is almost inevitable. How do we treat these most vulnerable members of the community, the ones most likely to find sanctuary outside the family unit, the ones often to be found wandering the streets somewhat aimlessly, the ones referred to in the opposition's statement of reservation as 'the youth at risk before offending becomes prolific'? I know them because they are in number disproportionately from my community. Do we embrace them? Do we as a government or even as a community seek to bring them in and show them and take on the support of which they have been deprived? Or do we reject them, scorn them and tell them that they are not welcome and that they should go somewhere else? That is what my community hears particularly from those members of the Gold Coast opposite: 'We don't want your Logan kids down here. We don't want them catching the train down to the Gold Coast. Go back to where you came from.' That is the village that we are raising such children in these days.

'We believe in establishing gold standard early intervention programs,' the opposition statement of reservation implores, and then goes on to highlight this bill's failure to outline services offered by the government in the prevention space. It is such a shame then that when they were in government they funded three-fifths of stuff all when it came to youth justice diversionary measures. Project Booyah was not good enough for them. I would point those members to the broader strategic goals of tackling youth justice.

There are four pillars, the first of which is intervening earlier. This bill is not a silver bullet; it does not pretend to be. It merely represents the last of the four pillars of our youth justice strategy which is about reducing the reoffending. There are a range of measures in between which many members on this side have already spoken about before me. In fact, the committee report notes that the amendments to legislation of this bill are not in isolation and form part of a larger youth justice reform, such as youth and family wellbeing services, community youth response and diversion, restorative justice conferencing and youth co-responder teams.

I would like to briefly discuss one of the clauses in this bill because it gives us an insight into why we are experiencing a rise in unlawful use of motor vehicle offences, particularly for juveniles. Clause 8 makes amendments to the unlawful use of a motor vehicle in the Criminal Code, specifically to section 408A(1B) which outlines the circumstance of aggravation for when an offender publishes material to a social media platform. This is a phenomena that was not around when I was policing property crime, and in many cases it is not ancillary to the offence but is the core driver of offending behaviour; that is the stealing of cars is no longer just for the joyride or to get from point A to point B, but for playing to an audience. The desire to be a social media star is what young people are prepared to do and risk for notoriety. It is a challenge for all governments at all levels, of all persuasions. Yes, this specific clause does evoke a 12-year imprisonment offence which thankfully our magistrates and judges are competent enough to be able to read in conjunction with the Youth Justice Act, even if the member for Burdekin cannot. This bill is not the be-all and end-all for youth justice reforms in Queensland. It is one end of a spectrum of measures.

We on this side of the House want to see a safe and prosperous Queensland for all Queenslanders where young people on the wrong path can be diverted where possible and engaged in their community, not ostracised, not humiliated and not shamed. I support our government's youth justice strategy.

 **Mr STEVENS** (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (3.26 pm): This issue of youth crime is, without a doubt, the biggest issue in my Mermaid Beach electorate, and has been for quite a time. Unfortunately, it has not abated. The fact that we even have this bill today shows that this government has finally woken up to address this ongoing problem. We have raised the matter of youth crime time and time again in the House; I have on behalf of my constituents. I have had parents of these young criminal offenders—nice parents providing great backgrounds—express that their kid is out of control and they want him locked up. I have had victims come to see me. I have a street full of victims who seem to have been the target of the so-called 100 kids who are in our South-East Queensland area. I understand from our police that there are 400 statewide who are identified as these young repeat criminal offenders. It is a matter that we have to address.

The only reason this bill is in here is because the polling that the Labor Party would have done would have shown the Premier, when she went into the room to say, 'You, you and you,' and all the lefties that are against this would lose their seats,' and that is exactly the way we have this rushed bill come through to the House on youth crime.

It is the same as the promises we have heard time and time again from Minister Ryan saying, 'We have the toughest youth criminal laws in Queensland.' They have not worked time and time again, as evidenced by the fact that we have this bill in the House today. Weren't the tracking bracelets a big success? They were a badge of honour for the kids, and they would go out to commit crimes again. Increasing the penalty from 10 to 15 years in this bill has no relevance to the reality of the fact that there has not been a 10-year conviction imposed for them anywhere anyway.

During the short consultation period we had as a committee to take the views of submitters across the state we heard time and time again that the bill does not go far enough to address the 400 young criminals throughout the state who are causing this major problem. Even my wife leaves the keys to the car out so if somebody breaks in—and it has happened throughout our suburb—they will take the keys and no-one in the house will be stabbed, as has happened. We know about those incidents and we feel very sad for those people who have been caught up in that situation. Their family life has been ruined forever by these youth criminals. That is unfortunately at the feet of this government which has watered down the legislation we put in place to keep these young crims off the street.

The biggest problem we have—and it was brought up at all our meetings—was the fact that the Youth Justice Act has in it a mandating provision. We know the Law Society and the lefties opposite are against mandating any servitude in terms of custodial services and yet they are mandating to our judiciary—who are supposedly independent but are not capable of making their own judgements on these criminal offenders—that they not give custodial sentences. That tells us that they are not going to solve the problem. I guarantee we will be back in here within six months—or at least before the election—debating more legislation because this bill will not solve the problem relating to those young kids. They go off to court and the judges' hands are tied. They let them out again and they become free-range juvenile offenders. They get out again and they are at it the next night because they do not know any different.

I take on board the member for Cooper's submission to the committee, which was very good, in terms of putting forward matters that should be addressed at the early stages. I agree with those sorts of things. However, we have a problem now which is the fact that these young offenders are out in the community and they will remain in the community. The provision regarding breach of bail as an offence is a help—and we recommended it back in April of 2021 but the government voted against it.

What we have here is a knee-jerk reaction to a polling problem of the government. I know some of their blue-collar areas were identified in terms of that polling; it was affecting those particular areas as well. That is why we have the legislation before the House. Unfortunately, those opposite have not addressed the major problem in the changes to the Youth Justice Act. We support all the other measures. We have been calling for breach of bail as a criminal offence for a long time, so we support that; and there is no way in the world we are not going to vote for any similar measures whatsoever going forward. All the talk about other measures such as more intervention, more tracking devices—all those things are not going to affect those 100 repeat offenders who will be out there offending again the next night.


I am very pleased that the Auditor-General is now conducting that audit of the social services and government assistance agencies to find out what is going wrong in the delivery of those matters to work on the prevention side before we get to the actual criminal activity of these young crims. Quite clearly, we need absolute, quantified results from these matters. The fact that these kids come from broken homes, from homes where drugs are involved, from homes where they have been swapped

from one carer to the other and sometimes have suffered abuse, as we have heard, at the hands of carers adds to the fact that these young criminals have no understanding between right and wrong. No amount of promises and caring will address their behaviour until they are taken into a custodial sentence away from the community so that they do not continue their crime waves. Instead, that can be addressed and they can be re-educated in those systems—and they have worked. We have heard examples of that. The other day one lady called me and talkback radio and said her child was re-educated in one of those programs and is now a successful project manager for one of the large building and construction companies north of Brisbane.

The problem can be fixed; it can be addressed but we need positive steps from the government in terms of legislation, but this legislation does not go far enough. That mandated clause regarding the judges needs to be removed. That will assist. There also needs to be more assistance—the gold standard, if you like—in terms of the outcomes from the Auditor-General's report which should be adopted. I speak of what he identifies as the shortcomings in government policy for the future regarding early intervention for these young criminals. We are not going to get anywhere unless we address these matters.

In the case of my area, the 100 recidivist kids need to be taken away and out of the community to undertake a re-education program. They need to be kept away from my community, which is sick of having their homes broken into, their keys and cars stolen, and threats being made. The big problem is that with these break-ins there seems to now be an attitude that they need to take along a knife. I suppose they do that for self-protection because some victims are starting to take a cricket bat to them and those types of things. However, when those offenders carry a knife there is the possibility of a very untoward outcome for both them and the victims.

Speaking of victims, I think that the committee was unanimous in its support for victims who did not receive any financial support from the government for the damage that was done and, importantly, did not receive counselling or fair treatment by the police in these matters. They are important issues to be addressed for the future. It is a problem that can be fixed and it is a problem that can be fixed rather easily if we just put our nose to the grindstone and not take up those idealistic philosophies that kids cannot be locked up, because they need to be locked up.

 **Mr TANTARI** (Hervey Bay—ALP) (3.36 pm): I rise to make my contribution to the Strengthening Community Safety Bill before the House today. This bill is about putting community safety first. The main objective of the bill is to give effect to the announced legislative reforms and to strengthen youth justice laws by ensuring there is tougher action on youth crime and its causes. For those who choose to continue to do harm to our communities, this bill will ensure they will be dealt with by the full force of the law. The key changes this bill will bring about include targeting serious repeat offenders, tackling the complex causes of youth crime and supporting community safety to respond to serious offending within our communities.

As a member of the Economics and Governance Committee that undertook the review of the bill, from 87 submissions and hearings held across Queensland we heard about the level of frustration from many who lived within these communities. We heard opinions on what solutions should be adopted to curtail the behaviours of a small minority of repeat youth offenders. The committee also heard how youth crime is a complex issue that impacted not only victims but also the families of the perpetrators and the wider community. Additionally, submitters spoke about substance abuse, mental health issues and family breakdowns as causal factors to the likelihood of a young person committing a crime. They spoke about the prevalence of social media as a catalyst for narcissistic self-promotional behaviours with all its dire consequences. We have all seen its effect on the victims who we acknowledge must be supported.

As stated in the committee's report No. 41, many submitters believe that the bill was too strong, it was too punitive and it went too far. Others believed the bill did not go far enough. This just shows the complexity of the issue we are debating here today. This bill will strengthen our youth justice laws. We know that, statistically, 17 per cent of youth offenders are committing 50 per cent of the crimes. These new laws will further target those serious repeat youth offenders who put community safety most at risk. By setting a new declaration of serious repeat offenders, tougher sentencing principles to protect community safety must be applied to these offenders.

Breaching bail will be a criminal offence for young offenders for the first time this century. Further, there will be several other measures such as those relating to motor vehicles by ensuring that the penalties for unlawful use of a motor vehicle are increased through the amendment of existing penalties; and through the introduction of a number of circumstances of aggravation, including where an offender has published material of their offending behaviour on social media.


Like many members, in my electorate I have spoken to victims of crime about their experiences and how the government is addressing those behaviours. In the electorate of Hervey Bay, the government is implementing further programs to break this cycle. Already, intensive case management programs target chronic young offenders and their families, the Transition 2 Success program is working to prevent at-risk young people entering the criminal justice system and multiagency collaborative panels are working across government and non-government organisations to coordinate response services. A new rapid response co-responder team will be put to work in Hervey Bay, alongside high-visibility targeted patrols as well as packages to support victims of crime and make further investment in community safety. These programs have a single aim: to prevent young people from engaging in criminal activities. These programs provide support to young people and the families of those who have already offended, they address the underlying causes of youth crime and, most importantly, they support the victims of crime.

I thank the Minister for Youth Justice and the Minister for Police for their continued support for the Hervey Bay electorate in working with the departments to address crime faced by my community, because we know that there will always be crime. There always has been and there always will be crime committed by those who choose not to follow our laws. We would not need a police force if that was not true, but we do, and I thank the men and women of the Queensland Police Service, particularly in Hervey Bay, who are doing a great job in making their presence felt in their community and in tackling these offenders head-on. I thank my community and small business owners, like Aggie and Kim from Seega Rent a Car, who last September took the time to speak with Minister Linard and me about their experiences. Their input, like that of many others, is the foundation of these new tougher laws and our community thanks them for that.

I acknowledge the officers of the department of youth justice in my electorate as well as the ambos and the volunteers who deal with the traumas created by the actions of the serious repeat offender cohort. I know that they all do tremendous work in very difficult circumstances. They are the real heroes on the front line. They are the ones who work every day to keep our community safe and our community thanks them.

I thank the committee chair, the member for Logan, and the deputy chair, the member for Mermaid Beach, and the spirit of bipartisanship shown by committee members during our deliberations. I thank the committee secretariat, who worked overtime to ensure hearings were held across the state. It was a mammoth effort that was completed with utter professionalism. Well done.

This bill is legislation that acknowledges the impact that youth crime is having on our community. That is why these new youth laws will be tougher than those anywhere else in Australia. The Palaszczuk government has listened to the community and has now acted, and with these new laws community safety will be strengthened. I commend this bill to the House.

 **Mr CRANDON** (Coomera—LNP) (3.43 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the Strengthening Community Safety Bill 2023. On 21 February 2023 the Minister for Police and Corrective Services finally introduced a bill to address the explosion of youth offending in Queensland. We on this side of the House have been calling for action for many years. Following its tabling, the Strengthening Community Safety Bill 2023 was referred to the Economics and Governance Committee for detailed consideration and report. I thank the EGC secretariat for the huge effort they put in to ensure we were able to—in a very short time frame—do what the government did not do, and that is consult with Queenslanders.

Report No. 41 of the Economics and Governance Committee was tabled on time on 10 March. The main objective of this bill is to cauterise the wound, so to speak, with a focus on those few hundred recidivist offenders—up from 10 per cent to 17 per cent recently—that are committing half of the serious crimes being perpetrated by youth in this state. This is the first step, in my view. A great deal more needs to be done, with the ultimate aim of keeping the community safe by strengthening youth justice laws to respond to serious repeat offenders.

This bill will amend the Bail Act 1980, the Queensland Criminal Code, the Youth Justice Act 1992 and the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000. The amendments are intended, among other things, to increase the maximum penalty for the unlawful use or possession of motor vehicles, aircraft or vessels, although the jury is out on what those maximum penalties will actually be. The bill will create new circumstances of aggravation for the offence of unlawful use or possession of relevant vehicles, including if offenders publish material about their involvement in or of the offending on social media; where the offending occurs at night; or where the offender uses or threatens violence, is or pretends to be armed, is in company and damages or threatens to damage any property. The bill will make it an

offence for children to breach a condition of their bail undertaking and will extend and expand the trial of electronic monitoring as a condition of bail for a further two years and to include eligible 15-year-olds. The important thing here is that electronic monitoring needs to be properly trialled.

The bill will remove the requirement that police consider alternatives to arrest under certain circumstances; provide that a child's bail history must be considered during sentencing; create the ability of a sentencing court to declare that a child offender is a serious repeat offender in certain circumstances to ensure such things as community safety are a paramount consideration; enable conditional release orders to operate for a greater period of time; ensure certain child offenders serve their suspended term of detention if they breach their conditional release orders; expand the list of offences included within the definition of 'prescribed indictable offence' for children declared serious repeat offenders; enable the transfer of persons who have turned 18 years from youth detention centres to adult prisons; and ensure the continuation of multiagency collaborative panels.

Sadly, this bill falls short of what is needed, and we on this side of the House will continue in our endeavours to repair youth crime laws in Queensland. Before presenting this bill, the government did not consult with relevant parties. We have. Following extensive consultation with victims, police, advocacy groups and the broader Queensland community, we have determined additional actions that we will pursue beyond the changes proposed in this bill. The Palaszczuk Labor government watered down the Youth Justice Act eight years ago, and we have seen an ever-increasing escalation in youth crime. The three broad actions in our initial plan, developed before release of the detail of this bill was made known, are designed to start implementing the change that Queenslanders are urgently calling for ahead of further long-term reforms.


The first of the LNP actions to embed consequences for actions by introducing breach of bail as an offence for young offenders in the Bail Act has now been accepted by the Palaszczuk Labor government. This is despite minister after minister refusing to accept our call for this element to be included in legislation over an extended period of time and as recently as just days before the bill was tabled. Breach of bail as an offence will ensure consequences for actions by young recidivist offenders, as is currently the case for adults.

As a matter of priority, should the LNP be successful in forming government following the October 2024 Queensland state election we will unshackle the judiciary, who have had their hands tied since the Palaszczuk Labor government watered down the laws to require them to consider detention as a last resort when sentencing young offenders. The removal of the provision of detention as a last resort will allow the judiciary to detain young offenders who must be taken off our streets. They will retain the option to direct offenders to early intervention programs when appropriate, but the judiciary must be free to make the right decision for the right circumstances.

As well, we will start delivering gold standard early interventions. As a first step, we have requested an immediate and independent investigation by the Auditor-General into early intervention programs that are currently funded by the state government to analyse the benefits and failings of each program and to identify future opportunities to break the cycle of youth offending. We will use the Auditor-General's findings to start delivering those gold standard early intervention programs across the state to ensure we see a marked reversal in youth crime, thus providing a healthier and safer community that all Queenslanders can be proud of.

These additional changes are sensible additions to begin the journey towards community safety. The first priority of any government is to ensure the safety of its citizens. Queenslanders deserve better than to feel like a prisoner in their own homes and be worried that they are not safe out in their own communities. Between now and the election we will continue to listen to Queenslanders and build a full youth crime framework with a view to repairing Labor's broken laws. Under Labor, the number of young offenders in Queensland has increased every year above the 2015 levels it inherited, with the number of serious repeat offenders rising in the last few months from 10 per cent to 17 per cent. This is Labor's legacy on youth crime.

Beyond these strategies designed to fight youth crime, we need to go further with intervention programs. We need to identify and engage with at-risk groups in our community. We need to develop programs that assist our children from when they are, as I refer to them, gummies and ankle biters—indeed, from when our children are still in their mother's womb. We need to work with our families. We need to work with our preschools. We need to engage with our preppies and their families. We already have some programs in place, but they are few and far between. We need programs throughout our education system from preschool to year 12 and in the meantime we need to work with this recidivist youth cohort to give them a better chance at life. Only then will we see an improvement over time when we no longer have this youth crime crisis.

 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Murrumba—ALP) (Deputy Premier, Minister for State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning and Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympic and Paralympic Games Infrastructure) (3.51 pm): Every Queenslanders deserves to feel safe in their home and in their community. Our priority is to put community safety first. It drives everything we do. While this bill is tough on the perpetrators of crime, it also builds on the work we have already started to prevent crime in the first place. We are a government that is committed to giving our young people the very best chances in life through a good education, jobs, health care and the right support. Where serious repeat offenders are breaking the law, we need to give the police and the courts the right tools to stop them. But for many young people, we can help them before things go that far. The factors that drive young people to commit crime have always been complex. There is always more to do and, no matter what any politician tells you, there is no magic wand. We know there is no magic wand or silver bullet.


That is why the government is also tackling the complex causes of youth crime. This includes an additional \$100 million to expand programs proven to make a difference at breaking the cycle. By investing in prevention and early intervention, we can stop vulnerable young people falling into a cycle of crime. Intensive case management has already delivered great results in diverting young offenders in Townsville and Cairns, turning around vulnerable people's lives and setting them up for the future. We will expand this program to Brisbane, Logan, Toowoomba, Moreton, the Gold Coast, Rockhampton and Ipswich. A dedicated team of police and youth justice workers currently provide a rapid response program in Cairns, Townsville, Mackay, Rockhampton, Moreton, North Brisbane, Logan and Gold Coast. They have completed 40,000 engagements to ensure that these young people are getting the help they need and staying out of trouble. We will expand that service into Toowoomba, Hervey Bay, Mount Isa, Ipswich and South Brisbane. The early action group has seen great successes in bringing together police, youth justice and other agencies to manage high-risk individuals. We will expand that program into Mount Isa and Cairns.

First Nations people are overrepresented in youth detention. Their circumstances are often even more complex and they require a more tailored approach. We will invest \$4 million in On Country program which will provide a tailored approach in a manner which is culturally appropriate and evidence based. To bring young people together and get them to engage positively with the community, we are investing in localised programs. We will provide a safe space for them with investments like \$4.2 million into the Townsville Street University and \$1.5 million for midnight basketball in Cairns.

Being a victim of crime can have a long-lasting impact on a person's life. That is why we are also increasing support for victims of crime. We will provide an additional \$9 million of funding to Victim Assist Queensland that will ensure the victims of violent crimes receive assistance and support to help them recover from the physical and psychological impacts of crime, and I acknowledge the contribution that you have made, Madam Deputy Speaker Bush, into our thinking on supporting victims of crime.

They are just some of the many evidence-based responses supported by the Palaszczuk government. We know there is more to do, and with this bill we are acting. Those opposite would have Queenslanders believe that there is a simple solution, but Queenslanders are smarter than that. They know the causes of crime are much more complex and the solutions need to be evidence based and put community safety first. That is why we have developed this bill that gives police and the courts the tools that they need to stop serious repeat offenders from committing crimes while also investing in programs to help vulnerable children to turn their lives around before they commit crimes.

Finally, I take a moment to thank our police and all of the people working on the programs I have mentioned and all of the youth justice staff, including those in the youth detention centres and in programs. They have difficult jobs. They do the people of Queensland a huge service. I especially want to thank those who have spoken with me so honestly and openly over the last few months. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr PURDIE** (Ninderry—LNP) (3.55 pm): I rise to make a contribution on the Strengthening Community Safety Bill. At the outset I want to acknowledge my fellow committee members, as they have also previously done, and the secretariat which took us on the road on relatively short notice. I also want to thank the IT department which on short notice helped us take this show on the road to Cairns and Townsville to listen to victims of crime and other community groups and get their feedback which helped our deliberations on this bill.

Before I get specifically to the bill, I want to go back through the history which I think the government more recently is trying to rewrite. In 2015 when this government was first elected to power one of its top priorities was to start implementing its soft-on-crime regime. It did that by tabling a bill in 2015 which effectively, as it acknowledged in its media releases and speeches at the time, repealed

the tough laws that the LNP government had introduced in the previous term of government. The question is: why did it do that? The stats showed quite clearly across the board that crime at that time was going down, that all indicators were pointing down. Even the Childrens Court report from 2014-15 showed a marked decrease in the number of young offenders appearing before the Childrens Court and the number of charges the Childrens Court was dealing with—essentially, the number of crimes committed.

The question is: why did the government impose this social experiment, its soft-on-crime regime, on Queenslanders and where has that ended up? If we go through the chronology of the government's continued watering down of the laws, it started in 2015 when it tabled its first youth justice amendment bill which did scrap the LNP's breach of bail offence, made childhood findings of guilt inadmissible in court and reinstated the principle that detention should be a last resort. On 15 September 2016 Labor introduced another bill which essentially put 17-year-olds into the youth justice system. I was on the front line at that time and I can tell members that youth detention facilities were already at capacity. As a frontline CPIU officer, we assumed that the government would have a plan for that because we were already getting turned away from youth detention facilities because they were at capacity. It turns out now that the government did not have a plan for that.

Not long after that we saw hundreds of children being held in maximum security watch houses which are designed as holding cells for people to be kept in—adults preferably—for a few hours or a night or two, yet consistently still to this day children are held in maximum security watch houses for up to a month and the Childrens Court report, which I will turn to later, reflects that. In May 2019 when *Four Corners* exposed the number of kids being held in watch houses, off the back of that in August 2019 this government again tabled more amendments to the Youth Justice Act to further weaken the laws. The objective of that bill in the explanatory notes outlines that the bill was to remove legislative barriers to enable young people to be granted bail, further watering down the laws. I remember that I and all of my colleagues on this side pointed out that all this was doing was transferring the problem from youth justice and detention facilities back out onto the streets for the police to deal with.

Six months later, in March 2020, off the back of some horrible crime statistics that were starting to come in, Labor announced its five-point plan to crack down on youth crime, the first point being tougher action on bail. This is another example of this government talking tough in media releases but coming in here and clearly showing to the community of Queensland that from 2015 they have had an overt agenda to water down laws available to police to help keep us safe.

In April 2020 the LNP tabled in parliament proposed amendments to restore bail provisions as they applied in 2019 prior to those August amendments, which takes me to some of those statistics. Since those watering down amendments in August—

Mr Harper: Talk about your stats, mate.


Mr PURDIE: I will get to that. I am happy to table that. Crime statistics did show that after watering down the bail laws again in August 2019 youth crime, particularly break and enter of dwelling house and unlawful use of motor vehicle, did go up and in that corresponding time adult offenders committing those crimes did not go up. That is another example of watering down the laws failing to keep people safe.

In June 2020 Labor again amended the Youth Justice Act which still retained the presumption in favour of bail. The major amendment moved was section 48(2) of the Youth Justice Act which includes the presumption in favour of bail. On 15 July 2020 the LNP moved a crime motion, again calling for tougher laws, particularly breach of bail, to become an offence. In December 2020 there was some bright news when the government scrapped its failed bail houses after spending over \$30 million and which were proven to have an 85 per cent reoffending rate.

Then we get to 2021, where unfortunately the wheels did legitimately start falling off. It became crystal clear where this was heading after years of a government that was watering down the laws available to police to help keep us safe. On Australia Day in 2021 we saw the fatal accident in Alexandra Hills which has been spoken about a lot in this place. Off the back of that, a few weeks after that, on 9 February 2021, the government announced another tough-talking, youth crime crackdown—the headline being 'GPS tracking devices'. We now know that was a failure. The government has a constant track record of failures. In April 2021 the member for Burdekin moved amendments to establish breach of bail as an offence, which is what this government has now done word for word. It is a shame it was not done then because breach of bail effectively gives police the power to monitor and take early intervention to correct behaviour. When young offenders on bail are breaching their bail, police can take action before they commit another offence. Recently we have seen tragedy after tragedy, lives ruined and families destroyed.

That brings me to the committee's deliberation of the bill. In Brisbane we heard from a number of stakeholders, particularly the Human Rights Commission, talking about how tougher laws would not work and how the science is settled. Academics across the board unanimously agree that tougher penalties and harsher sentences do not work, but we heard from Michelle Liddle, the mother of Angus Beaumont, who in her firsthand account, in her direct evidence, stated to the committee that she honestly believes that her son Angus could potentially still be alive today if police had taken early action against these offenders for breaching their bail continually before they murdered Angus. The matter has concluded in the court and it is on the public record. Angus was stabbed to death by well-known recidivist young offenders who were out on bail after previously stabbing someone else. When the family reported to police that they were out on bail, they were told by authorities that the police could take no action on that until they committed another offence because breach of bail was not an offence at that time. We took that evidence to heart during the committee deliberation.

Further to that, when we went to North Queensland we heard some other alarming information, in particular from a lady in Townsville who runs a youth shelter, who told the committee that the real picture of criminality in Townsville potentially could be worse than what it is now because locals have given up on reporting crimes to police. They have given up on trying to get through to Policelink, which is a service related issue. People in crime-stricken communities across Queensland cannot get through to Policelink to report crime so they are now reporting it on community groups which have up to 35,000 members saying, 'Can you please look out for my work car. It has been stolen.' Through that network in the community they are locating vehicles, people are getting their vehicles back and they are not even reporting it. They cannot get through and when they do get through it takes hours for police to get there because we now know the police are stretched. The thin blue line has never been thinner. It is about time this government stopped misleading the people of Queensland, give the police the resources they need and the tough laws and the staff they need to do their job.

 **Hon. DE FARMER** (Bulimba—ALP) (Minister for Employment and Small Business and Minister for Training and Skills Development) (4.05 pm): I wish to contribute to the debate on the Strengthening Community Safety Bill 2023. I thank the Economics and Governance Committee for their outstanding work on this bill: travelling so widely across Queensland in a relatively short period of time, hearing some difficult stories about the direct impact of youth crime on everyday Queenslanders, hearing strong views on the absolute polarities on this issue and recommending a way forward. I thank them and I commend them and particularly their comments regarding further support for victims of crime. I welcome the Premier's commitment as a result to reviewing the Victims of Crime Assistance Act with a view to greater support being provided, which will be on top of the \$9 million of additional support to victims of crime which has already been announced, including \$3 million to boost counselling capacity and support NGOs building on the existing Victim Assist service.


I point out this comment from the committee in particular. Although we know there has been real effect from the many intervention programs we have put in place to address youth crime—for instance, restorative justice conferencing where 77 per cent of participants did not reoffend or decreased the magnitude of reoffending; intensive case management where there has been a 71 per cent reduction in the proportion of crimes against the person; Transition 2 Success where 67 per cent of all participants did not offend or reoffend within 12 months of completing their course—although victims know that the overall numbers of unique offenders is declining with the majority of young people who have contact with the youth justice system not reoffending after the first contact and although it is important to know that these things are working, if you have been a victim of youth crime, lost a loved one, been fearful inside your own home, or wondered if you will ever feel safe again then probably you do not feel personally comforted by these figures and you will need real support to deal with that. Although you might feel sympathetic to the fact that of the 17 per cent of young offenders who commit almost 50 per cent of the crime, most, if not all, would have lived life characterised by domestic violence, poverty, homelessness, substance abuse and disengagement from education. Literally no child is born bad. They are children who have literally probably never had a single person walking their life alongside them and will have suffered much other extreme disadvantage. I know the people of my community understand this about these young offenders and they are sympathetic, but if they have been victims of crime then they will possibly never feel quite the same again and that is why this support that we can offer to those victims is so important.

In 2018 the highly respected former police commissioner Bob Atkinson delivered to government Working Together, Changing the Story, which was a way forward for youth justice reform and at that time and in response the government committed half a billion dollars to a range of initiatives, including

preventative and early intervention measures as well as tough laws and a commitment to build further detention centre capacity. The billion dollar quantum our government is now referring to for youth justice initiatives includes those commitments, so many of which are now bearing fruit. In preparing that report, Bob Atkinson said that any measures around youth justice reform must be bookended by community safety and community confidence. I think we all agree with that. It is why we need to keep addressing both sides of the argument on this difficult, complex issue. We need to keep the community safe. We need to address the issue in the longer term so those people do not stay in the cycle of crime. We need to provide a chance to those young people for a different life.

It is why the legislative changes that are being debated this week strengthen and build on the operation of some of Queensland's current youth justice and criminal laws, including around breach of bail, strengthening conditional release orders, a new declaration of serious repeat offenders, increasing penalties for stolen vehicles and expanding the number of offences with a presumption against bail. They are all so important and they must be accompanied by our commitment of more than \$332 million to programs that divert children away from crime such as expanding intensive case management, expanding youth co-responder teams and early action groups, the On Country program and our investment in grassroots early intervention. We need to keep young people from the cycle of crime in the longer term and we need to keep our communities safe.

On the local front, before I finish I want to give a shout-out to Senior Sergeant Dave Buttram and his team from the Morningside police who have made a giant effort and are achieving so much for our community. I know they will do much more.

 **Mr JANETZKI** (Toowoomba South—LNP) (4.10 pm): Over the past couple of years in this House I have given a lot of angry speeches about crime. I have given a lot of speeches calling on the government to listen. Time and time again, the city that the member for Toowoomba North and I represent has suffered because of the crime epidemic. Over the past 12 months, on a number of occasions, I have spoken emotionally in this House, as has the member for Toowoomba North. We have launched petitions, we have done videos and we have spoken to the media. However, time and time again my community has simply felt abandoned and not listened to.

Having listened to this debate I am not sure whether the government has walked in the footsteps of the victims of crime. Despite having listened to the contribution from the member for Bulimba I am not sure whether the government has actually acknowledged the fear, trepidation and uncertainty felt by many people around Queensland. My community has felt that terribly for the past 18 months. The member for Toowoomba North and I have spoken about it repeatedly. Things in Toowoomba finally reached a flashpoint with the death of Robert Brown. I submit to the House that it should never ever have come to that in my city. It should never have come to the death of Emma Lovell on her front lawn for the Premier to take this seriously. It should never ever have come to that.

Through legislative powers, the government has the opportunity to change and strengthen the law, properly resource the police and invest in early intervention and diversionary programs that could get repeat offenders off the streets. However, the Premier has not acted and the government has not listened. The Premier did not come to the crime forum in Toowoomba and the government did not listen. The people of Toowoomba have repeatedly asked for the Premier to listen and for the government to act. I table a picture of the 300 people who were at the crime forum in Toowoomba at which the Premier did not appear. The police minister came and the youth justice minister came. They doubled down on the breach of bail laws, which I will come back to later. The Premier was not there. The Premier did not listen and has taken too long to act.

Tabled paper: Photograph depicting community safety forum, Toowoomba [\[289\]](#).

I want to mention some of the victims of crime who have come to see me. I think of Andrew. His children who go to university or work in Brisbane no longer come home to their property in Toowoomba for the weekend because they have been targeted too often. I think of George who is a hardened bushie and truckie. He has been extraordinarily shaken up by the loss of two vehicles. I think of my mate Greg who has been repeatedly targeted. I think of Ken Cunliffe who, in his dismay at the state government's lack of action, formed a Toowoomba advocates group. I acknowledge Ken's advocacy. He pulled together key people of the city and victims of crime because he wanted their voices to be heard. He will continue to fight for that. I acknowledge Ken, Daniel, Sarah, Vicky, Ashley and Kate in that regard. In his frustration, Ken put together 28 stories of victims of crime from a single post on social media. I table that for the benefit of the House.

Tabled paper: Document, undated, titled 'Messages and emails re Toowoomba crime' [\[290\]](#).

A pensioner has written a poem about our city. Toowoomba has not been listened to for so long. Last year 700 cars were stolen. The poem says in part—

No longer are we feeling safe
in our homes, and on the street.
Break and enter is their aim
and stealing cars just a game.

...

The Government assures us
crime is under control.
The only people in control are
these murderous, callous thieves.
Premier, we the people of this state
expect you to intervene before
it is too late.
It already is too late, for some.

I know the member for Toowoomba North has experienced this as well. People have been overwhelmed by this. They feel unsafe in their homes. As the Leader of the Opposition said earlier, people are discussing whether they should leave their keys in the front door, put them on a table or hide them under the pillow. It should not come to that in Toowoomba let alone in Queensland. My frustration is that the government has taken too long to act and it has failed to listen.

That brings me to the law. Will it make any difference? Do they even believe in what they are proposing? Are we to seriously believe the media reports that say it was a PowerPoint presentation from the police minister that persuaded the government to adopt our policy on breach of bail?

Mr O'Connor: He had some good slides.

Mr JANETZKI: Is that how cabinet decisions are being made? I take the interjection. They had the PowerPoint slides and the presentation, but do they believe in it? We know that last June the Attorney-General said, 'It was not a disincentive.' The forum was held just a few days before they wound back their position and adopted our policy. Last year the youth justice minister said, 'We don't want something that didn't work.' Why should we believe that the government now believes in this? The last thing we need is more indecisiveness and indecision from the government, because that is all we have had. The member for Ninderry outlined the history of this government and the weakening of the laws. They put 17-year-olds into the youth justice system without a plan in the world. I remember at the time the Police Union chief said that more planning went into opening a new McDonald's store than the government had put into moving 17-year-olds into the youth justice system. Is that how the government operates? Are we to believe that this is how decisions are made in Queensland?

The member for Sandgate spoke about breach of bail when the day before he was still defending their former position. I feel a little sorry for the member for Sandgate. I feel a little sorry for the Attorney-General who is clearly now arguing for something she does not believe in. I feel sorry for the youth justice minister who is now arguing for something that they clearly do not believe in. In the same way that the Premier abandoned the Treasurer on the renters tax and the patients tax, she is now abandoning most of her ministers and their previously deeply held convictions. Is this how government is run and operated in Queensland in 2023?

I look at the law and I reflect on the contribution of our shadow police minister. He spoke about the principle of detention as a last resort. For the benefit of the House, I table the amendments to be moved by the shadow police minister.


Tabled paper: Strengthening Community Safety Bill 2023, amendments to be moved by Mr Dale Last MP [\[291\]](#).

Tabled paper: Strengthening Community Safety Bill 2023, explanatory notes to Mr Dale Last's amendments [\[292\]](#).

Tabled paper: Strengthening Community Safety Bill 2023, statement of compatibility with human rights contained in Mr Dale Last's amendments [\[293\]](#).

There is so much more to do. We have a principle of detention as a last resort. We need to see consequences for actions and we need early intervention that actually works. We need early intervention and crime prevention programs. There are many in Toowoomba who are willing to work with the government to deliver on the commitment that they have made. The member for Bulimba had the most expensive interview in political history. At the height of the watch house crisis, the disastrous *Four Corners* interview revealed that children were being held in watch houses for days on end. That was called out by Amnesty International and many others. They are still there. Where is this government's plan? What do they believe in?

We want to see early intervention programs that work being adopted. I look forward to the Auditor-General making their findings, because we need it. We need money to be put to the right programs. Queenslanders cannot afford wasteful spending any longer. What does wasteful spending mean for Queenslanders? It means more debt, higher interest costs and fewer and declining services. Wasteful spending means higher taxes and a lower standard of living. That kind of outcome is the price that all Queenslanders pay for wasteful spending. More than ever, we need this government to spend the money in the right programs. There is no more time for indecision. The people of Queensland expect this government to act. They expect this House to act. For too long the people have paid the price for a government that is soft on crime and bereft of leadership on this issue.

 **Mr HARPER** (Thuringowa—ALP) (4.20 pm): I have been looking forward to speaking in support of the Strengthening Community Safety Bill 2023. Members opposite will know why shortly. We need to draw a line in the sand for those serious violent offenders who need to be held to account. That is what people in my community have said to me. I have been resolute in standing up and fighting for change in the right area by working together, as we will in this parliament.

Mr Mander interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Bush): Pause the clock. Member for Everton, I have spoken to you three times since taking the chair. The next time it will be to give you a warning.

Mr HARPER: I want to thank those victims of crime who came before me and shared their experiences.

Mrs Frecklington interjected.

Mr HARPER: I take the member for Nanango's interjection. Suddenly they have forgotten what happened before 2015 and before Labor came to government. Let me give members a history lesson. In 2012, 2013 and 2014, those opposite hid the crime statistics by closing the statistician's office. That is typical of the LNP. They had a failed boot camp, with 70 per cent of participants reoffending. Worst of all, they cut funding for Project Booyah. As recently as Friday the *Courier-Mail* talked about the money we have invested and the change we have created by backing in that program.

Community safety is absolutely paramount. I want to talk about two elements of this bill. The first is breach of bail. We need the Leader of the Opposition to admit that under the Newman government it was an offence to have an offence. There was no change. Every single one of them reoffended. It is because of the advocacy of members like me and other regional members, who went to the Premier, the youth justice minister, the police minister and the Attorney-General, that we have change. I thank the Premier for that, because community safety remains paramount in my mind. The breach of bail provisions that we are putting in have teeth. If people offend, they will be put in custody.

The second element is the serious repeat offender declaration. I need to go through this. Clause 21 of the bill proposes that the court may declare a child a serious repeat offender if the court is sentencing the child in relation to prescribed indictable offence; the child has previously been sentenced on at least one occasion to a detention order for a described indictable offence; a pre-sentence report has been received; or the court is satisfied that there is a high probability that the child would commit a further prescribed offence. If such a declaration is made, the court must still consider the sentencing principles and must have primary regard to the need to protect members of the community; the nature and extent of violence, if any, used in the commission of the offence; the extent of any disregard by the child in the commission of the offence for the interests of public safety; and the impact of the offence on public safety.

This completely discounts the opposition's rubbish in its statement of reservation and in the contributions we have heard about removing youth detention as a last resort. The courts now must have primary regard before sentencing to everything I have just articulated.

An opposition member interjected.

Mr HARPER: They will have primary regard because it is now in the legislative framework. I believe that this bill builds upon the presumption against bail that we brought in last year. It builds upon serious offenders not getting bail that was brought in in 2019 or 2020. As a parliament, now is the time to work together to make positive change in our community.

We just heard the hypocrisy of those opposite. They talked about early intervention, but we know that they cut programs. Here is what we have done in Townsville. I have advocated long and hard for this. We had 400 people in 2016 at a crime rally. We got \$7.4 million back for Project Booyah. We have the Stars Foundation, Silver Lining, Clontarf, the Stronger Communities Early Action Group, the Street University—I am very happy to have got funding for that—and the On Country program. While I am

trying to work with my community, I have to put up with this rubbish. The member for Burdekin and the federal member for Herbert have been complicit in dividing our community with hate speech and racial discrimination. I table an article from 10 June 2022 by the ABC titled 'Townsville residents refuse efforts to break cycle for troubled young people'.


Tabled paper: Document, dated 10 June 2022, titled 'Townsville residents refuse efforts to break cycle for troubled young people' [294].

Who was there? The member for Burdekin was out the front with the federal member for Herbert wearing a blue shirt, along with the other LNP members. Their actions are politically motivated and designed to divide our community with fear and hatred. Those members should hang their heads in shame. This is a time to work together as a parliament to make our community safer. Those members should hang their heads in shame and apologise to the people of Townsville for the political hatred.

Tabled paper: Photograph, dated 2022, depicting a crime rally [295].

I will share something with the House that I cannot forget. I went to one of those Take Back Townsville 'you have to wear a blue shirt' rallies. The language I heard I cannot repeat in this House. There were some 50-odd LNP members there. The journalists refused to report what they saw. It was purely designed to divide our community with hate speech and racial discrimination. I say to those members: you can keep going low—just like the Leader of the Opposition did this morning when he personally attacked me—but I will rise above and continue to fight for my community and advocate to make sure that we get a safer community through the elements of this bill.

I support this bill. I thank the committee that travelled throughout Queensland, visited Townsville and listened. They have done a good job. I thank those ministers who backed us in. This bill was needed to make change. We will not have a legacy of failure, like the LNP does. We are working hard to make change in our communities. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr MANDER** (Everton—LNP) (4.28 pm): The member for Thuringowa has proven to the House that he lives in a parallel universal.

Mr HARPER: Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I take personal offence at the member's remarks and I ask him to withdraw.

Mr MANDER: I withdraw. This member has shown that he is completely out of touch with his community. For the last seven or eight minutes he has talked about his great record in Townsville and what he has fought for over the last eight years. Guess what: he has completely and utterly failed, because Townsville is where it all started. The newspapers called Townsville 'Dodge City' seven or eight years ago because every night cars were being stolen, houses were being invaded and people were being assaulted, and this member plus the other two members representing Townsville totally ignored what was happening. There was not a problem!

Mr HARPER: I rise to a point of order, Madam Deputy Speaker. I again find the member's remarks offensive and I ask him to withdraw.

Mr MANDER: I withdraw. The problem we have with this government—and the member for Thuringowa symbolises it all—is that they think that all they have to do is throw more money and more money at the problem. In fact, the Premier said herself that over the last eight years the government has allocated \$1.2 billion to this. Here we are today with another dot point plan. We had a three-point plan. We had a five-point plan. We had another five-point plan. We had a 47-point plan around the Youth Justice Act. Today we have a 10-point plan. Who remembers a few years ago the dot point to have police cadets in Townsville knock on people's doors and remind them to lock their doors? That was one of their dot points. It was law-abiding citizens' problem for not locking their doors. There was a time in regional Queensland when people would be proud of the fact that they could keep their homes open and leave the windows down on their cars because they were safe places to live.

Then we have had members opposite come into the House and pretend that these plans have been effective. What are we doing here today with a 10-point plan if they have been effective? The answer is that nothing has been effective. Those opposite have failed the basic test of a government which is to keep people safe.

Every member in this House has had people come to them and talk about the crimes that have been inflicted upon them. It has been disgraceful. I had somebody sit in front of me who had obvious signs of post-traumatic stress. This is a person who lives in the leafy suburb of Albany Creek. This is what she said to me in her letter—

Consequences for my family are as follows—

This was after they had a home invasion and things were stolen and people were in their house while they were in the house. The letter reads—

Paramount is the complete loss of any feeling of safety in our home but also when we are out in the community; living under lock and key day and night; sleeping with the house alarm on; monitoring CCTV cameras and notifications, including through the night—

when dogs walk past they go off because they feel they have to have them set to high sensitivity—

children being scared of noises at night. We have to minimise our outings at night. We are worried about leaving our house unattended when on holidays. We no longer go to the shops or the cafes locally for fear that our car is seen as a desirable target and we are followed back to our house. Our kids only play in their backyard when the door is unlocked for them and then locked again. No gate or door is left unlocked when expecting visitors or tradespeople. Everyone is locked in under this new world order.

That is the reality in Queensland at the moment. We have members like the member for Thuringowa who lives in denial and thinks their plans have been effective and yet here we are today talking about another 10-point plan—a 10-point plan that would, in my opinion, have been written within 48 hours on the back of an envelope by a couple of media advisers because they have a PR problem and a political problem.

As everybody on this side of the House has said, they do not believe it. The left lost the argument because those members, like us, have had people pounding down their doors about this issue. This is the greatest backflip since they pinched our air-conditioning policy. They bagged it and bagged it as they bagged breach of bail. Every one of them bagged it. I can name them. I am sure the member for Thuringowa got up and bagged it. Of course he did.

Hallelujah! They have had a road to Damascus moment. They have seen the light. Suddenly the LNP's policy is the saviour. That is what has happened. The hypocrisy knows no end. We have to sit opposite this mob and listen to this rubbish. They have no idea about law and order and crime control.

An opposition member interjected.

Mr MANDER: The member for Toowoomba South has already brought this up, but I have to bring it up again. They have a political problem so the self-proclaimed ministerial heavyweight the member for Morayfield comes in here and talks tough—'We've got the toughest laws in the country.' They are not working, Minister. We are here again because they are not working. The minister's colleague the Minister for Tourism, Innovation and Sport said the day before cabinet—on the Sunday—'It will not work bringing breach of bail back as an offence. We have all wiped it out.' Suddenly the PowerPoint presentation says, 'We have a political problem. This is what the political problem is: the LNP is right. We have to neutralise it. We have about 20 months before the election so let's do it now. Let's just cut it now and bleed a little bit at the moment. Hopefully everybody forgets.' We will not forget and the people of Queensland will not forget either. They are not stupid.

An opposition member: What did the left get?

Mr MANDER: What did the left get? I will take that interjection. The left got the drug laws. That was the trade-off. They gave them that. That is what we will see in the future as well.

Not only have we got this, but we have the most inane policy points I think I have ever seen. We have already talked about maximum sentences. People are not stupid. The first thing they say is 'Increase the maximum sentences.' All we want is a minimum sentence. All we want is for them to be detained for a short period of time.

We are not talking about those kids who can be turned around. We are talking about the 17 per cent. We are talking about the 570-odd kids who are hardcore offenders. Guess what? Although we have to do all the early intervention—that is important—we are always going to have hardcore offenders. That is why we have a police force. People do the wrong things. We have to have laws specifically for hardcore offenders and take them off the streets.


That is why the shadow police minister will try to bring in an amendment. The missing link is the magistrates. The Deputy Premier can get up and talk tough and speak against the magistrates, but let us remember who has appointed the magistrates for 30 of the last 35 years. It is the Labor government that has appointed them. Now they have shackled them.

They will not take the final step. The left will not let them go that far. The final step is to take away detention as a last resort. They should be fair dinkum and if they want the magistrates to do what the Deputy Premier and the police minister said they should do then give them the power and the ability to do that. Trust them and do not restrain them.

Here we are in March 2023—eight years after this government was elected—talking about the same issues. As has been said already, I have no doubt that in the next 12 months we will be back here again talking about this. The government will take out detention as a last resort because they know that the LNP knows what works for the community. Only our policies work.

(Time expired)

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Hart): Members can hear what happens when there is a lot of noise in the chamber. Everything in the chamber escalates. I am sure the member Mount Ommaney does not have as big a voice as the member for Everton. Let us keep the noise down a little bit, please.

 **Ms PUGH** (Mount Ommaney—ALP) (4.39 pm): It depends if you are one of my kids and you are in trouble, but thank you very much for your protection, Mr Deputy Speaker.

Every Queenslanders deserves to feel safe in their home and in their community, on this I am sure every single member of the House can agree. I rise to speak in support of the bill. I would like to begin by recognising the excellent work of the committee. They have done a great job not just in working through the particularities of the bill but also looking at future areas that can be examined as part of the overall solution to what we all know in this place to be a complex problem.

I thank the members of my community groups such as Sinnamon Park Neighbourhood Watch and Jindalee Neighbourhood Watch for their feedback. I was able to attend some of the meetings during the consultation phase and seek their feedback on the legislation, which was very helpful. In addition, I also met with community members and hosted some community catch-ups, as I often do, with local police. During my consultation, as I am sure many members would have experienced, there were very consistent themes coming from members of my community around providing victims with support. I like to think that at their core all members of this House are motivated strongly by looking after victims and minimising their current and future trauma. It is fair to say that in many regards government departments and systems are now making big strides in a number of ways in becoming supportive and trauma and victim aware. For example, the Mental Health Select Committee recently provided trauma support to witnesses. Our police are investing significant resources into supporting DV survivors and providing upskilling and trauma informed policing. In fact, on Monday I attended the start of the training for upskilling our police in this work, which includes as part of the modules on the training course best practice for trauma in response to the *Hear her voice* report. We know that our police and other government agencies are doing fantastic work in this space.


I would like to refer to the committee report as to how we can better support victims of crime in the Strengthening Community Safety Bill going forward and how that can be examined as an outcome of the report examining the legislation. As stated in the report—

Following consultation on the Bill with Queenslanders who had been affected by youth crime, the committee considers it would be opportune for the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee to conduct a review of the Victims of Crime Assistance Act 2009 (VoC Act), with a view to considering enhancements to the VoC Act designed to better assist victims of acts of violence, by providing support and financial assistance in a timely manner to avoid compounding the distress suffered by them.

In this proposed review, consideration could be given to a) expanding the eligible victim's category to include home invasion enabling these victims access to financial support to recover from the act of violence, b) mapping the victim's experience through the (VOCAA Financial Assistance) application process to identify ways to reduce the burden on applicants, and c) reviewing the Charter of Victims' Rights—to identify common complaint themes from victims to inform future sector training needs.

Further, we consider it would also be beneficial for the Queensland Police Service (QPS) to review the way in which it supports victims. While the community want accountability and consequences for the offender, there is also the need for a victim to be heard and included throughout the investigation and prosecution of their matter in a timely manner.

There will be many different contributions as I think almost every member of the House wants to speak on this bill. As I touched on earlier, I had some fantastic community consultation sessions. I have fantastic local police who are doing a wonderful job, but can I particularly thank my two local Police Beat cops who come out to almost every mobile office—Coffee with a Cop, a lot of us call them—Ben Harm and Lisa Easton. They have been mainstays in my community for many years. Along with many of their colleagues, they always come out for Coffee with a Cop community consultation sessions. They really do an amazing job in my community and I thank them for their tireless work. I am so glad that the bill has such strong support and I commend it to the House.

 **Dr ROWAN** (Moggill—LNP) (4.44 pm): I rise to address the Strengthening Community Safety Bill 2023. Queenslanders were demanding, and needed, Premier Palaszczuk to recall parliament in January to deal with our state's youth crime crisis, but as is always the case under Labor there are

delays and inertia. Now Queenslanders have learned that the Labor Premier will not even deliver the laws that were promised, with revelations that the maximum penalties that can be applied will only be half of what was initially presented by the Premier.

Elected members of the Queensland parliament are debating this legislation for two key reasons: firstly, the failure of real leadership from the Palaszczuk state Labor government; and secondly, because of the comprehensive failure of the Palaszczuk state Labor government's current legislation and associated policy framework. Queensland is in the midst of a youth crime crisis that started from the moment the Palaszczuk state Labor government was elected eight years ago.

It is the primary responsibility of any elected government to ensure the safety and protection of its citizens. This means providing a safe and secure environment in which people can live, work and raise their families. A government that fails to protect its citizens is one that is failing in its most fundamental duty. Labor has absolutely failed Queenslanders on this issue. It is without question that Queensland residents feel less safe now than they did eight years ago when the Palaszczuk state Labor government was first elected in 2015.

It is now common occurrence for Queenslanders to experience—to see via the news, to hear on radio, to read in local newspapers and to discover through various social media platforms—the reality of Labor's daily youth crime crisis. This is a crisis that has been engulfing various communities right across Queensland. Local residents in my electorate of Moggill and Queenslanders right across our state are having conversations and taking actions that just eight years ago seemed unimaginable. Families are now having to discuss and plan for what they would do in the event their home is broken into or if a family member is violently attacked. Sadly, we have seen these occurrences occur in a number of communities across Queensland. Businesses are having to invest more dollars every year in additional security and monitoring, such is the fear and lived experience as a consequence of break-ins and robberies.

I have met with many Queenslanders and local residents who have been victims of such crime. In fact, I recently met with a local resident of Kenmore Hills who shared with me their recent lived experience of two robberies within two months. At the time, I promised this resident I would share their experience in the Queensland parliament to highlight the dire situation that is currently gripping communities across our state. As the local resident told me—

We've lived in this neighbourhood for 43 years and never had a problem with security until recently. It appears that these types of situations are increasing at a rapid rate, and from what we can gather the state government urgently needs to put a stop to this nonsense in the community by changing their laws and legislation. From these two experiences of home robberies we and our neighbours have been left feeling vulnerable, disturbed, uneasy, and we are all being forced to increase our security situation.

Queenslanders should be under no illusion. This is a crisis of epidemic proportions, yet from the Premier to her ministers and all members of the Labor state government, none of them can bring themselves to call this what it truly is: a Queensland youth crime crisis—one that is in fact Labor's youth crime crisis. Denial has been at the very heart of Labor's response to tackling crime in Queensland and delivering improved outcomes for those who come into contact with Queensland's youth justice system.

Yet again, as we saw at the end of last year, after first denying that any such youth crime problem existed—and, in fact, after defending the strength of the laws and measures already in place—the Labor state government rushed out yet another multipoint plan with the promise that it would be 'making tougher laws even tougher'. Since weakening Queensland's youth justice laws in 2015—eight years ago—the state Labor government has announced a five-point plan in 2016, a four-point plan in 2019, a five-point plan in 2020 and 10-point plan in 2022. These plans have all been failures—some 24 points and counting—yet Labor still cannot bring itself to admit it has failed.

What is worse is the fact that the Palaszczuk state Labor government has completely lost sight of what it means to deliver a comprehensive justice system here in Queensland. This should not be about making tough laws tougher or making announcements with more millions of dollars attached to them. A youth justice system that is fair, efficient and effective is essential for maintaining social order and reducing crime, and this has to be the focus and standard of delivery of the Palaszczuk state Labor government. Queenslanders have had enough of the kneejerk, short-term political fixes that the Labor state government announces time and again rather than implementing the measures and reforms that will make a genuine and meaningful difference.

The Queensland Liberal National Party state opposition has consistently called for offenders, no matter their age, to be held to account for their actions. A modern and just society demands nothing less; however, quite simply the Palaszczuk state Labor government's approach has not adequately held juvenile offenders to account.

The Liberal National Party has listened to residents of communities across Queensland as well as stakeholders, all of whom have had a direct connection to offenders and their victims and know what it takes to combat this youth crime crisis. The first step in addressing juvenile crime has to be to restore the offence of breach of bail. This offence was removed by the current state Labor government, and finally Labor have had to admit that they got it wrong. Bail is a privilege, not a right, and any breach of an offender's bail conditions is a breach of trust, not just with our justice system but with the community. There must be consequences for such a breach. This is about upholding the values of our society. With rights also comes mandatory responsibilities. The state Labor government must lead by example and reinforce the ideal that actions do have consequences.

The Liberal National Party also supports the implementation of meaningful early intervention and other services to support offenders when they are released from custody and/or detention. A modern justice system is not just about punishment; it is also about delivering early intervention, rehabilitation and support. A modern justice system is one which helps young offenders turn their lives around, reducing the likelihood of reoffending and helping them to become productive members of our society.

It is the current state Labor government's legacy that, according to the Productivity Commission, Queensland leads the nation for child detention and repeat youth offenders. It is nothing less than a systemic failure when more than half of all youth offenders released from supervision are resentenced for new offences within a year of their release. It is time for the Palaszczuk state Labor government to listen and adopt a holistic, thoroughly evidence-based approach to reforming its failed youth justice system.


As the Liberal National Party shadow minister for education, I know that education and training has a significant and measurable impact not only on preventing young Queenslanders from entering our youth justice system but on rehabilitating young offenders as well. There are legitimate questions as to whether the state Labor government understands this. This was emphasised recently in an open letter to the Queensland parliament, signed by a number of peak bodies and esteemed experts, which stated—

By the time children enter detention, over 50% have not been attending school... Non-attendance at schools and high rates of suspensions and exclusions are frequent precursors to children's involvement with the youth justice system.

The Department of Education's latest annual report reveals that school attendance rates have declined across all regions in Queensland during the last five years. This decline is even more pronounced amongst Queensland's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. It was shown in a 2021 research brief prepared by the Queensland Treasury that 40 per cent of youth offenders under youth justice supervision were 'totally disengaged from education, vocational training and employment programs'. I would like to acknowledge and endorse the comments made this week by the highly respected retired magistrate Alan Yorkston, who has stated that the key to addressing the increase in juvenile crime is through education.

Queenslanders have been asking these questions. What is the Labor minister for education's plan? Where are the dedicated strategies, evidence-based programs and measurable targets to keep Queensland students engaged with education and to increase school attendance rates? There is no doubt that Queenslanders deserve answers to these questions.

In concluding my contribution today, I would also like to thank and acknowledge the incredible dedication and tireless work of all who are involved in our youth justice system. It is incredibly hard, challenging and difficult work. I acknowledge local Queensland Police Service officers, frontline health workers, youth support officers and educators to name just a few. It is time that the Palaszczuk state Labor government accepts responsibility for its own failings and delivers meaningful and comprehensive evidence-based reforms to our youth justice system which are responsive to the needs of our communities. There is no doubt that the issues affecting victims of crime must be addressed. We need to have a youth justice system that works for all here in Queensland. We deserve that for all of our communities across Queensland.

 **Ms McMILLAN** (Mansfield—ALP) (4.53 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the Strengthening Community Safety Bill 2023. My contribution draws on 23 years experience as both a teacher and leader within the state school system working in a variety of communities, including those with challenging and complex issues. I have learned that young people, specifically teenagers, respond positively to clearly defined and firm psychological boundaries, respond best when they understand the consequences of their actions and are hindered in their decision-making by a range of factors external to their control. These factors may include, but are not limited to: a lack of adult/parental supervision,

neglect, fetal alcohol syndrome, substance abuse and addiction, learning difficulties, cognitive impairment, sexual abuse and trauma, their chronological age and cognitive development. I am yet to hear any acknowledgement of these significant factors by those opposite.

Young people require a network of relevant and appropriate support in order to be successful and exit a context of youth justice and crime. They need their parents or carers or a significant other to be a positive and constant influence in this process. They require a safe and supportive environment in which mistakes provide opportunities to learn and grow, and of course school is the ideal environment for this to happen. They would rather not disappoint; every young person wants a good life and to be the best person they can be. Young people take time to learn to make more positive decisions. They require regular daily reminders, guidance, support, positive reinforcement and feedback. Finally, of the thousands of parents that I have worked with closely, I can say that every parent, regardless of their personal circumstances and challenges, cultural or socioeconomic backgrounds, wants their children to experience a better life and to have a better future than their own. We know that postcode matters, and we also know that the issue of youth crime is strongly linked to poverty, socioeconomic status and indigeneity. It is incumbent on every member of this House to be clear in their minds of the causes of youth crime.

Short-term responses to a complex issue suggested by those opposite during their time in government may resonate politically. However, it is hard to accept that such short-term strategies will lead to long-term solutions. Strategies are required that reflect a stronger moral purpose, a systematic and strategic process, steadfast dedication, and intelligent, ethical and courageous leadership. There is no quick fix. This issue requires a broader, more sophisticated long-term response, as outlined in the Palaszczuk government's bill.

Policy and funding levers are the easy part of the equation. The public administration and implementation of these policy and funding decisions require experienced leadership, hard work and tenacity. Administering and implementing these policies requires more than just adequate resourcing. It requires the commitment and preparedness of the public service and non-government organisations which reflect the following: a strategic intent, which must be multiagency; a structure that will deliver the reforms; a strong moral purpose; opportunity to intervene early; the skills, knowledge and expertise; the right people in the right positions; a time line of strategies; and key metrics, agreed deliverables and accountability. I commend the Attorney-General, the Minister for Police and Minister for Emergency Services, and the Minister for Youth Justice for their leadership and for ensuring the methodical implementation of evidence-based strategies in navigating this very complex issue.

As legislators, we must be cognisant of the relevant and recent research and the reactionary, proactive and preventive evidence-based measures. We must identify early and understand every young person and their family's story, their needs and the intervention required. We must understand and address the primary causes of youth crime. We must apply intensive case management, not just for young people but for their families. The \$56.8 million investment is a great example of this. We must establish clear lines of accountability. The \$100 million investment in evidence-based intervention, diversion and rehabilitation programs appropriate to the needs of individuals, such as cognitive behavioural sessions, along with the \$9.8 million for On Country and the \$61.5 million for Transition 2 Success will go a long way to supporting these young people. Restorative justice conferencing will receive \$65.1 million.


I urge my principal colleagues to be mindful of their school disciplinary absences. In particular, when excluding students, wraparound services must be afforded to our most at-risk students and their families. Exclusion should be avoided at every opportunity. Further, consideration of part-time enrolments in the first instance, to continue a line of sight with these students, and support for other agencies to intervene is imperative.

We, as state politicians of all stripes, must begin to redefine the language we use to describe young offenders, youth detention centres, criminals and youth crime. For example, 'rehabilitation and learning centres' sows a whole new discourse for our at-risk young people and their families.

Finally, clinical intervention must continue to occur at the first sign that a young person and their family is not coping. This may occur at birth, kindergarten age, during prep or in the early years of school. It is too late to engage clinical intervention when a young person is sentenced and enters youth detention. We must continue our interdepartmental work and early intervention processes with our young families.

All Queenslanders deserve to feel safe in their homes and in their community. We need to protect our children, protect our homes and protect our communities. Young people are the responsibility of every community. As a community, we as adults have a responsibility to protect young people from themselves and encourage their positive decision-making. Those opposite would have Queenslanders believe that addressing youth poor decision-making is easy. Queenslanders are smarter than this, and my community is smarter than this. They understand this issue is complex.

Finally, as we embark on a Path to Treaty in 2023, we must do better to address the incarceration rates of our Indigenous peoples. It is a sad indictment on our society that the colour of a child's skin is still the strongest precursor to their prospective chance of incarceration and experience with the youth justice system. We must do what is right for all Queenslanders. I support our government's youth justice strategy.


 **Mr KNUTH** (Hill—KAP) (5.01 pm): I rise to give my contribution to the government's Strengthening Community Safety Bill. Sadly, this bill falls under the category of too little, too late. The government has completely ignored pleas from Queenslanders to fix youth crime over the past eight years and are scrambling to force through a bill that will do little to address the current crisis. In other words, the horse has already bolted. A complete overhaul of our system is the only hope to fix it. This is simply a propaganda bill that allows the government to make sweeping statements, pat themselves on the back, tell everyone that they are doing a tough job on crime and, 'We are fixing everything,' when the reality is that homes are being ransacked, cars are being stolen and burned, businesses are being destroyed, and elderly residents are scared to leave their homes while juvenile criminals are filming themselves committing crimes, posting it on social media and laughing at the current system. Queenslanders have absolutely had a gutful.

The KAP will be introducing strong amendments to this bill, including removal of detention as a last resort, youths to be tried as adults for offences such as murder and rape, mandatory minimum sentencing for particular offences such as unlawful use of a motor vehicle, burglary, break and enter, and relocation sentencing.

At the Local Government Association annual conference, youth crime was highest on the agenda where a motion from the Mareeba Shire Council was put forward to establish diversionary facilities on remote state-owned properties for wayward youth. The majority of the state councils voted in favour of the motion. This vote sends a clear message in support of KAP's relocation sentencing policy to be an alternative option for the courts. The current system has proven to be a dismal failure.

The recent Productivity Commission report confirmed the government spent \$219 million in 2021/22 on youth detention services, double the previous year, yet the latest Childrens Court of Queensland's annual report warned of a chronically underfunded and understaffed Forensic Child Youth Mental Health Service. Yet, the government's solution is to do more of the same and spend hundreds of millions of dollars on new detention centres where they say they are receiving treatment just to get exactly the same outcome. Sending youth to detention centres is a badge of honour for them which costs Queenslanders up to \$1,800 a day. To put this further into perspective, 95 per cent of youth sentenced to Cleveland Youth Detention Centre reoffend within 12 months of being released. Albert Einstein once said, 'Insanity is doing the same thing over and over and expecting different results.' That is a pretty good description of this government's approach to youth crime.

We need drastic measures to break this cycle, and the KAP have continually put forward tangible solutions, and relocation sentencing is a part of that solution. Relocation sentencing would give magistrates the power to send youth to remote locations, teach them values and skills and deliver workable programs. A relocation sentencing policy should be implemented as a real alternative to bring this crime crisis to an end and give magistrates another option. Youth would be given the opportunity to have a life and a purpose and not just aspire to be the best criminal they can be by the time they reach adulthood. I encourage the House to support the KAP's amendments which will be introduced by the member for Hinchinbrook.

 **Mr SAUNDERS** (Maryborough—ALP) (5.05 pm): I rise in support of the Strengthening Community Safety Bill 2023. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the chair of the committee, the member for Logan, and the committee members. It was a pretty tough task they undertook, going around and listening to people. I would like to commend them and the secretariat for the work they did for the House. I commend also the police minister who is in here today. I know he, the youth justice minister and the Premier have been working very hard on this. The police minister has always listened to me and the concerns of my community about this. I take my hat off to him because these are very

complex issues. There are a lot of issues involving the families that you do not read about in the *Courier-Mail* or you see on the Instagram or Facebook pages. There are a lot of back stories behind the misbehaviour of some of our youth in our state.

Let's have a look at the bill. Our breach of bail provision will work. We have the strengthening conditional release orders, the new declaration of serious repeat offenders and increasing the penalties for stolen vehicles. That is an interesting one. We hear the other side talk a statistic of 215—and we know they did not give the right stats—but social media was not as big then as it is today. Social media plays a major role in youth crime today. We know that the criminals are on Instagram and SnapChat. This is a problem facing not only communities in Queensland or Australia, but if you look around the world, social media plays a part. It is happening everywhere. What is happening on social media is a concern for all people of this state, this country and the world.


The government is expanding the number of offences with a presumption against bail to include the people who are passengers in stolen vehicles or who enter premises to commit an indictable offence; they will now be subject to an offence with a presumption against bail. That covers the fact also that when some of these young people get in the cars, they know exactly what is going on, and they will now be treated accordingly.

Extending the Youth Crime Taskforce is a big plus to get the police out on the beat talking to the community and also ensuring that we have high-visibility police patrols. This has already commenced in my community. We have had the police out working very hard. There is the expansion of joint flying squads, help for seniors to secure their homes, a trial of vehicle immobilisers, and enhanced assistance to victims of crime.

The government has listened. We are listening. I am in my community every day talking to people. It is important that we as a whole community—not just Labor, the LNP, or whoever—make sure that people feel safe at home, on the street and at work. That is what this bill does. It covers a lot of the areas of concern that people have come to me and talked to me about in regards to youth crime and crime in general. I feel the bill covers everything.

The minister has listened. He has listened to me. The education minister has listened, too. We heard earlier the LNP talking about what is going on in schools. Members should come up and have a look at what is happening in my schools and what the teachers are doing in my community. We have some great programs happening in the state schools. I take my hat off to them. They are working under very stressful situations with families, and they are doing an amazing job with some of these families who are stretched.

It requires a whole-of-government approach. Everyone is working together—Youth Justice, the Department of Education and the Police Service. The police in my electorate are absolutely brilliant. They are out on the street, doing their job every day. I would like to congratulate and thank the police in the Maryborough electorate because they are responding to crime and responding to everything very quickly. We often hear, 'The police do not turn up.' I can tell honourable members that is not happening in my electorate because I talk to the police constantly and I talk to people who have had crime committed against them and the police are there very quickly. I commend this bill to the House.

 **Mr BENNETT** (Burnett—LNP) (5.09 pm): Many aspects of youth justice and youth crime are some of the most difficult and divisive issues we need to address—and that has been acknowledged in contributions in this House today—particularly when we focus on the youth involved, the families and the communities where we have seen youth crime escalate since 2015. There are substantial costs associated with crime in our communities. We know of the tangible costs associated with administering justice, such as operating police, courts and corrective/detention centres, and sadly of the intangible costs of harm experienced by victims of crime.

We have lost nearly a decade in reforms and, sadly, more is still required. We have again seen the media play a role in these legislative reforms being brought forward after a tragic Christmas of youth crime including hooning, carjacking, smash-and-grab robberies, violent assaults and, unfortunately, murder. It has forced the government to acknowledge that this difficult and complex area of reform is necessary, and our communities expect and deserve this parliament to work together to make sure our communities are safe. As we have heard time and time again as we travel around the state—and it has been mentioned previously—there is debate about where people now leave their car keys in their house. Do they hide them away so criminals have to ransack their home and risk violence against themselves, or do they leave them out in plain view so that those criminals can steal their car and hopefully leave them safe?

I have expressed before in this place my disbelief of some of the submissions to the committee that tried to advocate against youth justice reforms or blame other factors that somehow justify these offenders being treated differently. It is bad enough that we have seen this issue floundering for nearly a decade let alone seen certain groups advocating for some type of utopia in dealing with these dangerous youth offenders. It amazes me that with an investment of over \$1.1 billion since 2015 we still have no tangible improvements in our community's safety in dealing with these youth criminals. We have waited so long for the government to even begin to acknowledge that we have inadequate, soft-on-crime youth justice laws. I have sympathy for the families who have lost loved ones to crimes committed by repeat juvenile offenders, that could—and should—have been prevented. We desperately need solutions and we need to stop defaulting to what it looks like politically as opposed to the facts that relate to the youth crime crisis.

Although difficult—it is also politically difficult—to explain to a fed-up community, it is important that we invest more in those early intervention programs that may take time to influence a new generation of children. Despite many promises, the government has failed to implement appropriate early intervention programs and strategies including failing to improve the unfortunate school attendance rates. I reference comments made recently by Professor William Wood, who in acknowledging we have a significant problem, stated the issues have no hope of improving if we continue the 'tough on crime' trajectory in isolation. Professor Wood asks, 'How can we get a positive outcome for the community if we are tough on children who, in many cases, carry deep, traumatic scars from physical and sexual abuse, neglect, drug and alcohol dependency, financial insecurity or impoverishment?' Usually it is a combination of these issues. When we consider early intervention, we need to also consider the time before a child is even born and issues such as fetal alcohol spectrum disorders, abuse against family members and their mothers and insufficient prenatal nutrition. Social disadvantage, cognitive and emotional development, education and health substandard service delivery do contribute to poor educational performance and early behavioural problems emerging.

Queensland needs to fast-track construction of custom designed, purpose-built remand centres for young offenders to deal with young people on remand. We desperately need suitable safe accommodation for them upon release. This issue should be a priority in terms of young people being housed in police watch houses, another youth justice failure we should be very unhappy to see continuing. When we again reflect on the \$1.1 billion being spent on youth justice reforms since 2015, I suggest the process should be undertaken in addition to the proposed Queensland Audit Office audit, 'Diverting young offenders from crime', which is expected later this year or next. It is a deep dive, a review, into government agencies, funded stakeholders—all who supposedly have a role to play in youth crime prevention etc. A blowtorch should be applied to the key performance indicators and the youth crime crisis failures. These departments need to be held to account.

Unfortunately, there is evidence of the need to refocus on outcomes of those who have a responsibility and who are funded, and I remind the parliament of the failures of those who have a responsibility to respond. I will give a couple of examples for the House. Report No. 14 of the committee I serve on, chaired by the member for Mansfield, was titled *Inquiry into social isolation and loneliness in Queensland*. The committee travelled around the state and saw a lot of similar issues. A lot of issues will continue and will not be resolved until we acknowledge the problems. Then there is report No. 23, titled *Towards a healthier, safer, more just and compassionate Queensland: decriminalising the offences affecting those most vulnerable*. Unfortunately, there was similar evidence from submissions and witnesses that many responsible agencies et cetera have failed to deal with the underlying problems such as homelessness and entrenched disenfranchisement. I raised my concerns in a statement of reservation to that report about the performance of those who have a significant role to play in not meeting society's expectations. It is serious when, again in youth justice, we see program evaluation activity fragmented at best and many of the program's activities lacking accountability and transparency.


I welcome the changes being made in the bill, particularly the amendments to the Bail Act 1980 and the Youth Justice Act 1992 as well as the amendments to the Criminal Code, breach of bail as an offence for children, electronic monitoring, police powers to arrest for contravention of bail conditions, strengthening the youth justice sentencing framework, expanding the scope of 'prescribed indictable offence', transfer of persons turning or who have turned 18 years from youth detention centres, and the multiagency collaborative panels.

I want to go on the record in support of the shadow minister's proposed amendments to remove detention as a last resort as a sentencing principle from the Youth Justice Act 1992. I would have thought when we were considering these issues, and we do have a lot of bipartisanship, this could have

at least been debated and given the respect it deserved. With all we do, we need to remember what ordinary Queensland taxpayers who fund the justice system have a right to expect, and that is that young repeat offenders be taken off the street and kept in secure premises well removed from the community while their rehabilitation and their sentencing becomes a priority.

In closing, I want to acknowledge all those crime watch groups, whether it is the Burnett Heads Neighbourhood Watch, the Moore Park Beach community or Facebook groups right across Queensland who have been powerful advocates for some of these issues that continue to be reported. Some of these groups have 20,000 to 30,000 members reporting every day on the tragedy, the crisis and the issues that confront the youth crisis in crime. Of course, we have to show respect and acknowledge the work they have done. Many of them up and down the coast have worked tirelessly to try to convince the government that their issues need to be resolved.

I give a shout-out to all those groups. I say congratulations on being determined and dogged in making sure these reforms come forward. Please do not give up highlighting the need for future reforms because, clearly, what we have before us tonight will not completely solve the problem of youth justice. We have to be bold, we have to be courageous and we have to get on with making sure that reforms are meaningful and tangible but, more importantly, that our communities are kept safe.

 **Mr O'ROURKE** (Rockhampton—ALP) (5.17 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Strengthening Community Safety Bill 2023. Queensland has amongst the toughest youth justice laws in the nation and this bill will make those laws even tougher. We know that a lack of resources and a lack of opportunity are primary causes of youth crime. Families who are stretched economically and who are facing housing insecurity, job insecurity and limited opportunities for children to join extracurricular activities speak to me about the challenges they face in keeping their children engaged in school and away from negative influences. Many of these serious repeat offenders have sadly grown up in homes that have not always been safe and secure. Many have grown up in homes exposed to violence, abuse, neglect and social exclusion. Not only does this exposure socialise young people to think they are unlovable or that violence is okay; we also know it impacts on their neurological development, often leading to more impulsive and greater risk-taking.


The presence of drugs and alcohol in the lives of young people continues to concern me as a father and as a community representative and advocate. Substance abuse can impair judgement, increase aggression and lead to criminal behaviour both for adults but particularly for young people who are already so impressionable. At a time in their lives when young people are already feeling pressured and at times confused, the presence of alcohol and drugs can contribute towards antisocial behaviours.

It is not uncommon for young offenders to present in custody with addiction issues. There is no quick fix for youth crime. That is why the government is delivering an additional investment package of more than \$332 million, building on the \$800 million already invested in youth justice, to ensure that programs that work at diverting young people away from crime will continue and expand.

In Rockhampton we have the youth co-responder teams, which are working well and assisting youth before they get into trouble. Everything that we do in this area of youth justice is focused on enhancing community safety and reducing and preventing youth crime. Rather than waiting for young people to offend, the co-responder program is working to stop crime and antisocial behaviour from happening in the first place. A key part of the team's work has been to connect young people who are at risk of offending to services that can help turn their lives around. The team works on issues such as education, domestic violence, housing and health so they can intervene early and deal with the underlying causes of crime. They also play an important role in checking that young people are complying with their bail conditions.

In addition, co-responders have made contact with families, community agencies and other stakeholders hundreds of times in relation to young people. We have a bike shed in Rockhampton city which offers a program for young people that is centred around the repair and restoration of bikes. It offers young people an opportunity to talk about the issues they are experiencing while they refurbish bikes for people in need. We have had Project Booyah running for a number of years now. This youth mentoring program is targeted to young people aged 14 to 17 years to help them make better choices.

We also have Transition 2 Success, which aims to prevent at-risk young people from entering the criminal justice system and reducing reoffending among young people. There are another 14 programs delivered in the Rockhampton area that are providing support or intervention programs for youth and their families. I believe that this bill not only addresses youth crime, particularly recidivist offenders, but also provides support services to assist our youth to make better choices. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr MINNIKIN** (Chatsworth—LNP) (5.22 pm): There are a lot of things you can buy in life, but one thing you cannot buy is time. We have had eight years of this government, which is now in its third term. We are now at the point where we have to ask what we have to show for it. In the Premier's own words, over a billion dollars has been spent on a particular area of social policy, and what do we have to show for it? Under Labor's watch, the number of serious repeat offenders has increased from 10 per cent to 17 per cent.

Late last year I held a crime forum in my own Chatsworth electorate. It was held in the Scouts hall at Gumdale, which holds about 90 people. I put the word out, as most of us would do, on Facebook and social media and said, 'If you're interested, please sign up.' It was a non-ticketed event; I simply asked people to say if they would turn up to the crime forum. A couple of policemen from the Wynnum station gave up their time to attend, which we appreciated. To make a long story short, those 90 spots were gone within 24 hours.

One comment made to me at the end of the forum absolutely broke my heart. The forum went for about 90 minutes. After I wrapped it up—the way I roll is to start on time and end on time—a lady said to me, 'Where do I hide the keys? I have heard two different schools of thought. Do I hide them in the bedside drawers or do I leave them on the kitchen bench or on the table?' We have heard previous speakers talk about the reasons that conundrum has entered people's hearts and minds.

The reality is that there are some good members on the government side of the chamber—there are—but if you wanted to see the Labor Party divided like nothing else, you would only have had to be a fly on the wall around 28 December last year. I will not go into the horrific specifics; what happened in the northern suburbs of Greater Brisbane on 26 December last year has been well documented. In the game of politics, the one thing you have to have is an ability to read the dial. Undeniably, in my humble opinion, the dial on youth crime changed after the tragic events of 26 December. That is tragic in itself.

There are people who were victims before that incident. Only a week later around Newmarket another tragedy occurred. For some reason in society, people are drawn to a particular issue which is the sum of the moment. This has been the reality no matter where you go in Queensland: Cairns, Townsville, no doubt Mount Isa—I have not been there lately—and out west. We are all hearing it, but where I live I actually sense it. When I conduct a mobile office, the two topics raised are the cost of living and youth crime. You can probably throw a nickel over the two. They are overwhelmingly the two issues being raised.

I return to the Strengthening Community Safety Bill. I almost felt embarrassed watching the TV on that Sunday night when the Minister for Sport, the member for Sandgate, was sent out on ministerial detail. It was a bit like what happened with Rachel Nolan years ago when she said, 'No, we're not selling Queensland Rail' but then literally a matter of hours later she had to say that, yes, it was for sale. It was the same with the member for Sandgate: 'Breach of bail? Absolutely no way, Jose.' He echoed the thoughts of several ministers in cabinet: 'Absolutely, unequivocally, we ain't going back to that—no siree.' What did we see on the news literally 24 hours later? It was a road to Damascus conversion of the highest order.

The simple facts of the matter are that we have been saying repeatedly that breach of bail is not a silver bullet but is part and parcel of a package of reforms that need to be adopted by the Labor government. I find it incredulous that we have a Premier who has been missing in action—an MIA Premier. She is meant to be a lawyer, but she did not even get the right briefing in relation to maximum penalties. She could not even get that right. That hastens me to think that, if I go back to 28 December, this is—yet again—another example of policy on the run. You have spin doctor after spin doctor—spiv after spiv—who would have gone, 'Hold on. We don't have a community societal problem here; we have a political problem.' That is the one reason that everyone on that side of the chamber should hang their heads in shame.

There are good men and women on the government side and they know that this issue is biting everywhere, including in their own electorates. For some members to have the temerity to say, 'There's nothing to see here; everything is tickety-boo,' defies all logic. One good thing is that the words of every member who has made utterances such as that are recorded in *Hansard*. You can bet your bottom dollar that in 19 months, 18 months, 12 months and leading up to the election period that will come out and haunt them.

The member for Everton made a sage point when he said that the Labor way is to simply throw ever-increasing amounts of money at a problem. We have had over \$1 billion spent on youth justice measures—and for what? We have seen an increase in crime. It defies all logic that here we are, yet again, with another 10-point plan. We have had other multiple dot point plans and what has it achieved?

It has achieved one thing. I have to be fair: you do not see it happen all that often with the ALP. Normally they are a little bit like the Praetorian Guard—externally we are the enemy but internally they put the shields up—but the cracks have absolutely been there for all to see.

We now have the ‘accidental Premier’ who, in the minds of many of her own cabinet ministers, has overstayed her welcome. We have the left splintering with the right. The old guard—Centre Unity—does not know what it wants to do.

A government member interjected.

Mr MINNIKIN: I hear the interjection from the member who knows what it is like to lose at around about 20 past seven on election night. That sense is coming back again or otherwise you must have been living under a rock. There are very few things that I agree with the Premier on, but when she made the comment that none of that backbench is going anywhere this term she probably was right, because all we have to do is listen to the parrot speeches that they are handed from their masters. They do not even believe half the words that come out of their mouths. This is a party that has absolutely overstayed its welcome. It has been there for three terms and is bereft of ideas. The left is leaking like sieves. There was the PowerPoint that came out a matter of hours after the cabinet meeting. I would have loved to have been a fly on the wall for its caucus meeting. It must have been an absolute corker.

Government members interjected.

Mr MINNIKIN: The fact that those opposite are starting to get a bit hot and sweaty says it all. The fact of the matter is that the ALP has been in power now for eight years. Youth justice has absolutely become—in addition to its budget blowouts, in addition to cost-of-living blowouts—its Achilles heel. The sad fact is that half of the backbench such as the member for Hervey Bay and the member for Thuringowa have no idea what is coming. Here they go. They get their speaking notes, they get up, they get the little easel, they rabbit it off. They cannot even speak off the cuff for 10 simple minutes. The fact of the matter is this: we have had failure after failure after failure. We have a government that is a third-term out-of-puff government. We have a Premier who has well and truly checked out, but do not take my word for it. Take her own cabinet. Take her own caucus. Half of them want her gone. Half of them absolutely would not know if it is night or day. They have failed.


Debate, on motion of Mr Minnikin, adjourned.

WORKING WITH CHILDREN (INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES) AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Resumed from 21 February (see p. 101), on motion of Mr Katter—

That the bill be now read a second time.


 **Mr DAMETTO** (Hinchinbrook—KAP) (5.32 pm), continuing: I rise to continue my contribution to the Working with Children (Indigenous Communities) Amendment Bill 2021 introduced into this House by the member for Traeger. I must commend the member for Traeger for the work that he has done in not only listening to the people of Mornington Island who helped put this legislation together but also having the courage to step into this House for the third time to introduce this bill. We have heard a lot of conversations over the last six months around trying to bring a stronger Indigenous voice into our parliaments. Paths to treaty seem to be one of the No. 1 topics in this House. The people of Mornington Island, which is a remote Indigenous community in Queensland, are using the voice of their local member. They are using the legal and legislative mechanism available to them to carry their voice to their local member, the member for Traeger, and asked him to put the legislation together with them in order to then take it into the parliament to be voted on as something that these people have called for in the community of Mornington Island.

The member for Traeger has then had the courage to visit every other remote Indigenous community the three times that this legislation has been before a committee and then the House. He has not only the respect but also the backing of every single mayor in every one of those remote Indigenous communities for this legislation because they know the best way to bring economic prosperity and freedom to their people is through employment. That is the way we break intergenerational unemployment. That is the way we give families an opportunity to rebuild—that is, put the family unit back together and get mum and dad into gainful employment. How good is that for the self-esteem? With mum and dad working, children will go to school and those children will have someone to look up to. The only way they can do this is amending the blue card system in these remote Indigenous communities.

Let us be fair and honest: a lot of people who have grown up or lived in these communities have had brushes with the law over the years. These people do not leave their community. They want to raise their children there, they want to work there and they want to be buried there. They are luxuries that the people who live in these areas of Queensland should be afforded. The problem is that the biggest employer in a lot of these areas is either the state government or local government, and guess what? To gain employment with most of the opportunities in these areas people have to hold a blue card. Even if they want to get involved with looking after children who have been removed from their families because of the way that child services have viewed the living arrangements, to provide kinship care they have to have a blue card. To have a job in these areas, people have to have a blue card. Who better to decide whether these people get to work with the children in these small communities than the people who live there? Some 1,500 kilometres away the decisions are being made on who gets to work with these children, who gets to work at the schools, who works as the janitors, who works for the council and even who gets to go on the rural fire brigade. Those people are decided on from 1,500 kilometres away.

The reality is that all this bill is seeking to do is open the chance for those people to gain a blue card. Do members know what? We have seen this bill now for the third time and there has been ample opportunity for the state government to consult with the same stakeholders that the member for Traeger has consulted. There have been three opportunities to put together amendments to a broken blue card system. Fixing this will be like putting the cornerstone into solving this problem by allowing people to work. Right now there are fly-in fly-out workforces in places like Normanton, Mornington Island and Palm Island. Local people should be trained locally to do those jobs, to work with locals to solve local problems. Instead, they are unable to fill those roles because there is a requirement to hold a blue card.


I would love someone on the other side of the House to come up with an amendment and call it whatever they like. Do what the LNP did with the KAP's reef regulations bill—that is, move an amendment that puts a line through this bill altogether—but fix the problem that these people are crying out for to be fixed. No-one in these areas is asking for an increase to their unemployment benefits; they are asking for a job. They are asking for economic prosperity and freedom to be unshackled from government. They do not want to live anymore on government handouts waiting for the next grant application to come good. They want a job. Anyone who wants to support this would also be supporting Indigenous Queenslanders who want opportunity. I commend the bill to the House and I absolutely applaud the member for Traeger for his valiant efforts in this space.

 **Ms PUGH** (Mount Ommaney—ALP) (5.38 pm): We know that more needs to be done to reduce the barriers experienced by First Nations peoples when they are interacting with government services, and the Palaszczuk government is prioritising options that provide greater cultural context to this decision-making process. I acknowledge the great work of the committee. I know it travelled the length and breadth of Queensland on this bill in its research and it gave it a lot of heartfelt thought and heartfelt consideration. The submissions that were made to the committee highlight the complex issues experienced by First Nations communities right across Queensland when they are engaging with the blue card system. In this regard, I, too, commend the member for Traeger. He has done a wonderful job in highlighting the challenges faced by First Nations communities and he should be proud of where we have landed on this policy as a parliament.

We are piloting a blue card liaison officer project that will be co-designed in consultation with community to ensure that First Nations people have a genuine voice in how services are delivered. The Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Protection Peak is working with urban, rural and remote First Nations communities to research and analyse the impact of the blue card system on kinship care approval processes. Blue Card Services are also developing a suite of resources for the kinship care sector, and that will include a number of resources like videos and easy language information for prospective carers.

The Palaszczuk government will be working to reduce the barriers experienced by First Nations Queenslanders by working to provide a more supportive system at each step of the blue card process and empowering First Nations people by embedding cultural capacity into the blue card system. We do recognise it can be a tricky system to navigate. In saying that, I recognise that the inquiry has raised this as a really important issue. I commend, as I said earlier, the member for Traeger for raising it and also the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee—the member for Toohey, the member for Cooper, the member for Caloundra, the member for Scenic Rim and the member for Noosa—for their travel throughout the state in looking into this important matter. It is a great example of bipartisan committee work to get a much better policy outcome.

I finish by commending the member for Traeger for bringing this up. I know he will be heavily involved in the process that will ensure that his community gets the best possible outcome. In this particular case I cannot commend the bill to the House, but I certainly commend the work of the committee and the intent behind raising this important issue.

 **Ms BOLTON** (Noosa—Ind) (5.41 pm): The Working with Children (Indigenous Communities) Amendment Bill aims to address issues being experienced by Indigenous Queenslanders with the blue card system by moving decision-making to community justice groups. As is known, currently a person must possess a blue card before working or volunteering in child related employment or operating a child related business. A blue card is automatically denied for what is termed a disqualifying offence or while you are being charged with a serious offence. As we heard during our inquiry—and the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee did travel far—these cards are being denied in a range of other circumstances, with examples given of historical non-child or sexual related offences preventing applicants from receiving a blue card for their employment in non-child related positions.


For Queenslanders who have never had charges laid against them a blue card application is relatively easy. However, for our Indigenous communities, where high levels of offences are recorded, including by youth that remain on a criminal record for years, the blue card system is incredibly wide reaching, impacting significantly on small communities where employment opportunities are limited. We heard some heartbreaking stories everywhere we travelled. To better understand the reality these communities face, our committee held public hearings in Mount Isa, Palm Island and Yarrabah as well as Brisbane.

These hearings, in addition to the submissions, highlighted the issues being experienced. These included long delays in decision-making—we heard examples of up to a year in the appeals process; a lack of information, updates or knowledge sharing; and an overreliance on blue cards by businesses and entities even when not legally required such as road and building construction. The complex bureaucratic blue card application process deters many from even applying. It is the No. 1 legal issue for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Service and they do not have the funding capacity to help applicants. This is all exacerbated in remote locations, with it impacting more than just employment. There are enormous difficulties for kinship carers as every person over 18 years living in the house must have a blue card. One tragic example we heard that resulted in a suicide was when child safety authorities asked a kinship carer to take a child in and the mother had to refuse because one of her own children had turned 18 and could not get a blue card due to a juvenile offence.

Under the proposed amendments, in Indigenous communities the decision-making for blue cards would transfer from the chief executive to local community justice groups. These are non-government, not-for-profit Indigenous volunteer organisations that provide practical and much needed support to their own people, including with Queensland's justice system. Throughout the hearings there were mixed views on this with witnesses highlighting concerns. Quoting from evidence at Palm Island, the local groups would need 'someone who has training in psychology and someone who is from the police department'. They further stated, 'We have to be educated to know that once we make the decision it will not backfire on us'. They also said, 'We cannot be put in a place where we are going to fail. We need that support not just for two years but on and on'.

It became clear that the issues are enormous. However, the solution was not in this bill. Instead the committee has recommended that the focus should be on urgent and extensive improvements to assist Indigenous communities in their applications and appeals, as well as, importantly, implementing the vast number of outstanding recommendations from the Queensland Family and Child Commission's report in 2017. A priority should be reviewing the legislative list of serious offences, introducing a multidisciplinary panel with an Indigenous representative to advise on complex cases, making communication material much less complex than it currently is and ensuring that community justice groups are an integral part of the assessment for Indigenous applicants.

I wish to commend the member for Traeger for never, ever giving up in his efforts since 2017 to bring this bill forward which has unearthed our failings and provides the catalyst for real change. That it took three attempts to come to the chamber demonstrates the flaws in time allocations for private members' bills. The results, as we have seen, can be catastrophic and have been experienced by these communities. In closing, I would like to acknowledge the efforts of our chair, the member for Toohey, my fellow Legal Affairs and Safety Committee members and our secretariat for the bipartisan and collaborative approach achieved from this inquiry and ensuing report. To all submitters and witnesses at the hearings, including those who came in virtually, my gratitude for the honesty in sharing your reality and efforts for your communities. May the change desperately sought now be realised.

 **Ms McMILLAN** (Mansfield—ALP) (5.47 pm): On 1 September 2021, Mr Robbie Katter MP, member for Traeger, introduced the Working with Children (Indigenous Communities) Amendment Bill 2021 and referred it to the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee for detailed consideration. On 2 December 2021 the committee's reporting date was extended by the Legislative Assembly to 31 October 2022. The committee tabled its report on 31 October 2022. This bill primarily amends the Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000 to establish a new blue card framework that empowers First Nations communities to make decisions which best serve their interests in relation to child protection and employment of community members.

According to the explanatory notes, this bill proposes to achieve this objective by creating a blue card assessment framework that would overcome the limitations of the current blue card system by enabling a local community justice group, as defined in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities (Justice, Land and Other Matters) Act 1984, to make a binding recommendation to the chief executive to issue a restricted working with children clearance to an individual for work within that community. This would apply even if the individual would be issued a negative notice by the chief executive due to previous criminal offences.

During the committee's deliberations the committee heard that the process of applying for a blue card in remote communities can be exhausting and retraumatising to First Nations people due to a number of factors, including intergenerational trauma, language barriers and complexities around formal documentation as to identity. Further, blue card applicants in First Nations communities, particularly in remote communities, face significant disadvantage when it comes to online applications. For example, a lack of facilities and issues with internet access and wi-fi can severely limit an applicant's ability to communicate with Blue Card Services, thus contributing to delay and inequity.


The Legal Affairs and Safety Committee also heard how negative blue card notices are contributing to social displacement and impeding kinship-care arrangements. Their inquiries revealed manifest disadvantage, including that negative notices impact not only individual families but also the wider community by disconnecting young people from family, country, language and culture. That disconnect is unjust. I note that the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee's report on the private member's bill refers to the Community Support and Services Committee's report from 2021 on the Child Protection Reform and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2021. At that time, my committee encouraged the Department of Justice and Attorney-General to investigate the nuances and barriers with regard to First Nations peoples obtaining blue cards for employment purposes. That recommendation was supported by the Queensland government.

Since 2021 and in response to the QFCC's blue card report, Blue Card Services also implemented several strategies to improve participation in the blue card system, including providing applicants who identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander with assistance in cultural capability training for staff, developing specific information resources that promote key messages in a culturally sensitive way and that debunk myths about providing a blue card, and providing free tailored workshops in person and online.

At its heart this bill proposes the creation of a two-tiered system that is directly contrary to the recommendations of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse that equity in child protection is upheld while diverse needs are taken into account. The bill, if passed, would create more problems than it seeks to solve.

The Legal Affairs and Safety Committee made seven recommendations following their examination of the bill, including that First Nations communities have available more assistance with blue card applications and that the Queensland government consider reviewing family related definitions under the act and their application to First Nations peoples. The committee also recommended that there be clear guidance provided to large employers and the construction industry that would have the effect of supporting organisations to develop child-safe policies that do not necessarily rely on the positive issue of blue cards.

Whilst the government will not be supporting this bill, the government has committed to accepting all seven of the recommendations made by the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee in their report published in October 2022. Like my colleagues, I thank Katter's Australian Party for bringing to the parliament, amongst others, this bill on a crucial issue for many people in our First Nations communities.

 **Mr KRAUSE** (Scenic Rim—LNP) (5.52 pm): In speaking to this bill I commend the member for Traeger for highlighting these issues, especially in relation to the shameful inaction of government members in dealing with them. I have been a member of two committees that have looked at these very issues. In 2017 I was part of the committee that first looked at them. That committee travelled

extensively and heard about all of the issues that members on both sides of the House, including those on the government side, have acknowledged are big issues for people in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. We heard all about it back in 2017. The government members of that committee included the current minister for agriculture; the current Assistant Minister for Local Government, the member for Pine Rivers; and the late member for Stretton, Duncan Pegg. It is not as if the minister for agriculture and the Assistant Minister for Local Government do not know about the issues. They were part of the inquiry way back in 2017. The fact that we are talking about it for a third time shows the shameful inaction of the Labor government in Queensland.

Ms Boyd: Second time.

Mr KRAUSE: I take that interjection from the member for Pine Rivers. It is only the second time we have debated the issue in the House. The first time we had an election and the bill fell off the table, but this is the third time we have had a committee inquiry into the issue. That inquiry yet again highlighted the inaction of the government.

At a public hearing in Brisbane, the QFCC highlighted its 2017 report and the fact that only 16 of 81 recommendations from that reports have been implemented by the government. Instead of acknowledging all the problems, members of the government should do something about them. I am not saying that the bill before us has the perfect solution, but the bill before us and our examination of it have certainly highlighted some problems—again—that need to be fixed.

When you go on these inquiries, as I have twice, you hear stories of the pain that people in the communities have been put through by a bureaucratic process that takes them out of the workforce and, in some cases, takes away their means of earning a living. That hurts them. It hurts and it is causing huge issues in those communities. After the 2017 review further reviews followed the tragic death of Tiahleigh Palmer and other cases, yet still the root causes of the issues have not been dealt with. When we look at some of the feedback from stakeholders it is very clear that the same concerns are still held.

Other members have spoken about kinship care arrangements. What really struck me as extremely disturbing is that a kinship care arrangement will not be allowed if an 18-year-old lives in the house and does not have a blue card or cannot get one. Maybe that comes about when someone with some sort of history turns 18. The problem with that whole setup, and this does not make sense, is that before that person turned 18 they did not require a blue card. Someone could go into a kinship care arrangement with that person in the house. Even though a history of offending or other conduct existed before they turned 18, they did not need a blue card. However, the moment they turn 18 they need a blue card and the kinship arrangement terminates. That does not make sense. It does not make sense that the two systems of bureaucracy do not talk to each other. Again, this has been highlighted before but the problem has not been fixed.

We travelled to a number of places for this inquiry and I want to touch on issues raised at the different public hearings. At the Mount Isa hearing reference was made to offences such as stealing a vehicle. Someone could have been charged with such an offence either recently or some time ago. While that does not lead to an automatic disqualification from holding a blue card, it can certainly slow the process. When you are applying for a job and you need a blue card right away, you cannot wait 12 or 18 months to get one. We heard stories that it does take that long and the delays remove any opportunity for employment. There needs to be reform around that area of the provisions.


Reference has been made to having community reference groups making decisions or binding recommendations to the chief executive. One of our witnesses in Mount Isa, William, said that people know who is who in the community. That is a sentiment that we should all take heed of when trying to empower local communities. At the end of our session, another witness, Julie, likened the process that people have to go through to extrajudicial punishment. People are punished for offences that they were charged with perhaps years ago and then, through this whole process, they are punished again because they cannot get a blue card, or at least not in a timely manner, and they cannot get a job because of that.

We also heard about contracts through the public sector—or even in the private sector in some cases—where there are jobs that have absolutely no contact with minors and never will but that still have blue card requirements all throughout the tender process. The issue of whether those tender requirements were too stringent for some roles or some particular projects was raised within our committee process.

I made a note that in one hearing the prospect of there being another 'stolen generation' potential due to a flawed blue card system was raised. I think that was in relation to kinship care arrangements not being able to be entered into and having minors removed from community as a result. They are the concerns that are held. Localising decision-making in that context is something that really should be looked at. The concept of this being an extra layer of extrajudicial punishment was also brought up on Palm Island.

We visited Yarrabah as well. At Yarrabah the point was made that the inability to get a blue card is a real barrier to economic participation. The council that we met with—we thank them for meeting with us—highlighted the importance of getting people off welfare in order to grow the community as a whole. The issue was raised about minor discrepancies or misdemeanours, some of which may have been committed or charged 30 years ago, slowing down the process of approval for a blue card. Even though it is not a disqualifying offence, there could be concepts of it being a serious offence and then it just taking forever and a day for that issue to be resolved, with damage to the individuals involved.


We all in this chamber know that we want to protect children, but when three times now a committee of this parliament has had the same issues raised by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities—highlighting the problems with the blue card system which should be able to be resolved to help out people in that community to participate in the economy while also achieving the sacrosanct goal of keeping kids safe—but there has been no action, it is a disgrace. We in the LNP certainly commend and support the intent of this bill. The way in which it was to be operationalised was subject to some doubts and concerns throughout the committee process—that is why we are not supporting the bill—but the government needs to pick up its act and do better, because this is causing too much damage to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

 **Ms BOYD** (Pine Rivers—ALP) (6.02 pm): There was a time when I was not attuned to my level of privilege in this world. I was unconscious of the advantage my life circumstances afforded me—advantage that I am now very conscious others do not have. This privilege is something that I make an effort to keep front of mind when it comes to matters concerning our state's First Nations people. This is relevant and important to me, because my privilege has afforded me many opportunities including being a parent of a daughter with arguably more privilege than I was born into. When it comes to our First Nations people, we have entirely stripped away their privilege—along with much more—generation after generation.

I am uncomfortable with the premise of this bill that suggests that a privileged child like mine in my community is afforded all of the protections under a system while a First Nations child in their community should not be, that they should be provided with fewer protections. I am deeply uncomfortable with that proposition. All children, regardless of where they live, deserve the protection of being safe. It is entirely our job to provide a system that has those inherent protections and enforces them.

In 2020 I spoke to this lesser standard in this House during the debate of the predecessor bill from the member for Traeger. In 2017 I was a member of the committee that travelled to the communities of Yarrabah, Hope Vale and Doomadgee. There we heard directly from the communities about these proposed reforms. There is a value proposition here that is really difficult for me to reconcile. There is a risk or potential risk that is being weighed against access, for employment or for kinship. I cannot and do not support the prospect that the access for adults who would otherwise be unable to meet the safety protections for obtaining a blue card should be able to in remote Indigenous communities, because it will come at the cost of safety of kids in those communities.

I do, however, wholeheartedly agree that we need to do better as a government in our Indigenous communities to address this system. That includes navigation assistance, overcompliance, self-determination and reform as set forward in the committee's recommendations. I commend the committee for the work it has done in providing a comprehensive and considered report that has identified a number of safe and sensible recommendations through its work. Further, I am pleased to see the Attorney-General adopt the report's recommendations. I also recognise the advocacy and hard work of the member for Traeger for continuing to pursue this agenda. I look forward to seeing the agreed report recommendations make improvements as they get implemented. While I do not support this bill, I do support the committee report and its comprehensive recommendations and commend them to the House.

 **Mr BERKMAN** (Maiwar—Grn) (6.05 pm): I rise to make my contribution on the Working with Children (Indigenous Communities) Amendment Bill. As we have heard, the bill has the same legislative objectives as its 2018 equivalent which the member for Traeger introduced during the last term. Like I

said then, we absolutely support those objectives to address the disproportionate barriers First Nations people face within the blue card system, including by increasing community participation in decision-making. But like I said then—and I am sure the member for Traeger is getting sick of hearing this—we are not entirely convinced that this bill adequately achieves those objectives. It is absolutely true that the blue card system does not adequately account for cultural considerations and that strict eligibility criteria disproportionately restrict access for First Nations people. That causes particular problems in communities where almost every job is a government job that requires a blue card.

The Queensland Family and Child Commission report on its review of the blue card system recognised this when it recommended that the government ‘develops and implements a specific strategy and action plan to provide more support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and build cultural capability in the blue card system, including ... considering ways to empower communities to be involved in decisions about their community’. That is clearly what the member for Traeger is trying to achieve with this bill. The member is brought to this point where he has to do it because the government still has not acted on this recommendation.

The root of this issue is that, as a legacy of colonisation, First Nations people are incredibly over-represented in our criminal legal system. In particular, recent reporting from the Queensland Sentencing Advisory Council tells us that First Nations women and girls receive more than 30 per cent of sentences in Queensland despite making up around four per cent of the population. It is over 20 per cent for First Nations men and boys, which is still a huge and shameful over-representation, but the implications are obviously significant for women and girls, who often are involved in both professional and kinship caring roles.

We cannot adequately address this issue without addressing the systemic racism in our criminal legal system. That racism was laid bare through the inquiry into Queensland Police Service responses to domestic and family violence and it is clear from the data that, starting from the moment they become criminally responsible at the age of 10 years old, First Nations people are more likely to be charged than cautioned by police, more likely to be sentenced than diverted and more likely to be held for longer periods in watch houses and prisons. You cannot address First Nations over-representation in the criminal legal system when the only response to crime—particularly youth crime—is introducing tougher penalties and building more prisons.

The model proposed in this bill would allow a community justice group to make a binding recommendation to the minister to grant a new category of restricted blue card. That card would allow the applicant to work in that community where a blue card otherwise would not have been issued due to the applicant’s previous offending history. I do share submitters’ concerns that confining the operation of the new restricted blue card to the specific Indigenous community area in which the individual applied and got the recommendation from the CJG is likely impractical. It would mean a protracted application if the person moves and it could make it harder to continue employment.

There are also issues with limiting the new system to Indigenous communities that do in fact have a community justice group. Create Foundation raises concerns that this different category of blue card could suggest that there is a lower standard for Indigenous children, as we heard just a moment ago, and children in remote communities, than there would be for other children living elsewhere. QCOSS points out that, in urban areas where community justice groups exist, not all First Nations people will benefit from the interpersonal connections that are more commonly a feature of rural or remote communities.


QCOSS also pointed out in its submission that the bill only deals with a select number of criminal offences—namely, stealing with violence, burglary, unlawful entry of a vehicle and drug trafficking and supply offences. It does not actually address the underlying issues with the discretionary decisions made by the chief executive under the act. Sisters Inside recommended that a more fulsome way to deal with this would be to create a higher threshold for the exercise of that discretion, where the chief executive says it is an exceptional case and the applicant should be refused a blue card for a non-serious offence. They say the threshold should require that there be a ‘real and not remote chance’ that it would threaten the safety, interests or wellbeing of children for the chief executive to issue the clearance.

They also recommend that instead of just creating this new path for blue card approvals via a community justice group recommendation for those specific offences, the list of serious offences could be amended to remove them altogether, unless, in line with the exceptional circumstances provision, there is a real chance of harm to children. The eight-week statutory timeframe for decision-making, which would apply to community justice groups under this bill, should apply for all blue card decisions. This was a recommendation from both Sisters Inside and LawRight.

The bill also does not address a particularly relevant issue for First Nations people, which is the requirement to hold a blue card to be a kinship carer. A number of submitters suggested the restricted blue card should allow holders to be a kinship carer in their community or that the act should be amended to remove the requirement for a blue card altogether for kinship care.

Ultimately, there are alternative ways to ensure that community-led decision-making about safety issues in First Nations communities is more broadly and effectively distributed. Both Sisters Inside and LawRight recommended the government provide additional resourcing for blue card applicants to access culturally appropriate advice and support to navigate the system. In addition to broader reforms like removing the blue card requirement for kinship care, tightening the definition of 'serious offences' and the application of the 'exceptional case' provisions and introducing a statutory timeframe for decisions, we could require the minister to consider the views of the relevant community justice group and take cultural considerations into account when making the initial decision regarding a blue card application. That would likely be more effective than this proposal for a new category of blue card only in particular areas.

I absolutely support the intent of this bill. I need to put on record my appreciation and recognition of the effort that has gone into putting this bill before the parliament and raising such an important issue again. While we cannot support the bill in this form, I genuinely hope that the government listens to some of the suggested alternatives that have come up through the inquiry process and acts on this reform which is so long overdue at this point.

 **Mr ANDREW** (Mirani—PHON) (6.13 pm): I rise to speak in support of the member for Traeger's private member's bill—the Working with Children (Indigenous Communities) Amendment Bill 2021. The bill creates a much needed framework for blue card assessments that will empower Indigenous communities to make decisions which best serve their communities' interests. The new framework would go a long way towards overcoming the significant limitations of the current system by enabling a local community justice group to make recommendations to the chief executive that a restricted working with children clearance be issued to an individual for work within that community, regardless of whether that individual's record contains certain past criminal offences.

The type of serious offences that could be considered under the new framework would be limited to Criminal Code sections 409, 419 and 427 offences and Drugs Misuse Act sections 5, 6, 8 and 9D offences. These offences relate to stealing, burglary and unlawful entry of a vehicle and drug related offences.

When making their recommendations, the community justice group must have regard to police information, the applicant's previous work with children, social standing and participation in the community area and whether or not making the recommendation would have any adverse impacts on the community's inhabitants. Any restricted working with children clearance issued under the proposed legislation could only be used in specific community areas.

The health, safety and wellbeing of all children is paramount and must continue to be the No. 1 priority of the community. However, the one-size-fits-all approach to the blue card system has had an enormously negative impact on Indigenous communities throughout Queensland where unemployment is chronically high. The current blue card system contains significant limitations in the way it applies to the unique circumstances of Indigenous communities, which has resulted in missed opportunities for social and economic development. In a number of cases, the local community, through community leaders, law enforcement and judicial representatives, have determined that the person poses no risk to children and their employment would have broader positive community impacts.

It is imperative that the legislative framework in Queensland recognises the different circumstances of remote Indigenous communities and supports the process for jobseekers in Indigenous communities while continuing to protect the interests of children. I would go so far as to say that the cultural areas that these people grow up in have cultural hunting grounds and cultural fishing grounds. They are born into the culture of those areas. It is very difficult for them to leave those areas, especially when they want to retain their culture and work within their cultural boundaries. This is a very important thing that we are not taking into consideration as much as we should be.

It is very difficult for these people to walk out of these communities because their family is there. Their whole life has been spent there and generations before them have lived there. We have to consider introducing something so that these people can live, work and prosper whilst retaining their cultural heritage in their cultural space. We do not seem to be looking at that. I know for a fact that this is so important. We are all telling everybody what we need to do to support these people, but the biggest

support for these people is to be amongst their own people. That is where this falls over. This severely impacts the employment opportunities for a number of individuals but it also impacts employers and their ability to conduct business in many of these areas because they are short staffed, they regularly recruit but they cannot enrich these cultural areas by employing the local people.

It is vital to remember that employment can and does have a positive effect on individuals. It can prevent criminal activity but can also be rehabilitative for those who have previously committed offences. Feedback from community leaders and law enforcement officers indicates that handing over more decision-making power to the communities themselves would assist greatly in resolving this problem.

The proposals in the bill were first made in 2018 following consultation in the gulf and cape communities. These consultations revealed how communities in those areas experienced enormous difficulty in getting and retaining suitable workers due to the extremely low numbers of blue card holders.


The member for Traeger has pushed for this three times over a period of years. Surely together we can come up with a way of amending this legislation to trial this. Today I spoke to Chris Anderson, a Gunggari man, who is heavily involved with the rehabilitation of children. He said, 'Stephen, some of these people cannot fill out blue card forms. How can we help them to do that?' The next thing he said was, 'How dare we ask these people to have a blue card to talk about their cultural heritage or what they did in old times when they are sitting around talking to children or in a work space or anywhere else.'

These things have to be considered. We all know that. We need to come up with a plan that is sincere and protects children but gives people the right to practice their cultural heritage, be in their cultural space, be in their cultural hunting and fishing grounds and lets them continue to work in the society that we created where we took away some of their cultural practices. Is that not a fair go for these people? Give them a fair go. The government should think about this. I am not saying this for the sake of it because I am on the crossbench and I am going to go against whatever the government says. I say this because everyone deserves a fair go. This is Queensland. We tell everybody every morning when we come in here that we respect the people who live in this country—their elders past, present and emerging. How about we show them that!

Interruption.

PRIVILEGE


Correction to *Record of Proceedings*, Apology

 **Mr KRAUSE** (Scenic Rim—LNP) (6.19 pm): I rise on a matter of privilege suddenly arising. I wish to correct the record in relation to my contribution to this bill earlier on in the piece. I inadvertently mentioned that the member for Ferny Grove, the minister for agriculture, was on the committee that reviewed this matter in 2017. Having since checked the record, that was incorrect and I apologise.

WORKING WITH CHILDREN (INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES) AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Resumed.

 **Mr KATTER** (Traeger—KAP) (6.19 pm), in reply: I rise to close off the debate for the Working with Children (Indigenous Communities) Amendment Bill 2021. I thank all honourable members for their contributions to this bill. I appreciate the demeanour and attitude shown by a lot of the speakers, which was very complimentary to the efforts we have jointly made as a party towards this initiative, and I acknowledge that. I thank the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee for their efforts, but one thing I will not thank them for is their neglect in not visiting more of our first Australian communities. I was really hoping that this time with this bill there would be a good tour of Cape York. It is a place I do not get to very often and I am sure not many of us do. There are more Aboriginal communities up there than I have in my electorate. I think that would have given a really deep insight into the impact of this legislation. Just going to Palm Island, Mount Isa and Yarrabah is not covering it. This does not do it justice at all. That was very disappointing, I must say from the outset.

I would like to thank everyone who has had the courage to talk to someone outside of government. It has become a rare thing these days. People get scared to talk to you if you are not a part of government and the community groups, but they rose above that and expressed their opinions and views despite that and I want to make mention of them: Waanyi Tribal PBC; Cloncurry Justice Association; North Queensland Indigenous Catholic Social Services, led by the famous Father Mick in Mount Isa; selectability in Mount Isa; Palm Island Community Company; Palm Island Community Justice Group; the mayor of Palm Island, Mislam Sam; Yarrabah Leaders' Forum; Yarrabah Aboriginal Shire Council; North Queensland Regional Aboriginal Corporation Language Centre; the mayor of Mornington Island, Kyle Yanner; Doomadgee Community Justice Group; the mayor of Doomadgee, Jason Ned, and other members of the Doomadgee council; Junkuri Laka Wellesley Islands Aboriginal Law Justice and Governance Association; Calvin Page; and Grant Garvie. That is not an exhaustive list by any means.

This is the third time I have introduced this bill, or at least a bill in this form based on this principle, in the spirit of the growing sentiment around our state and nation to advance the interests of our first Australians—which I think everyone in this House would strongly agree with—and rectify their on average abysmal socioeconomic conditions, their incarceration rates, their welfare dependency, the violence that is rife in their homes and communities, their poor health outcomes and their life expectancy. I expected much better from this debate. We owe these people a hell of a lot more.

Let me remind you of one of the communities I refer to a lot, Doomadgee, which is one that I am familiar with. They are currently experiencing the impact of floods which has exacerbated a lot of these issues right now. It is a town of about 1,000 people where about 90 per cent or higher identify as first Australians. The unemployment in Doomadgee hovers around 20 per cent. The average household income is \$63,000 versus \$87,000 for the state. It costs about \$600 for a fortnightly trip to the supermarket. What does it cost you? It costs me about \$200 or \$300; it costs them \$600. Try living in that community. The average life expectancy is 49. The crime rate is about 10 times that of Brisbane. A domestic violence breach occurs every day. A person is assaulted almost every day. A home is broken into every three days, and of course that is just the crimes the police know about. Unfortunately, there is a lot that we do not know about that goes on inside homes that is unreported.

Life in Doomadgee is not that easy. Despite that hardship, hope still exists. Quite surprisingly, hope for these people still exists. While the members who have spoken on the bill and provided input into the committee report have empathised with the bill and its intent—and as I said, I appreciate that—none of them acknowledged this hope and none of them have risen to the challenge that was asked of them by the Palm Island mayor, Mislam Sam, who said—and they are powerful words—

I think one thing I will say from the get-go is this community needs a brave state government. Our welfare snowball continues to grow by the day. Every year we have 50 funerals. There are probably two weeks in the calendar year where we do not have a funeral on the island. I have one of the busiest cemeteries and busiest airports. Do you see the correlation? All the people are flying in and out of my community because locals cannot hold down simple local jobs because they cannot access a blue card.

I will put it in the words of Kyle Yanner, the mayor of Mornington Island, who struggled to get a blue card when he became mayor. His community voted for him to be their mayor, but he could not get a blue card. He has it now. He said—

The blue card has failed us, like most other systems in communities. They are not fit for purpose in our communities. At the end of the day, not just individuals but the whole community loses. We also lose. We sometimes get employees, young families from cities like Brisbane or Cairns, who want to come and work here, who want to come and help us, who want to come and make a difference and help us change the struggles that we face, but we lose them mainly because our preschool is normally understaffed. It is not running efficiently because our mob cannot get blue cards to work in this place. It is hard to get family orientated people across to our island to work in the preschool also. Not only do we lose with that; we have young families who lose also. They want to get ahead. They want to build a better life but they cannot because our blue card system restrains our other mob being able to work there to cater for these families who have young families.

Finally, I will refer to the words of the mayor of Yarrabah, Ross Andrews. He said—

For us the blue card issue is important in terms of a lot of the big reforms that are happening around First Nations people—particularly the Voice to Parliament, the Path to Treaty, Closing the Gap, health equity and a few others—both at the state and national level, where First Nations people have to have a voice consistent with fellow Australians. For us, this issue is important in terms of economic engagement and participation.

Like the member for Hinchinbrook said, it is about having that economic participation, that opportunity like the rest of us. He continues—

Blue cards play a part in that as well in terms of getting our people off welfare and engaging in the real economy. There are challenges within the rules of government and how they play out, but there are also opportunities for our people to move forward on many of our challenges.

These are just three voices from the communities where that bill would apply. They are genuine voices who have asked for this bill time and time again. Now they are seeing it for a third time, and for a third time they will see it knocked back again. We will be left back at square one when this bill fails tonight.

This is not my bill. There has been criticism directed towards me in this House. People have said, 'You don't have all the answers.' Well, I don't. I know I don't have the answers. That's why I go out there to ask people, 'How do we fix these things?' One of the reasons this bill is here is partly because one of the initial calls was from the Department of Education in Mount Isa. They said, 'Rob, can you fix the blooming blue card bill? As soon as we get someone good in Doomadgee we have to put them off. You need something that is fit for purpose.' We did not make this up: this came from the community. This is the voice coming out from those Aboriginal communities. This is not my idea, so you are not really criticising me when you say, 'You don't have all the good ideas.' I cannot see a better demonstration of how you give the voice to our first Australian people. This is about saying perhaps with our rigid guidelines we are not always in the best position to make a good judgement call on whether that person is fit for that job in that community.

Mr Dametto: It's pretty paternalistic.

Mr KATTER: It is paternalistic, to say the least. There is a trapdoor for a lot of speakers on this bill who are saying, 'We can't see a deterioration in the standards of this rural set,' so you must be accepting that the rules that would be applied by the local justice group, by the locals, would be of a lesser standard than we would apply. So you are saying they would care less about the safety of their kids than we would.

You could make criticism and say, 'Local justice groups don't have the support,' but you have got to pick someone. There was plenty of time for amendments. You could have picked the council or other groups, but no-one came up with any of those suggestions. You have just sat here and criticised the KAP bill. There have been nice things said about it but I have also heard, 'It just won't work.' Well, give me something that does work because there are some pretty big problems out there to fix. I do not think it will fix all of them, but this was a glaringly obvious one that has been sitting there for 10 years.

It is pretty frustrating when the same issue comes to my office 100 times, so we thought, 'Surely we can make this a bit better.' It does come with risks. Of course it does. Everything we do here comes with risks. The only way to remove the risk is to remove every kid out of the community, so that risk will never be removed. Guess what? A lot of these offences happened despite having the blue card. Waving it around the school or the hospital is not stopping some of the horrible things at the home. As Bravehearts has said, 90 or 95 per cent of what is happening there is happening in the home. Outside of kinship care, most of this debate becomes irrelevant. You keep defaulting to say that we must keep child safety sacrosanct. Who is going to disagree with that? Of course it is, but we have to make a call at some point. What is the cost on the other side of this debate? You will let these adults dwell in misery with no hope of getting a job just so you can sit back and say, 'But at least the kids are safe,' which I do not even think is a valid point.

It is very hard for me to reconcile this momentum built up by the government talking about the Voice and treaty and these are the pathways and we need to close the gap. I could not give a better working example of an issue that is sitting there that would close the gap right now and assist with that but everyone is walking away from it. Again, there are no amendments here from the government. There is nothing here to suggest that we look at the Ochre Card in the Northern Territory because that seems to be working okay. All we have is criticism that there are flaws in the bill. Maybe it does have flaws, but give me something that works then. The government has a lot of staff and a lot of smart people to work this out. I am sure we all care about this issue, and I am sure I do not have the mortgage on compassion for these communities. I am sure everyone here cares just as much as me. If you do, then crikey we have to do something here. There should be a sense of urgency, and if there is not, my goodness me, you are in the wrong job because this is a big issue and a big problem.

We have heard some pretty serious stories in this House, and I am not going to share all of them tonight. Some of them have come up already in some of the speeches. If members are saying that we should do nothing or that we should throw more money at it to get people to help them a bit more with applications, then they are completely removed from the process. That is a completely unrealistic solution. It helps—of course it helps—but it is so far from resolving this issue it is not funny. It really says to me that those people have not lived or worked enough with this issue.

I will go through a few cases. A lot of members of the public say, 'That's letting paedophiles get near kids.' This next example came up in a speech from a government member. Mornington Island had alcohol bans for eight or 10 years and the magistrates were just clogged up with home-brew offences, which ironically was the thing that disqualified you from getting your blue card. I have heard several times in this debate that we cannot have two sets of rules. Well, you already applied two sets of rules; you had alcohol bans. There are multiple examples.

The member for Hinchinbrook mentioned child safety. We had legislation in here that applied a separate standard for a First Australian family. If the child was from a dysfunctional family, they would extend the time they could remain in the care of a household. You are already recognising that there are some differences and nuances associated with different communities and you have changed the rules accordingly, but here you have defaulted back to that standard argument, which is a safe space, saying, 'We can't have two sets of rules.' That is nonsense. It has been done a lot and it is a silly argument to bring up.

I will give a few examples, and this is just a small sample of what I experience all of the time. I have permission from these people to mention these examples. The local mayor from Normanton rang me because the cultural support officer at the Gulf Christian College was declined a blue card. I rang the minister's office down here, which was very helpful. He had held that role successfully for many years without an issue, so this was devastating for him for personal reasons. He had picked himself up off a pretty low base. He was in the local school and the principal and staff loved having him around. His name is Daniel. They appreciated the work that he did. Six months passed after good help from the minister's office, which was really trying. The mayor, Jack Bowden, was so invested in trying to help this bloke. Daniel did receive his blue card after six to 12 months, but the principal got sick of doing the entire workload and he could not wait so they had to employ someone else. So Daniel loses and Normanton loses, but we all get to feel safe because we did not make any amendments to the blue card. We can avoid things like this.

Another example is Calvin Page in Doomadgee. He was so lost. He did not know that I was onto this issue already. He came and saw me and said, 'I just can't work it out. I'm trying to work here in Doomadgee.' The Pages are a big family in Mount Isa, and Marjad Page is a well-respected doctor up there from the same family. He was denied a blue card. The reasons were not well explained to him. He was of the understanding it was due to some minor offending that he had gone to court for before and was due to receive a community service order for. He was unable to agree to community service as he worked out of town quite often. After a number of internal appeals, he never got his blue card. He was unable to stay and we lost Calvin Page. He was pleading for help.

This next one is an interesting one. I should qualify that this lady is in Charters Towers and my bill would not apply to Charters Towers, but I think it still speaks to the principle that we are trying to address. This Indigenous lady in Charters Towers had lost her job due to being rejected for a blue card. She had previously been working for 18 months at a local school as an Indigenous support officer for kids. She admitted she had fines and court appearances in the past; most were non-convictions and were dated. They were drug and assault charges. She attempted to appeal the decision through QCAT but was told she had to wait another two years to apply. The schools wanted her; everyone was happy with the job she was doing. She had successfully raised two of her own children and was now the legal carer of her niece. She said the blue card process made her feel constantly attacked so she threw in the towel. She said her life has gone downhill since she lost her job at the school and she is now suffering mentally and emotionally. That is probably putting a nice bent on it.

We can multiply that by hundreds of stories and I do not hear all of the stories. I am giving the House a small sample of what I encounter. I saw that selectability was one of the contributors on the bill. They are an employer up there. My usual conversation with any health providers, child safety workers and youth workers is, 'You're going to have a problem. You're not going to be able to engage the families because most of the people who have lived experience and are really good at working with these kids won't be able to get the job and you won't be able to give them the job mainly because of blue card.' It is not only because of blue card, but mainly because of it, so we need to solve the blue card problem. The lady from selectability did not know I had this bill in parliament, but she said to me, 'Can you do something? It's crazy. We're trying to employ these people in Doomadgee and Mornington and we can't get anyone. We can't do our job properly.' I thought, 'No kidding. Here's the number for the committee. Ring them and give them your submission. Tell them. I've heard it enough.'

There is just story after story of misery. Yes, there is risk with any solution that is given to these things. No solution would be perfect, as we have found out now. The blue card was done with the best of intentions. It was probably a good idea, but we are learning now that perhaps it has some flaws. Perhaps it has done more inadvertent damage than we set out to address in the first place. I will drill down on that because that is a really important concept I truly believe in.

If mum and dad in Doomadgee have missed out on that job right now, that barrier is too high. More money can be put into helping people to fill out the forms or whatever, but at that point when they decide, 'I'm going to engage. I'm going to advance myself and join the modern economy. I'm going to get a job,' that is a really important time in their life. They are ready to turn around and there needs to be a job ready and they need to be put in a place within a week. They need to get support.

The first comment they get is 'Crikey, we're having problems with your blue card. Don't worry though. We'll appeal it. It might take six to 12 months but just hang around and stay off the grog.' What is inevitably happening is that a lot of these people slip back into that dark place and the kids who we are trying to protect in the first place are at greater risk because mum and dad are still subject to these barriers. Meaningful work is their salvation. It is the one common denominator in just about every conversation I have with people appealing for help up there. They say, 'Why haven't we got the jobs? How come Save the Children got the jobs here? Why have all these out-of-town people got the jobs?'

Like Mislam Sam said in regards to the airport problem, everyone is flying in to do the jobs because the locals cannot get the jobs. If anyone else has a better solution, please share it now because this is not something where we kick the can down the road and say, 'Look, we will get to it.' The problem is there right now.

There are people dying. We heard the terribly distressing story of the girl from Mornington Island. I am sure there was not a person who listened to that in this House, and particularly when it was delivered in the committee hearing, who was not moved to tears. This is causing anguish. It is the height of well-intentioned bureaucracy getting in the road of the right outcomes. It does not matter if you are First Australian, non-Indigenous or whatever; the principle of this should be expanded beyond the Aboriginal communities. There should be some autonomy given beyond a tick-the-box authority here in Brisbane that allocates these blue cards. It must happen because it cannot continue to operate like this, and it is most acute in these Aboriginal communities.

In regards to schooling, Mislam Sam, the mayor of Palm Island, said, 'How are we supposed to encourage kids to go to school?' If mum and dad have had one or two chops at getting a job, they then say, 'Don't worry about that. Those white fellas won't give you the job because you don't have a blue card.' They have had that conversation for five or 10 years now. A whole generation of kids has been built who say, 'Well, why would you bother? Why do you bother going to school?' There must be a correlation with that.

At my own political peril, people come into my office in Mount Isa and say, 'What are you doing about youth crime?' I say, 'You know what, the biggest thing I think I am doing is in regards to blue cards.' The reason the kids are running around the streets in Mount Isa is because they come from a dysfunctional family. What is the problem with the family unit? Invariably, mum and dad do not have a job. What is the problem with getting a job? It is not the only reason, but one of the biggest things you always find again and again—the one big common denominator—is blue cards. They are struggling. These are exactly the people we are trying to help, the ones you want to get off welfare and who are trying to have a go, and the first thing we give them is a barrier. We must change that. Every time we hit that point, we must think, as Mislam Sam said, 'You have to be brave and back these people.' That is what it takes. That is the whole issue of the Voice. If you want the Voice, you have to back these people and make a judgement call. Back it or do not say it at all; it means nothing.

There is risk associated with that. There is risk for the justice groups making these calls themselves. They could fall victim to one of the family groups in town who does not like the outcome of a decision, that is true, but we should all deal with this as a mature society. Everyone is going to have to deal with it at some point. We have to come back to the point that we need to bring these people forward. We have to remove the barriers to the jobs because meaningful work will be their salvation. If you want to fix youth crime, fix the families. If you want to fix the families, get them into jobs. They do not want money. When I go to Doomadgee, they do not say, 'Hey, give me more handouts. Give me more money.' They will not say that. They say, 'How come the white fella has got the job? How come we haven't got that here?' Most of the time the reason is blue cards.

Here we are tonight with an opportunity to fix that. Again, we do not have all the answers—we are not the smartest guys in the room—but we have something. I will guess that there are no amendments coming. There will be no alternatives. There will be no announcements from government tomorrow saying, 'We will overhaul the system.' There may be a statement of, 'We are going to add some more cultural awareness officers in Doomadgee to help with the processing that is happening.' Probably forget it. It is hard enough to try to get people out there now to engage in those spaces. It might help a bit; I probably should not say 'forget it.' But it breaks your heart. We need a really big change. We need the government to be bold to back these people. However it does not look like that is going to happen.

I started sharing this story in my original contribution, but the ridiculous impact of the blue cards was brought up earlier. It does not really relate to the bill, but it does explain the point in regards to the rural fires. We had 400 rural fires leave the service because of blue cards. Do you need any better evidence? I do not think that they were abusers. I bet 90 per cent of them were saying, 'You know what? Stuff that. If you are going to make me get a blue card, I'm out. I am not going to run around chasing kids while I'm fighting fires.'

Ms Boyd interjected.

Mr KATTER: I will take that interjection from the member for Pine Rivers saying they are predators. I would love you to go and take a sample—

Ms Boyd: I didn't say that.

Mr KATTER: Perhaps I misheard it, but you would have to say that that would be the insinuation of some because I have heard people say, 'It was a good result. We got rid of 400 threats to children.' I would not see it that way. Most reasonable people would think that that is probably a bad outcome; that is a bit of overreach from a policy that is not fit for purpose.

I shared a story in the last sitting week about Indigenous rangers. I sat next to a bloke on a plane who said, 'Mate, blue cards!' I always get the same reaction: they shake their heads and say, 'Blue cards—don't start me on that.' He said, 'I had two young blokes I got off the street to get them working, but we had to get them a fire safety certificate which meant they needed a blue card.' These guys are working in the most remote parts of the Queensland bush, yet they need a blue card. So guess what? They do not have a job now. They could not get the blue card. Congratulations! We are keeping kids safe by rangers not getting their blue cards.

These are the inadvertent effects that we are not addressing. That is the real regret of what is happening here tonight. We believe in trying to fix real problems and real solutions, not words, not nebulous type concepts that are going to somehow get these people out of a situation and address those horrible statistics I gave on Doomadgee. These are aspirational people. They want a job. They want a house. There is a racial pay gap here. In Doomadgee, the average annual income is \$63,000. You try to live off that when you are paying 600 bucks a week for groceries. No wonder they are angry. No wonder their kids are angry and coming to Mount Isa and playing up. They are angry because we are not backing them. Here is an opportunity to back them. Go and talk to the mayors. I challenge any member to go and ring a mayor anywhere through the cape or the gulf to argue with the concept here. If you want to argue semantics then put an amendment in or come back tomorrow if you are the government and reintroduce it. Suspend standing orders. Bring something back in which fixes this. I would love to support it. I could not care less if it does not have KAP's name on it; this is much greater than politics.

I do not think there would be too many more important priorities we have in this state than addressing the horrible things afflicting these people. They are getting angrier and angrier because we are not backing them. We can all sit here and feel safe in ourselves and say, 'That is right, we have a good rigorous regime to protect kids.' I am not sure we are protecting the kids any better. Again, I will argue that if you can get mum and dad into work, you have a much better chance of keeping those kids safe in Doomadgee. If you can get them into work and off the grog and off the drugs, you will have a much better chance—a much better chance than any blue card being waved around at the school or the hospital at the moment, or, if I want to make light of it, waving around the sewage plant in Kowanyama. The sewage plant operator in Kowanyama needed a blue card—that is really important.

Where is the benefit? Perhaps there is some small, marginal benefit at the moment with keeping it as it is in terms of child safety where the card will apply, but I think that is well offset. We are heavily discounting and ignoring the amazing benefit of empowering these people in the modern economy. That is such a big thing.


In closing, I ask people to really consider how they vote on this. It is a good opportunity. It is just going to keep coming back to the House if it is not done tonight. You are going to have to address this at some point because the problem is not going away. You can tinker around the edges and say whatever you want, talking your way through the media saying, 'We have this wonderful new policy that does it,' but unless you are going to tackle this problem head on and address it warts and all with the risks that go along with it, unless you are willing to really back and live what you are saying about giving these people a voice, if you want a manifestation of that principle to be put into policy, I cannot see how you can vote against this. Otherwise, I fear you are deeply hypocritical. With that, I respectfully put it to the House and ask you to support the bill.

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

Resolved in the negative under standing order 106(10).

ADJOURNMENT

Morish, Mrs J

 **Mr POWELL** (Glass House—LNP) (6.55 pm): It is rather fitting that I rise tonight following a week celebrating International Women's Day to reflect on the life of an extraordinary woman, Mrs Joane Morish of Woodford. Time does not permit me to expand on Joane's early life. Suffice to say: born in 1934 and trained as a teacher, Mrs Morish transferred from a school in Trinity Beach, Cairns to Woodford in 1973. It was the last transfer she undertook, finishing her teaching career at Woodford P-10 State School 43 years later in 2016. Doing the maths, Joane literally influenced thousands of students at Woodford. In some cases she even taught three generations of the same family. She passed on her love of teaching and passion for students to hundreds of colleagues over the years.


There are so many highlights, so many memories that speak of Joane Morish: her immersing of the school's Koban Japanese visitors in all that was Aussie: twigs of wattle, kangaroos, koalas and lamingtons, and field trips to Elvis Parsley down the road at what was the institution Grapeland; her love of debating, researching, training, even transporting students and staff in her own vehicle to wherever the competition would take them—you would not see that these days—her enthusiasm for sport and sports days, her beloved Stanley House, the team in yellow, of netball, of vigoro in which her team won the state titles in the mid eighties; her dedication in ensuring students could swim, even if it meant learning to do so in Reg Walker's dam across the road from the school—oh how our workplace health and safety and risk assessment procedures have changed!

There was the Lions Youth of the Year, Joane's encouragement of the students at Woodford to just get in there and give it their best shot, to work outside their comfort zone. There were so many enjoyable evenings with our local Lions, councillors, members of parliament and special guests. But always sitting in the mix was Joane, eager to fine-tune what the judges were looking for and get that feedback to the many students she mentored.

In the classroom she delivered many a lesson around history and the wartime and she discussed the old bunker on the oval. Students would listen in amazement as she brought the history of Woodford and the world to life. Joane would reflect on the good old days when there seemed to be more time in the curriculum for school musicals, plays and concerts. Of course, Mrs Morish could not contain her excitement when her beloved donkeys were illustrated in the beautiful children's storybook *Hullabazoo!*

As time moved on and Joane had to give away teaching, she continued to visit her beloved Woodford school, a place that brought her joy and peace. Right to the end she would take up residence in the old dungeon, the archive room, and shuffle through boxes full of school history. Teacher, mentor, coach, friend to so many, a legend, a true Woodford treasure, Mrs Joane Morish passed away on 12 February 2023. Her funeral service was fittingly held at the Woodford P-10 State School on 25 January. It is the consensus of everyone in Woodford and surrounds that Joane is up there now getting everyone moving and exercising and running sports carnivals, musicals, debating and public speaking competitions. Joane would be in her element. Rest in peace, Mrs Morish.

Bundamba Electorate


 **Mr McCALLUM** (Bundamba—ALP) (6.58 pm): Last week we marked Queensland's Women's Week which included our 2023 International Women's Day celebrations. Locally, I was very proud to host a table at the annual Zonta Ipswich International Women's Day breakfast. That always attracts a huge number of supporters. It was almost a complete sellout this year. I was honoured to join our

inspirational local women's leaders which included leaders from Riverview Neighbourhood Watch, our Ripley Valley Community Association as well as other leaders. Our local celebrations also included a high tea hosted by the team from Queensland's Youth and Family Support Service that was backed by local police officers from Goodna. It was an absolutely fantastic event. I would like to say thank you to all of the women in our lives for all that they do for us as individuals and for our community not just on International Women's Day but also the other 364 days each and every year.

We had a wonderful Clean Up Australia Day event locally where I was proud to join with volunteers in Redbank Plains at the Fernbrooke Ridge Sports Ground on what was an absolutely beautiful, stunning Sunday morning. I would like to acknowledge the hard work of Pye Augustine and the other local organisers for putting together what was a brilliant morning where locals came together and really helped beautify our local community.

Our local community has also backed our hugely successful Containers for Change program, which is another shining example of our community spirit of caring for our local environment. I recently had the pleasure of catching up with a little legend of that program, a 2½-year-old called Ramona from Goodna. Ramona has helped her dad, Blair, recycle over 10,000 bottles and cans through the program with the refunds supporting our local Goodna Street Life Christmas appeal to which Ramona and her family donated Hot Wheels cars for Christmas presents. That is absolutely wonderful and it is another incredible display of community pride and passion. I would encourage everyone to keep an eye out for this brightly coloured pair in and around Goodna during their daily walks in the morning.

Bowen, Pink Stumps Day

 **Mr LAST** (Burdekin—LNP) (7.01 pm): To quote the McGrath Foundation, 'pink is the colour'—and I can assure members that it definitely was the colour in Bowen for the recent Pink Stumps Day. When we speak of growth in relation to cancer it is hardly ever good news, but the growth in this event over the last 10 years is definitely good news, with 340 participants at this year's event. 2023 again saw the hardworking committee achieve its goal of raising awareness about breast cancer, its diagnosis and treatment. With the support of the community they also raised much needed funds.


The McGrath Foundation was established by cricketer Glenn McGrath and his late wife, Jane. Despite fighting her own battle with breast cancer, Jane was committed to ensuring every family experiencing breast cancer would have access to a breast care nurse, no matter where they live. The fact that the McGraths wanted to help people no matter where they live is something that struck a chord with many people in regional Queensland and there is no denying that it has struck a chord for people in Bowen.

In regional areas, the support services that we see in larger centres are sometimes simply not available, but Bowen Cricket and the McGrath Foundation are determined to change that. Despite 193 McGrath breast care nurses having already provided support to over 118,000 families, the McGrath Foundation knows that there is more to do in order to achieve its goal of 250 nurses by 2025.

It is a sad fact that most families in the Bowen community, like in other communities, have been touched by breast cancer in some way. Pink Stumps Day gives those families in the wider community an opportunity to not only fundraise but also learn, remember and celebrate. I assure members that, in true Bowen style, the celebration component is well under control. Challenges like a cricket box throwing competition and 'pin the box on the cricketer' were definite highlights and made a great contribution to the fundraising effort.

I am extremely proud of Bowen Cricket Inc. and their efforts to support women fighting breast cancer. I put on the record my thanks and the thanks of the community to Seth, Stacey, Tamika and Hannah for all their hard work. I encourage all members to support Pink Stumps Day in their local community. If a small community like Bowen can put on an event like Pink Stumps Day with 340 participants, it goes to show that there is support right across Queensland. In our rural and regional areas, where we quite often suffer from a lack of services and support, to see the support on that particular day in Bowen—a sea of pink in that great big marquee at the Bowen cricket ground—was certainly a welcome sight.

Bundaberg Electorate

 **Mr SMITH** (Bundaberg—ALP) (7.04 pm): In the last couple of weeks there have been nothing but good stories in the Bundaberg electorate. I have to kick off with Branyan Road State School and the wonderful announcement of a \$605,000 car park redevelopment. It will mean that buses will not be in


areas where cars are; it will be safer for parents, staff and all of the school community. It is a wonderful announcement for one of the best local schools you will find anywhere throughout Queensland. It has a very strong community and is a real credit to the staff, the students, the families and the wider community. I know that Principal Geoff Fitzgerald, who has been a fierce advocate for this project, is very happy, as are school captains Lacey, Caleb, Summer and Lily, who are now all instafamous with their contribution to making sure that this outstanding car park is there for students well into the future.

We have a great local community in Bundaberg. One of the great community organisations is the Angels Community Group. The Angels Community Group does a lot of good work assisting vulnerable people in Bundaberg—those who are facing the vulnerability of homelessness and those who are facing homelessness currently. They do a lot of great supportive work, but that work means that their electricity bill goes up. Sue Tasker, who runs Angels Community Group, has a power bill of \$30,000. Because they supply a lot of food and run a laundry, they needed some support. The Gambling Community Benefit Fund has provided a grant of \$35,000 to install 62 new solar panels. That will drop Sue's power bill by, on average, about 74 per cent. This means Angels can put that money back into their mini-mart and back into looking after the more vulnerable in our community. It is wonderful that we can support the people who support our communities.

When I went along to conduct the press conference with Sue I also met the 12 brand new trainees of the Skilling Queenslanders for Work program. The Angels Community Group are taking on 12 new trainees who are doing a hospitality course. I spoke to Maria, who for a long time did farming and construction work. She wanted a change so she is going into hospitality now through Angels. It is Skilling Queenslanders for Work that is delivering that outstanding opportunity.

When we talk about skilled work, especially across the Wide Bay region, how great is the fee-free TAFE program that is an Albanese and Palaszczuk government initiative? It is not the easiest thing to say over and over again in a press conference, but it has outstanding results. We will have more people in Bundaberg signing up for term 2, which starts in April. They will go into nursing, individual support and early learning as well. It is nothing but 'win, win, win' for the Bundaberg electorate when it comes to the Palaszczuk Labor government.

Gold Coast, Hooning and Noisy Vehicles

 **Mr LANGBROEK** (Surfers Paradise—LNP) (7.07 pm): I rise to speak on an ongoing issue in my community across the Gold Coast—that is, hooning and noisy noncompliant vehicles and the lack of enforcement by our stretched police. It is very frustrating for residents from Main Beach through Surfers Paradise to Broadbeach. In areas such as Old Burleigh Road, Wharf Road and Surf Parade, residents are so angry that they are requesting traffic-calming devices on Surf Parade and Queensland Avenue.

On 8 November last year I asked the police minister for a breakdown of the numbers regarding vehicles impounded, vehicles forfeited to the state and infringement notices for illegal vehicle modifications. The minister's answer highlighted that there have been fewer penalties compared to previous years, which again highlights the lack of resources to police this matter.

The issue of hooning and noisy vehicles continues to plague all areas of my electorate. The residents of Main Beach filed an e-petition in the parliament calling for the government to install prominent speed limit signage and speed cameras to enforce the speed limit. The petition, which is currently before the House and closes on 28 March 2023, has had 418 signatures. My electorate office is regularly contacted by residents concerned about this issue. They cite genuine health and safety concerns including the risk of accidents, increased danger for people crossing the road and residents having difficulty enjoying their residences and sleeping due to the noisy environment created by noncompliant vehicles and people hooning.

I refer to a news article dated 28 May 2023 from the *Daily Mail* titled 'Wild moment more than 100 hoons shut down one of Australia's busiest freeways—forcing irate drivers to brake suddenly and wait for them to finish'. The article refers to the M1 Pacific Motorway near Yatala, north of the Gold Coast and describes young men in hoodies performing burnouts and doughnuts. This is another example of this government's failure to provide appropriate policing resources and penalties.


During the pandemic the hooning and noncompliance vehicles issue began to increase in my electorate due to a diminished traffic police presence, but now in 2023 Gold Coasters are well and truly fed up with these brazen hoons and their appetite for criminal behaviour. Many are using social media and even our local newspaper the *Gold Coast Bulletin* to promote their escapades. I refer to one

notorious hooning gang on the Gold Coast calling themselves the Mexican Hoon Cartel. This group sent the *Bulletin* videos of the alleged incidents to gain exposure and egg on community groups and authorities, using fake names such as Pablo Skidscober and El Slappo. I table a series of articles that refer to the matters I have raised.

Tabled paper: Bundle of media articles relating to hooning at the Gold Coast [\[296\]](#).

These issues proliferate from Fridays to Sundays on the Isle of Capri, from Main Beach through to Surfers, Chevron Island to Broadbeach, Clear Island Waters, Bundall Road, Ashmore Road, Nerang Broadbeach Road and Bermuda Street, Robina Parkway and Markeri Street. The City of Gold Coast needs to consider a traffic-calming solution.

Ipswich Kindergarten Association


 **Ms HOWARD** (Ipswich—ALP) (7.10 pm): On 22 October last year—yes, I have been waiting a while to make this speech—I was greatly honoured to attend the 85th anniversary of Ipswich's oldest kindergarten, Ipswich Kindergarten Association or, as it is better known locally, Milford Street Kindy. Milford Street Kindy has been an iconic part of Ipswich since 1937. It is not only the oldest kindy in Ipswich but also the second oldest kindy in Queensland. Its beginnings in the 1930s are a remarkable story of Ipswich women who understood the immense value of kindergarten education and who used their passion and commitment to establish a kindy that would go on to educate generations of Ipswich kids.

Milford Street Kindy's first director, Marjorie Whyte, was a graduate of the Brisbane Kindergarten Training College and purchased the rights for the kindergarten in 1936. She put together an all-female committee of ladies and mothers who would be responsible for raising funds for kindy staff and all the kindy's running costs. In the spirit of International Women's Day, it is really important to highlight the important work that these pioneers did. Their contribution to Milford Street Kindy's legacy is truly remarkable, as are the numerous women and men who have either worked for the kindy or who have volunteered their time on the Ipswich Kindergarten Association's committee over its 85-year history.

The Ipswich Kindergarten Association recently held its AGM at which it welcomed three of its five life members—Vicki Doig, Ken Millers and Rohan McPhail. The meeting was made extra special when outgoing treasurer, David Love, was surprised with his own life membership. The names I have just mentioned are not just linked to the Ipswich kindergarten; they are Ipswich people who wear many hats and that is why this kindergarten is so close to Ipswich people's hearts. There are few people I encounter in Ipswich who do not have some sort of connection to the kindy and we can never underestimate the influence this has on the type of community we live in. It is just one of the reasons I am so proud to be the Ipswich representative in this place.

One of the life members I want to talk about tonight is Vicky Doig. Vicky has had a longstanding and deep connection with Milford Street Kindy going back to when she attended the kindy as a child in 1954. She did work experience and volunteer work at the kindy while at high school and uni and then in 1972 Vicky was appointed as a teacher where she went on to have a long and illustrious career serving as the director for around 40 years. Vicky is a valued expert in her field and she is widely recognised for her kindness, her compassion and her vision. She has taught generations of Ipswich kids and she is a much-loved and valued life member. Labor governments have a long recognised history of focusing on early childhood education and we fought hard to make sure that kids get access to cheap or free kindy and preschool. That is why this government invested a billion dollars into providing free or cheap kindy earlier this year to help increase kindy participation. We know the importance of early childhood education. We are having lots of discussions around youth justice issues and we know that early intervention is best.

Connors, Ms S; International Women's Day


 **Ms CAMM** (Whitsunday—LNP) (7.13 pm): Tonight I want to thank Suzanne Connors not only on behalf of my local constituency of Proserpine, the greater Whitsunday region and the Mackay Isaac Whitsunday disaster management region but also on behalf of Queenslanders. Sue has been a member of the SES for 30 years and group leader of Proserpine for 15 years, and she is most recognised across this state as a peer support worker in times of disaster. She has received many commendations from the SES as well as our Citizen of the Year award last year. Sue has responded to major events including tropical cyclones Debbie, Marcia, Dillon, Ida, Yasi, Ului, Larry, Rockhampton floods, Hamilton Island

plane crashes and numerous land searches across our state. Being a relatively small SES group, Sue has been involved every step of the way in every local event and her 30 years of dedication along with her husband and her children has not gone unnoticed. We were pleased to celebrate with Sue a few weeks ago, but as a peer support officer she has provided support that is hard to put into words in terms of how much it is valued and the people she has touched across Queensland, and we thank her for her service.

I also want to acknowledge, as part of International Women's Day celebrations across Mackay and the Whitsundays, the Zonta Club of Mackay and in particular Karen Jacobsen, who was the guest speaker and who will launch next month Misogyny Opus. I know that many members of this House who may have heard a misogyny speech once or twice will really appreciate the launch that will happen in Mackay. I certainly will be attending and look forward to that event. I also thank Zonta Whitsundays for its contribution to International Women's Day across the Whitsundays. It does so much in our community. I also thank Fallon from the Just Saying Project who hosted the women's awards night in Mackay. Women's intuition is a powerful force of connection. It helps us find joy, strength and purpose and every day across our Mackay community Fallon instils that in women.

I also want to take this opportunity to recognise the contribution of those opposite today in the House regarding International Women's Day. I am used to the Attorney-General giving the same speech every third or fourth week criticising the opposition LNP women, but I note the hypocrisy of members of this House who speak about International Women's Day and yet criticise the women who serve this state on this side of the House. I expect that from some opposite, but I did not expect that from the member for Jordan today. I did not expect that when I heard some of her words. While we may fit in a maxi taxi, we actually enjoy spending time together as women from the LNP. We are proud conservative women and we will not be criticised by those opposite.


Mooney, Ms B

 **Mr TANTARI** (Hervey Bay—ALP) (7.16 pm): Given that last week we celebrated International Women's Day, I want to acknowledge an extraordinary Australian women's cricketer who has made a name for herself both on and off the field and who just happens to have made good from Hervey Bay. I am of course referring to none other than the extraordinary Beth Mooney, who has been a force to be reckoned with in the cricketing world. Whilst Beth Mooney was born in Shepparton, Victoria, we in Hervey Bay are proud to call her one of our own. When Beth was 10 years old, she and her family moved to Hervey Bay where she attended Star of the Sea Catholic Primary School and Xavier Catholic College. Growing up, Beth had a passion for cricket and played for her local team before eventually making her way to the big leagues.

Her talent and hard work soon caught the attention of selectors and in 2016 she made her debut for the Australian women's cricket team. Since then, Beth has gone on to achieve great success and has been a consistent performer for the Australian team, playing a vital role in several of its greatest victories. In 2020 Beth played a significant role in helping Australia win the T20 World Cup final against India and picked up the Player of the Series award for her outstanding performances throughout the tournament. Just recently, Beth did it again and played a significant role in helping Australia win the 2023 T20 World Cup. Beth top scored in Australia's 19-run victory against South Africa, where she again starred with an unbeaten 74 not out and was named Player of the Final for her match-winning performance.

Beth's achievements in cricket have been nothing short of remarkable, but what makes her even more special is her humble nature and her dedication to giving back to her community. Despite her busy schedule, Beth regularly returns to Hervey Bay to inspire the next generation of cricketers and to give back to the town that supported her in her early days. Beth's success story is a testament to the fact that hard work and determination can take you places. Her story is an inspiration to young girls—and indeed to all young cricketers—who dream of making it big in cricket, or any other field. Her achievements on the field and her dedication to her community make her a role model for us all. Beth Mooney is not only an exceptional cricketer but also an outstanding human being who has made her adopted hometown of Hervey Bay proud. Her achievements in cricket are a testament to her talent and hard work and her dedication to giving back to her community is a testament to her character. I am confident that Beth will continue to achieve great success in her cricketing career and her long life after cricket. Beth, Hervey Bay and indeed Australia are proud of you. Well done, Beth Mooney.

Moggill Electorate, Australia Day


 **Dr ROWAN** (Moggill—LNP) (7.18 pm): On Australia Day in January it was once again a great privilege and honour to join thousands of local residents across the electorate of Moggill and recognise our nation's deep shared history and culturally rich and diverse communities. At the Our Lady of the Rosary School in Kenmore it was my pleasure to welcome the more than 40 new Australian citizens from 19 countries at a special citizenship ceremony hosted by the Rotary Club of Kenmore. This event is now in its 26th year. I offer my congratulations to president, Dr Sanjoti Parekh, of the Rotary Club of Kenmore and all Kenmore Rotary Club members for hosting this annual ceremony.

Our local Australia Day festivities in the electorate of Moggill would not be complete without the Pullenvale lawnmower race. It was wonderful to see that despite the incredible heat and humidity local residents pulled up camp chairs and laid out picnic blankets on their driveways and front lawns to watch this great annual spectacle. This year I again supported the Mount Crosby Bowls Club and provided sponsorship for its Australia Day extravaganza. Families from across the community, particularly Karana Downs, Mount Crosby and beyond, came together for a great barbecue and live music, with children having a great time on the jumping castle out on the green and some unique Australian activities, including thong throwing and egg-and-spoon races. I would like to acknowledge the club president Mr Dan Parker and I look forward to working with Dan and the Mount Crosby Bowls Club committee to further enhance this fantastic local community club.

Later in the day it was a further privilege to welcome 20 new Australian citizens from seven countries at a special Australia Day citizenship ceremony hosted by the Karana-Bellbowrie Rotary Club at the Bellbowrie Sports and Community Club. My congratulations to Karana-Bellbowrie Rotary Club president, Mel Newberry, and all Rotarians and volunteers for making this ceremony possible. I would also like to give a special thank you to all members of the Brisbane Citizens Concert Band who gave a terrific performance as a part of the ceremony. The Bellbowrie Sports and Community Club also hosted an outstanding community afternoon event for residents, complete with market stalls and showcasing great community organisations, including the Moggill group SES, the 4070 Neighbourhood Watch with Jordan Vollmer, also the Queensland Police Service's 'Ivan' mobile police beat van. Also thanks to patrol group inspector Corey Allen APM and Acting Senior Sergeant Darin Carruthers, as well as other local community groups, including the Moggill Girl Guides, the Moggill Scouts Group and the Moggill Cricket Club. Well done to Sarah Dick and Amanda Strachan of the Bellbowrie Sports and Community Club in organising the Bellbowrie festivities.

After an extensive day out across the electorate of Moggill, it was a pleasure to conclude the day by joining Brookfield Show Society president Dan Petrie and other local residents for an afternoon at the Brookfield Showgrounds where many were enjoying a well-earned drink at the iconic Brookfield Bar. My thanks again to all residents and local organisations for bringing our community together each in their unique way to mark Australia Day, celebrating our nation's shared history whilst also embracing the wealth of cultures and communities that make our nation and state of Queensland so unique.

Nicklin Electorate

 **Mr SKELTON** (Nicklin—ALP) (7.21 pm): It gives me immense pleasure to update the House on some of the remarkable developments taking place on the Sunshine Coast hinterland. As the representative of this thriving community it is my honour to share the latest achievements and progress of some local groups. In the past month I have had the honour of attending several school investiture ceremonies where we celebrated the skills, dedication and potential of our young leaders. I extend my heartfelt congratulations to all the newly appointed student leaders across the Sunshine Coast and I wish them the best for their upcoming year. These young leaders have the potential to have a positive impact on our community and I have great hope for their bright future.

I am thrilled to announce that I recently had the privilege of awarding the Nicklin Community Champion Award to the Cooroy Gymnastics Club. This is the biggest club on the Sunshine Coast and one of the biggest in Queensland. This recognition is a testament to the tireless efforts of volunteers to grow the club and keep our children healthy and fit. It is encouraging to see local clubs like the Cooroy Gymnastics Club contributing to the training of the next generation of athletes, especially with the 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games on the horizon. They continue to grow and I will support that.

Last Thursday I had the pleasure of attending the Nambour community dinner which has been set up by citizens in Nambour to support people who are struggling with the cost of living, housing shortages and homelessness. I had the pleasure of taking over the grill from Mike and grilling wonderful

gourmet sausages provided by Nambour Heights Butchery, with buns provided by the Gourmet Storr and all the sauces and drinks provided by Suncoast Christian Care. It was a wonderful opportunity for a lot of different people in the community and it happens every Thursday night. It breaks down barriers. Everyone can have a conversation. I commend those groups for bringing everyone together and having that connection on a Thursday night in our wonderful little square.

On Friday I will attend the International Festival of Indigenous Football at the University of the Sunshine Coast where I look forward to welcoming the Native Indian Football Association of Canada as they prepare to take on our very own Australian Indigenousroos and the Australian Indigenous Koalas football teams. This event highlights the importance of cultural exchange and sportsmanship and provides an excellent opportunity for our community to come together while we promote and showcase Indigenous football talents against one of the most respected Indigenous football nations in the world.

In conclusion, the Sunshine Coast hinterland has exceptional young leaders, talented athletes, dedicated volunteers and community groups. We are building a better community. I am proud of the remarkable work happening there.

The House adjourned at 7.25 pm.

ATTENDANCE

Andrew, Bailey, Bates, Bennett, Berkman, Bleijie, Bolton, Boothman, Boyd, Brown, Bush, Butcher, Camm, Crandon, Crawford, Crisafulli, D'Ath, Dametto, de Brenni, Dick, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Frecklington, Furner, Gerber, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Hart, Head, Healy, Hinchliffe, Howard, Hunt, Janetzki, Katter, King A, King S, Knuth, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Lauga, Leahy, Linard, Lister, Lui, MacMahon, Mander, Martin, McCallum, McDonald, McMahon, McMillan, Mellish, Mickelberg, Miles, Millar, Minnikin, Mullen, Nicholls, O'Connor, O'Rourke, Palaszczuk, Pease, Perrett, Pitt, Powell, Power, Pugh, Purdie, Richards, Robinson, Rowan, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Scanlon, Simpson, Skelton, Smith, Stevens, Stewart, Sullivan, Tantari, Walker, Watts, Weir, Whiting