



RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

Hansard Home Page: <http://www.parliament.qld.gov.au/work-of-assembly/hansard>

Email: hansard@parliament.qld.gov.au

Phone (07) 3553 6344

FIRST SESSION OF THE FIFTY-SEVENTH PARLIAMENT

Wednesday, 29 March 2023

Subject	Page
SPEAKER'S RULING	707
Housing Legislation Amendment Bill, Amendment Out of Order	707
SPEAKER'S STATEMENTS	707
Hanlon, Ms S	707
School Group Tours.....	708
PETITION	708
TABLED PAPER	708
MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS	708
Housing	708
Hate Crimes, Legislation.....	709
Defence Manufacturing.....	710
Housing	710
North-West Queensland, Flood Recovery	711
Housing	711
Housing	711
Housing	712
Forensic DNA Testing.....	713
Training and Skills, Infrastructure.....	713
North-West Queensland, Flood Recovery	714
Hate Crimes, Legislation.....	714
Workplace Safety, Mental Health	715
Hate Crimes, Legislation.....	715
NOTICE OF MOTION	716
Cairns, Townsville and Redlands Electorates.....	716
QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE	716
Specialists, Wait Times.....	716

Table of Contents – Wednesday, 29 March 2023

Specialists, Wait Times	717
Infrastructure	718
Emergency Departments, Wait Times	718
Regional Queensland, Jobs	719
Emergency Departments, Wait Times	720
Housing	721
Public Hospitals	721
Housing Investment Fund	722
Maternity Services, Minister for Health and Ambulance Services	723
Women in Leadership	723
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Extract, dated 30 November 2021, from the <i>Record of Proceedings</i> , Queensland Parliament	724
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Media article, undated, titled “Extreme” Queensland LNP vetting allegedly focused on female candidates’ sexual histories’	724
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Media article, undated, titled ‘QLD election 2020: LNP candidate’s “misogynist” Facebook post’	724
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Media article, dated 4 March 2015, titled ‘LNP hosts International Women’s Day function at Tattersall’s male-only club’	724
Maternity Services, Member for Gladstone	724
Education Infrastructure	725
AUKUS, Jobs	725
Rural and Remote Queensland, Health Worker Accommodation	726
Dalby South State School, Air Conditioning	727
Sunshine Coast, Transport Infrastructure	727
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Document, undated, titled ‘Executive Summary: The Project Cost Summaries for NCC-60’	727
Horseracing, Broadcasting	728
Police Resources, Community Safety	728
MOTION	729
Suspension of Standing Orders	729
CRIMINAL CODE (SERIOUS VILIFICATION AND HATE CRIMES) AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL	729
Introduction	729
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Criminal Code (Serious Vilification and Hate Crimes) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023	729
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Criminal Code (Serious Vilification and Hate Crimes) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023, explanatory notes	729
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Criminal Code (Serious Vilification and Hate Crimes) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023, statement of compatibility with human rights	729
Referral to Legal Affairs and Safety Committee	732
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL	732
Second Reading	732
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Article from <i>Queensland Country Life</i> online, dated 23 March 2023, titled ‘Killing with kindness: Mulga “deserts” prompt calls for changes to vegetation code, P5’	743
Consideration in Detail	752
Clause 1, as read, agreed to	752
Clause 2—	752
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Environmental Protection and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022, explanatory notes to Hon. Meaghan Scanlon’s amendments	752
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Environmental Protection and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022, statement of compatibility with human rights contained in Hon. Meaghan Scanlon’s amendments	752
Amendment agreed to	752
Clause 2, as amended, agreed to	752
Clause 3, as read, agreed to	752
Clauses 4 and 5—	752
Clauses 4 and 5, as read, agreed to	753
Clauses 6 to 104, as read, agreed to	753
Clause 105—	753
Division: Question put—That clause 105, as read, stand part of the bill.	754
Resolved in the affirmative	754
Clause 105, as read, agreed to	754
Clauses 106 to 145, as read, agreed to	754
Schedule—	754
Amendment agreed to	754
Schedule, as amended, agreed to	754
Third Reading	754
Long Title	754
Amendment agreed to	754
SPEAKER’S STATEMENT	755
Cameras in Chamber	755

Table of Contents – Wednesday, 29 March 2023

POLICE POWERS AND RESPONSIBILITIES (JACK'S LAW) AMENDMENT BILL; POLICE SERVICE ADMINISTRATION AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL (NO. 2)	755
Second Reading (Cognate Debate)	755
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Community Support and Services Committee: Report No. 27, 57th Parliament—Police Powers and Responsibilities (Jack's Law) Amendment Bill 2022, government response	755
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Community Support and Services Committee: Report No. 26, 57th Parliament—Police Service Administration and Other Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 2) 2022, government response	755
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Police Powers and Responsibilities (Jack's Law) Amendment Bill 2022, amendments to be moved by Mr Dale Last MP	758
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Police Powers and Responsibilities (Jack's Law) Amendment Bill 2022, explanatory notes to Mr Dale Last's amendments	758
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Police Powers and Responsibilities (Jack's Law) Amendment Bill 2022, statement of compatibility with human rights contained in Mr Dale Last's amendments	758
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Letter, dated 30 June 2022, from the member for Thuringowa, Mr Aaron Harper MP, to the Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services, Hon. Mark Ryan	775
MOTION	778
Cairns, Townsville and Redlands Electorates	778
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Article from the <i>Courier-Mail</i> , dated 4 December 2020, titled 'Budget paper blooper over new \$40 million Redland hospital address'	779
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Article from the <i>Townsville Bulletin</i> , dated 2 May 2019, titled 'Thuringowa MP Aaron Harper needs refresher on his job'	779
Division: Question put—That the amendment be agreed to	791
Resolved in the affirmative	791
Question put—That the motion, as amended, be agreed to	791
Resolved in the affirmative	792
POLICE POWERS AND RESPONSIBILITIES (JACK'S LAW) AMENDMENT BILL; POLICE SERVICE ADMINISTRATION AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL (NO. 2)	792
Second Reading (Cognate Debate)	792
ADJOURNMENT	800
Gladfield Driver Reviver; Cunninghams Gap	800
Powell, Mr N, OAM	800
Hanlon, Ms S	801
Rotary Club of Archerfield; World Arts and Multi-Culture Inc.	802
Toowoomba, Roads	802
Cost of Living; Waterford Electorate, Easter	803
Townsville Enterprise	803
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Document, dated March 2023, titled 'Townsville Enterprise—Opportunity: Townsville North Queensland: Major economic development initiatives and investment opportunities, Edition 06'	804
Boyd-Boland, Father J, OFM; Out, Mr R	804
Noosa Electorate, Youth Crime	805
Redland City	805
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Article from the <i>Redland City Bulletin</i> , dated 27 March 2023, titled 'Mayor Karen Williams pledges to champion next generation as she pushes for re-election in 2024'	805
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Document, undated, titled 'Redland City Council Election 2024 Have Your Say'	806
ATTENDANCE	806

WEDNESDAY, 29 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.

SPEAKER'S RULING

Housing Legislation Amendment Bill, Amendment Out of Order



Mr SPEAKER: Honourable members, yesterday during the second reading debate on the Housing Legislation Amendment Bill the member for South Brisbane sought to move an amendment to the second-reading question. The proposed amendment was that the words 'be now read a second time' be deleted and the following words be inserted—

That Queensland introduce a two-year rent freeze, followed by a long-term cap on rent increases at two per cent every two years. The amendment was ruled out of order by the Deputy Speaker. I think it is important that the reasons for the ruling be provided for the benefit of the House.

There is no difficulty in members moving reasoned amendments to the second reading question, and this is contemplated by standing order 141. There is a requirement in standing order 141 that an amendment to the question for the second reading of the bill must be directly relevant to the question for the second reading. There are precedents for dilatory amendments to, for example, refer bills to committees, refer bills back to a committee or forestall the second reading until a specified matter occurs. However, the member for South Brisbane's proposed amendment sought to go further than to seek to delay the second reading until some identified future event. It sought to remove the question that 'the bill be now read a second time' in its entirety. The member for South Brisbane's proposed amendment was contrary to standing order 141 because it was not directly relevant to the question before the House—that is, that the Housing Legislation Amendment Bill, in its current form, be now read a second time. Accordingly, the amendment was out of order.

SPEAKER'S STATEMENTS

Hanlon, Ms S



Mr SPEAKER: Honourable members, 50 years of service with the Queensland parliament is a significant milestone which should not go unmarked. Sue Hanlon commenced employment with the Queensland parliament on 26 March 1973 as a stenographer in the Parliamentary Library. In February 1984 Sue was appointed as a Parliamentary Library research aide. In April 1990 Sue resigned from her position at Parliament House to commence working as an electorate secretary for the then member for Redlands Mr Darryl Briskey. In January 1991 Sue returned to the Parliamentary Library having been appointed as an Information Systems Support Officer. In November 1992 Sue again resigned from her position at Parliament House to return to work for Mr Briskey in his electorate office. In October 2006 Sue commenced working for Mr Phil Weightman MP in the Cleveland electorate office. In April 2009 Sue commenced working, and remains working, for Dr Mark Robinson MP, who had been elected as the member for Cleveland, now named Oodgeroo. Sue has worked for three different members on both sides of the House. In her own words, Sue commented—

Never in my wildest dreams, when I walked through the gates in 1973, did I ever imagine that I would be working for the Parliament 50 years on. What a wonderful journey it has been and I feel that I could quite happily continue for another 50 years—until realism kicks in!

Congratulations, Sue.

Honourable members: Hear, hear!

School Group Tours



Mr SPEAKER: Honourable members, I wish to advise that we will be visited in the gallery this morning by students and teachers from Marist College Ashgrove in the electorate of Ferny Grove and St Margaret's Anglican Girls School in the electorate of Clayfield.

PETITION

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

Main Beach, Road Safety

Mr Langbroek, from 393 petitioners, requesting the House to reduce the speed limit from 60 to 40 km/hr along Waterways Drive, Seaworld Drive and Macarthur Parade at Main Beach and to install speed cameras to enforce the reduced speed limit [\[383\]](#).

Petition received.

TABLED PAPER

TABLING OF DOCUMENTS (SO 32)

REPORT BY THE CLERK

The following report was tabled by the Clerk—

[384](#) 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—

Housing Legislation Amendment Bill 2022

Amendments made to Bill

Short title and consequential references to short title—

Omit—

'Housing Legislation Amendment Bill 2022'

Insert—

'Housing Legislation Amendment Bill 2023'

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Housing



Hon. A PALASZCZUK (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Olympic and Paralympic Games) (9.35 am): Yesterday's housing round table saw important housing sector stakeholders come together with the government in a spirit of cooperation to get more roofs over Queenslanders' heads. It gave our government the opportunity to tell stakeholders about the critical next steps we are taking to alleviate pressure on the more than one million Queenslanders who rent their homes and what we are doing to urgently address homelessness in Queensland, and we will continue to work together with those stakeholders. That spirit of cooperation is highlighted by their reactions to the round table and our government's new initiatives. Tenants Queensland CEO, Penny Carr, said—

I'm very pleased to hear the Premier say she's going to limit the frequency of rent increases. That will be helpful.

The Local Government Association of Queensland CEO Alison Smith said—

We welcomed today's announcement of State Government funding to facilitate the delivery of housing action plans across Queensland.

We look forward to working with the State and our members in coming months to progress this critical work.

Property Council Queensland Executive Director Jen Williams said—

Today's announcement will help Queensland's emerging Build to Rent sector overcome many of the financial hurdles it traditionally faces and will spur on a wave of new housing, providing better outcomes for tenants.

Initiatives like this one embody the Government leadership and focus on increasing supply that is required to respond to the housing crisis.

Q Shelter Executive Director Fiona Caniglia said—

Q Shelter welcomes policy changes announced today which are going to encourage more built to rent in Queensland.

We also welcome more support for local governments to develop housing action plans, and an extension of support for families.

As I told Queenslanders yesterday, we will immediately act to place a limit on the number of rent increases that can be imposed on tenants each year by legislating to allow just one annual rent increase. This new provision will be in place as quickly as possible by the start of the new financial year to give all Queenslanders who rent a fair go and achieve the right balance between their rights and interests and those of property owners to sustain healthy rental supply. We have allocated an additional \$28 million to continue the Immediate Housing Response Package for another year which will provide emergency hotel accommodation across Queensland as well as rental and bond payments to help tenants keep a roof over their heads. Among the other important announcements our government was able to make yesterday through the round table were land tax concessions for build-to-rent developments that provide a minimum affordable housing component, which was very well received, and the delivery of a second QBuild Rapid Accommodation and Apprenticeship Centre in Far North Queensland in Cairns to further support delivery of state-of-the-art factory built homes.

Today I can make a further crucial announcement that will also help keep roofs over Queenslanders' heads. Funding from our government's \$2 billion Housing Investment Fund will secure housing in Townsville and across South-East Queensland through a partnership with community housing provider National Affordable Housing. We will do that by allowing National Affordable Housing to investigate purchasing up to 335 individual properties that investors have elected to sell once they exit the federal government's soon to be closed National Rental Affordability Scheme. Let me make it clear: where the Commonwealth has stepped out of the housing sector, our government will step in for Queenslanders. The clear message from yesterday's round table was that the Commonwealth needs to be doing more to provide essential housing. It needs to step up more into this space.

Opposition members interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: The LNP and Greens support might go some way down in Canberra as well. We know that up to 5,000 properties are coming off the NRAS and these 335 are part of the first tranche. Those homes could be saved as social and affordable housing. These homes would otherwise have been lost from the pool of affordable properties once they exit NRAS.

Today I can announce that over 50 homes are already under contract, with the purchase of up to 100 properties to settle across the second half of 2023. Those properties include a mix of detached housing, townhouses, duplexes and apartments. The impending closure of the National Rental Affordability Scheme means now is the time to act and we have started acting quickly. By purchasing these homes we can provide peace of mind for existing residents and homes for households from the social housing register where properties are vacant. Securing these homes is another way our government is providing a fair go for renters.

Hate Crimes, Legislation



Hon. A PALASZCZUK (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Olympic and Paralympic Games) (9.40 am): There is no place in any community for hate crimes: people being vilified simply because of their race, religion, gender, sexual orientation or nationality. That is why our government is cracking down, including amending the Criminal Code to ban the display of hate symbols like those of Nazi ideology. Later today the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice will introduce the Criminal Code (Serious Vilification and Hate Crimes) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023. It includes tougher penalties and longer jail terms.


I am proud that our government continues to put the safety of Queenslanders first. Penalties for serious racial, religious, sexuality or gender identity vilification will be harsher. The reforms also bring in a new circumstance of aggravation for more serious offences. Importantly, it will remove barriers to commencing prosecutions for serious vilification offences. As a community we reject the use of hate symbols and acknowledge the impact they have on the safety and security of Queenslanders. Our government will help protect Queenslanders from extreme prejudice and hate.

I have spoken about the experiences of my own family who fled post Second World War Europe to seek a better life here. We must never forget history and its ongoing legacy in our community. Last October our government announced the Queensland Holocaust Museum and Education Centre's temporary inner-city location in Brisbane's cathedral precinct. This was possible due to a partnership between the Queensland Holocaust Museum and Education Centre and the Catholic Archdiocese of Brisbane. Our government's contribution of \$3.5 million is being matched by the federal government, with \$500,000 from the Brisbane City Council.

This is a significant milestone in Queensland's cultural history. The museum will honour the legacy of those who faced atrocities during the Second World War and will inspire and educate Queenslanders to stand up against prejudice, hate and racism. The fit-out of the interim site is well


underway and work is also progressing on an online museum and mobile facility. It is due to be completed in the middle of the year. Through these actions our government is sending a clear message that vilification based on race, religion, language, nationality, sexual orientation or gender will not be tolerated by our government or our community.

Defence Manufacturing

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Olympic and Paralympic Games) (9.43 am): Manufacturing in Queensland means one thing: jobs. Our government will back jobs for Queenslanders every single time. That is why we threw our support behind the growing defence manufacturing sector. Our government worked closely with Rheinmetall to secure the \$5.2 billion phase 2 project of the Land 400 program and we helped build the \$170 million Military Vehicle Centre of Excellence at Redbank—the most advanced military vehicle manufacturing facility in Australia, if not the world. Fast forward to today, Rheinmetall is now supporting 600 local manufacturing jobs in Ipswich. It was great to meet a lot of those workers at Rheinmetall earlier this month when, with the Deputy Premier and member for Bundamba, we officially marked construction of the first Queensland-made combat reconnaissance vehicles. This will contribute \$10 billion to the state's economy across the Queensland supply chain over the next 10 years.

I am also advised that talks are underway between Australia and Germany to manufacture and export our Queensland-made Boxer CRVs for the German Army. Milvehcoe is fully operational, fully staffed and has the necessary supply chains in place. That is why our government is backing Rheinmetall to secure the Land 400 phase 3 contract. A decision on phase 3 by the federal government is imminent and Queensland is ready to go. Whether it is buses, trains or armoured vehicles, we want them built in Queensland by Queenslanders.

Housing

 **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) (9.43 am): The Palaszczuk government is determined to help as many Queenslanders as possible into secure housing. Yesterday stakeholders from industry, local government and community came together to work on solutions to increase housing supply and affordability. This is a national challenge that is being felt across Queensland and across the country. We were able to update them on the many actions already taken and next steps to address housing supply. The Palaszczuk government has made a number of changes to the planning rules to improve housing supply and diversity and make it easier for local governments to approve more homes. Already more than 100 granny flats have been rented out through the private market.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: The Treasurer will cease his interjections. The member for Everton will cease his interjections. This is not going to turn into yesterday, members. I am making myself clear very early in the piece.


Dr MILES: Already more than 100 granny flats have been rented out through the private market and more than 30 are currently listed as 'for rent' on realestate.com. There is no silver bullet, but practical changes like this are helping to bring more supply to market. I want to again thank all of the participants in our two round tables and the Housing Summit for their commitment to work with us to provide more homes for Queenslanders.

I am sure the member for Aspley will be pleased to know works will begin this week on the final 25 terrace home lots at Carseldine Village. Delivery of the homes in the last stages are being supported by a \$7.8 million investment from the Queensland government with Queensland-owned civil construction company Shadforth set to commence works. When completed Carseldine Village will contain up to 606 dwellings.


Not only are we increasing housing supply but Carseldine Village is at the forefront of net zero energy emissions homes. It is the first 100 per cent solar and battery residential terrace home community in Queensland. Each home will have PV solar battery storage, wifi air-conditioning systems controlled by smartphones and heat pump hot water systems, saving homeowners substantial amounts on their electricity bills. Additionally, the garages will include a power outlet ready to accommodate a future electric vehicle charger.

Over 75 per cent of the natural bushland on the original site has been retained and there is more than 18 hectares of green and open space. With Carseldine Village, the Palaszczuk government, through Economic Development Queensland, is making sustainable living affordable. The Palaszczuk government is committed to delivering more affordable and diverse housing options for Queenslanders. We are working hard, together with stakeholders, to improve housing supply, security, affordability and diversity right across the state.

North-West Queensland, Flood Recovery

 **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) (9.46 am): I would like to give a brief update on the monsoon flooding in the Gulf of Carpentaria and North-West Queensland. Yesterday the Queensland Reconstruction Authority recommended that Disaster Relief Australia be called in to support the clean-up on the ground. So far, more than \$75,000 in DRFA personal hardship assistance payments have been distributed, assisting 432 people. Next week I will travel to Doomadgee, Burketown and Mount Isa with Major General Jake Ellwood to determine how we can further assist those communities.

Housing

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment) (9.47 am): The Palaszczuk government understands the housing challenges facing our state. We are listening and we are acting to address those challenges. That is why we are continually looking for more innovative solutions to get Queenslanders into homes. Yesterday I announced a series of build-to-rent tax concessions. Those concessions include a 50 per cent land tax discount for developments that include at least 10 per cent of rental homes as affordable housing. Those measures have won broad support across the housing sector.


Ms Palaszczuk: Well done, Treasurer!

Mr DICK: Thank you, Premier. Property Council of Australia Queensland executive director Jen Williams said the concessions were exactly what the housing industry needed and would rapidly increase the supply of rental accommodation. Ms Williams said, 'Initiatives like this one embody the Government leadership and focus on increasing supply that is required to respond to the housing crisis'. Urban Development Institute of Australia Queensland chief executive Kirsty Chessher-Brown said the concessions had real world capacity to swing the needle on specific projects. Ms Chessher-Brown said the build-to-rent model is one with the capacity to deliver large volumes of supply quickly. Build-to-rent tax concessions are only one measure to ease housing pressure, but they are not the only measure.

As the Premier said, our partnership with National Affordable Housing will protect the homes of more vulnerable Queenslanders. We can do this because of our \$2 billion Housing Investment Fund, which gives us the agility to address more housing solutions as they emerge. With the support of the fund, National Affordable Housing will buy an additional 100 properties to settle across the second half of 2023. Our target is to increase the number of properties purchased as they leave the NRAS scheme to 335 over two years. Those homes will include a mix of detached housing, townhouses, duplexes and apartments. With more than 50 homes under contract and the first of those to settle as early as next month, the Housing Investment Fund is providing homes for Queenslanders. This brings the pipeline of investment from the Housing Investment Fund to more than 1,500 homes.

Since the Housing Summit last year, we have also released the new Housing Investment Fund Private Site Invitation. Released last month, the invitation asks community housing providers—whom, can I say, our government strongly supports—along with construction companies, developers and investors to deliver social and affordable housing. We will support community housing providers; we will not demonise them. This focuses on ready-to-proceed social and affordable housing developments on privately owned sites. The Housing Investment Fund gives us the means to support even more of those types of proposals, accelerating the process of bringing more housing stock to market.

Housing

 **Hon. MC de BRENNI** (Springwood—ALP) (Minister for Energy, Renewables and Hydrogen and Minister for Public Works and Procurement) (9.50 am): The Palaszczuk government is delivering and building more housing more rapidly and across more regions in Queensland. It is the work that this government has done for years that has set us up to deliver big results. Since 2015, the Palaszczuk government has commenced 5,299 social housing dwellings across Queensland and we are on track

to meet our target of 13,000 commencements by 2027. We are also investing \$519 million over four years to build hundreds of new homes for frontline workers. By the end of the year, we expect to complete another 93 new homes for Queensland's teachers, nurses, police and other frontline staff. That includes 14 on Palm Island, two on Warraber Island, three on Thursday Island and three more on Mer Island. This year's program also includes 12 homes each for Winton and Texas, eight for Blackall and six for Wondai. Three homes each will be built in Inglewood, Tambo and on Mornington Island while St George and Surat will benefit from two homes each. We will build new homes for frontline workers in Alpha, Augathella, Bedourie, Birdsville, Bloomfield, Capella, Charleville, Coen, Croydon, Gayndah, Injune, Julia Creek, Kilcummin, Lochington, Marlborough, Mitchell, Mount Morgan, Taroom, Thargomindah and Westmar.

Think about how many more homes we would have in Queensland if it were not for the cuts made over three years. I can inform the House that between 2012 and 2015 the then government cut employee home builds to just 36, which is an average of just 12 per year. That is 90 per cent less than the rate at which this government will build and deliver. What an embarrassment for those opposite. Labor is building as many new homes for frontline workers on Thursday Island alone as the LNP built across the whole state during their term in government.

Rather than pruning housing programs, sacking tradies from QBuild and selling off their training depots, this week we have welcomed 30 more building and construction trade apprentices. They are our homegrown heroes. They are key to building and delivering on our big ambition. They will join us here at parliament tomorrow during their induction week. I invite any member who believes that government has a responsibility to directly invest in more skills, in better training and apprenticeships to join me and make the next generation of Queensland tradies welcome.

Housing



Hon. LM ENOCH (Algeria—ALP) (Minister for Communities and Housing, Minister for Digital Economy and Minister for the Arts) (9.53 am): To meet the pressing housing challenges that Queensland faces we need to leverage expertise from across the housing system. Yesterday's housing round table brought together representatives from the building sector, homelessness services, local government, the private rental market, planning experts and others to continue our collaboration on key housing challenges. Round table participants expressed strong support for the positive announcements around social and affordable housing that we have made this week and for the many achievements that have made an impact since the Housing Summit. There was recognition of the importance of the \$28 million the Premier announced to continue the Immediate Housing Response Package for another year. That initiative has already assisted over 4,000 families and supported over 44,300 nights of accommodation. The extra \$3.9 million earmarked to extend and expand food and emergency relief throughout Queensland in 2023-24 was also warmly welcomed to help ease the cost-of-living pressures many households are experiencing.


The Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute, AHURI, the leading expert in this area, was also represented. AHURI has been commissioned by the Queensland government to undertake housing modelling in what has become an incredibly dynamic environment. The modelling will look at the housing system in Queensland as a whole, including social housing, emergency accommodation and the private housing market, and that will be used to guide our collective efforts.

The Palaszczuk government's work to promote a healthy housing system is reflected in a series of other key housing announcements made this week, including: \$5.91 million to help unlock 5,600 lots in Ripley Valley and deliver road infrastructure for the Ripley Valley Priority Development Area; \$6,000 to work with the Local Government Association of Queensland to develop 38 local housing action plans with Queensland local governments; and land tax concessions for build-to-rent developments, which was very well received. These new initiatives complement our commitment to deliver more social and affordable housing through our \$3.9 billion investment, which is the largest concentrated investment in Queensland's history.

Since July 2021, when we announced our second housing action plan, we have completed 816 new social housing builds under our QuickStarts program, with a further 588 currently under construction and more in the pipeline. That is on top of what is happening with regard to our Housing Investment Fund. That means that every single day, as a result of our QuickStarts program, since July 2021 we have added another home to our social housing stock and housed more people. With so many people doing it tough we will continue our efforts in growing supply, but with pressures in the building industry expected to continue for many months to come we will also ensure supports are in place to help house vulnerable Queenslanders sooner.

In relation to a question the member for Currumbin asked the Premier yesterday regarding rent increases, I can update the House that, while the Residential Tenancy Authority is not informed every time rent is increased in a private rental agreement, I am advised that in 2022 the amount of tenancy agreements that saw more than one increase was likely to have been over 24,000. In addition, in 2022 the RTA received almost 9,000 calls about rent increases, which clearly demonstrates the size of this issue in the community.

Forensic DNA Testing


 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Minister for Health and Ambulance Services) (9.57 am): Today I wish to provide an update on the progress we have made in addressing the critical issues raised in the two reports from the Commission of Inquiry into Forensic DNA Testing in Queensland. Following the immense body of work undertaken by the commission of inquiry, for which the Palaszczuk government is extremely grateful, we have been working hard to develop a comprehensive approach to address Mr Sofronoff's recommendations.

Since we received the final report on 13 December last year, we have taken a range of immediate actions to restore faith in our criminal justice system. We have established the new unit, Forensic Science Queensland, to help us deliver the best forensic DNA services in Australia, with the appointment of the highly respected Professor Linzi Wilson Wilde as CEO. Walter Sofronoff KC and Julie Dick SC have been appointed as co-chairs of the advisory board for Forensic Science Queensland and the first meeting of the full interim advisory board occurred yesterday.

Work has been ongoing regarding the correction of 1,260 witness statements that were either untruthful or misleading, as recommended by the interim report. As of today, 564 cases have had their statements corrected. The Queensland government made \$29.5 million available to support further testing and analysis of samples. Regarding the testing of samples, the Australian Federal Police and the Institute of Environmental Science and Research in New Zealand are currently performing testing for FSQ in relation to bone analysis and Y-STR testing, and we continue to explore further arrangements with external providers.

In January, new revised sexual assault investigation kits were agreed by an across-agency subcommittee and underwent user testing. As a result, updates to the kit were made and the former will now go to the forensic medical examination subcommittee for approval. FSQ is undertaking a procurement process to source the kits and it is anticipated the new kits will be implemented midyear. We will continue to deliver on the long-term vision of establishing world-class forensic DNA services and restoring the community's faith in our criminal justice system.

Training and Skills, Infrastructure

 **Hon. DE FARMER** (Bulimba—ALP) (Minister for Employment and Small Business and Minister for Training and Skills Development) (9.59 am): The Queensland government is committed to publicly owned training infrastructure because we believe that, whoever you are or wherever you are in Queensland, you deserve access to high-quality vocational education. It is why we are investing \$100 million into the Equipping TAFE for our Future initiative, an initiative which identifies the workforce demands of the future and invests in infrastructure now to make sure we have the skilled workers to meet those demands. The program commits to new and/or upgraded facilities at 19 sites across 15 campuses, and already we are over halfway there. In fact, just about every month I seem to be opening a new facility or turning the first sod for an upgrade. I am loving it!

Next week I will be with the member for Hervey Bay opening the new nursing and allied health facility there, where demand for nurses is five times the national average. I know how excited the member is about that. This month I was with the Premier and other ministers at Bohle TAFE—and of course our very proud members for Townsville, Thuringowa and Mundingburra—turning the first sod on the new renewable energy training facility and advanced manufacturing hub. This was a first for TAFE Queensland and a critical piece in the Palaszczuk government's plan to support more training infrastructure for emerging industries.

This month I was also at Southbank TAFE showing the national skills ministers the new robotics centre there and our new cybersecurity training facility. Last month I opened stage 2 of the Rural Centre of Excellence in Toowoomba. Earlier this year the minister for agriculture opened the new aquaculture training facility at Bowen. At the end of last year I was with the members for Capalaba and Redlands, along with the federal Minister for Training, to open the new electrotechnology training facility at Alexandra Hills TAFE. Both of those members are such strong advocates for their local TAFEs. I have

opened the cybersecurity training centre at Mooloolaba TAFE, the new plumbing tower at Ashmore TAFE, the new student learning centre at Cannonvale TAFE—and the list goes on. We are building opportunity all over the state.

Alongside this fantastic program, we are also committed to making sure that every Queenslanders has access to that training by building on our successful free TAFE and free apprenticeships for under-25s initiative which has seen 62,000 Queenslanders supported into free training in priority areas including construction. We have a record 24,000 apprentices training this year. This is critical when we are talking about the housing issues that have been discussed so much this week and in so many other key areas. This year we have partnered in a \$200 million investment with the federal government on our 'free TAFE for all' initiative. This has already seen 16,000 enrolments across priority courses, with some of the most popular being in: early childhood, individual support, accounting and bookkeeping, and IT.

Our government is committed to good jobs, better services and a great lifestyle. We want to provide every Queenslanders with the opportunity to get a job. We want a workforce with the skills to meet the needs of our burgeoning economy and to provide the services every Queenslanders deserves. Our investment in skills and training shows that we are intent on achieving this.

North-West Queensland, Flood Recovery



Hon. ML FURNER (Ferny Grove—ALP) (Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries and Minister for Rural Communities) (10.03 am): On Friday, 17 March I joined the member for Traeger in visiting some of the areas of his electorate that were impacted by recent flooding. The assessments are still in the early stages, and it will take a while to know the full impact of cattle losses in that region. My department assisted with fodder drops to keep alive those animals that had survived the floodwaters. Our assistance for the region will continue. As we know, events such as these need community support for the long run. My department will continue to work with the region and local governments in the recovery arrangements from an agriculture perspective. Category B assistance was activated quickly. Primary producers can access this assistance through the Queensland Rural Industry Development Authority.

At Doomadgee we also crossed paths with the federal member for Kennedy, Bob Katter, and joined him in seeing the impacts of the town being cut off by the waters and the impacts across some service delivery. We visited the Tirranna roadhouse, where there had been substantial inundation from floodwaters with such force that a concrete truck had been moved off the road and spun around. I saw the impacts on homes and businesses as water came up to the floorboards and in some cases up to the ceiling.

At Escott Station, their impacts are still being assessed as the cleaning was well underway. Again, the sheer magnitude of the water destabilised trucks and equipment and washed a tank hundreds of metres away. I was informed by them that they had not seen flooding at this level for the last five decades. At Burketown there were discussions around telecommunication concerns at the time of the flood and the challenges that will be faced in rebuilding. We will continue to work with industry. I thank AgForce for its engagement as well the Commonwealth government for its assistance. Queenslanders can be assured that the Palaszczuk government will continue to support our great Queensland beef sector.

Hate Crimes, Legislation




Hon. SM FENTIMAN (Waterford—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, Minister for Women and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence) (10.05 am): Like all Australians, I was shocked and disturbed by the footage of Neo-Nazis standing on the steps of the Victorian parliament in the past fortnight. The brazen display of these hateful and disgusting views must be condemned publicly and unequivocally. Hate crimes and vilification have absolutely no place in Queensland or this country and must not be tolerated. We know that Queenslanders reject hatred and prejudice. That is why the Palaszczuk government promised to review and strengthen serious vilification and hate crime laws. I am proud that we will be introducing legislation to strengthen our laws today.

These reforms send a clear message that criminals who commit offences motivated by hatred or serious contempt will face tougher penalties. We are making it illegal for people to publicly display, distribute or publish symbols which represent an ideology of extreme prejudice, such as Nazi or ISIS ideology, in a way that could cause someone to feel menaced, harassed or offended. The offence is intended to capture a broad range of circumstances, including the public display of tattoos and the public distribution or publication of prohibited symbols online. In addition, a number of existing offences

in the Criminal Code and the Summary Offences Act will be amended to introduce a circumstance of aggravation where those offences are motivated wholly or partly by hatred. This will increase the maximum penalty for those offences to reflect the seriousness of these crimes and the long-lasting impacts on victims. The bill also moves the offence of serious vilification out of the Anti-Discrimination Act and into the Criminal Code while also increasing the maximum penalty to three years. This change better reflects how seriously the community views these offences.

These reforms strengthen Queensland's justice system for the benefit of all Queenslanders by providing stronger protections for our diverse communities. I thank the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee for its work in this area as well as the many multicultural groups and community members who have been involved in the process. Our government is listening and acting, and together we will create a Queensland that is safer and more respectful.

Workplace Safety, Mental Health

 **Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for Education, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing) (10.07 am): The Palaszczuk government has a proud record of leading the nation when it comes to worker protections, especially in work health and safety, and we all need to recognise that mental health is just as important as physical health. Physical risks and hazards at work are often more visible. Being able to prevent a psychological injury is not always as obvious. That is why we have created Australia's first legally enforceable code of practice directly addressing mental health risks at work. The new code—*Managing the risk of psychosocial hazards at work code of practice*—comes into force this Saturday, 1 April. The code provides a practical guide for employers and workers to help them understand their rights and responsibilities after a national review found many employers were unsure of their duties to manage psychological health and safety risks at work. The code includes advice on how to comply with existing health and safety obligations while also providing practical examples on how to manage psychological, social and psychosocial hazards in the workplace. It includes industry-specific case studies and templates businesses can tailor to their needs.


We are proud to partner with Commonwealth gold medallist and Queensland Workplace Health and Safety Mental Health Ambassador Hayley Lewis to launch the code. I am delighted she is joining us in the chamber today. Hayley is a passionate advocate when it comes to mental health and she knows that creating healthy workplaces is a winner for everyone. I thank Hayley for the important role she plays in promoting the benefits of mentally healthy workplaces.

This code was developed in consultation with academics, unions and employer organisations, and the community sector. It has been welcomed by employer groups, including Master Builders Queensland whose General Manager of Workforce Services, Craig Dearling, said the new code 'will most certainly assist in achieving better work health and safety outcomes for the industry'.

The Office of Industrial Relations has been providing extensive support to employers, including a communications campaign and the recording of a free live stream event that was attended by nearly 3,000 people from Cape York to the Sunshine Coast. They are continuing this with regional information sessions over the coming weeks in Townsville, Cairns, Longreach and Rockhampton.

It is clear that this code provides greater protection for workers. It also shines a spotlight on the importance of taking mental health just as seriously as physical health, which is something I am sure all members in this House can get behind. Thank you once again, Hayley Lewis.

Hate Crimes, Legislation

 **Hon. LM LINARD** (Nudgee—ALP) (Minister for Children and Youth Justice and Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (10.10 am): Disappointingly, we are seeing increasing examples of the rise of Neo-Nazi groups and the use of hate symbols in Australia, including a sickening display of the Nazi salute at an event in Melbourne last week, which the Attorney-General referred to. I welcome the legislation to be introduced into this House today by the Attorney-General to strengthen the state's response to hate crimes and vilification. Every person has the right to feel safe—free from harm, discrimination and vilification in our community. I note the very strong advocacy of our multicultural leaders with regard to this legislation, the important work of the committee and the powerful submission that my multicultural advisory council made to that process.

Queensland is home to many survivors and descendants of the devastating Holocaust. The Jewish community has been very strong advocates of this legislation. Across the globe, Holocaust museums and education centres play such an important role in educating and reminding each of us how we can individually contribute to stopping hate crimes and vilification—and the risk when we do not.

In October 2020, as the Premier outlined this morning, our government committed \$3.5 million towards the establishment of the Queensland Holocaust Museum and Education Centre. The centre will be located in Brisbane's cathedral precinct. I thank the Catholic Archdiocese of Brisbane and extend my appreciation to the archbishop for partnering with us in regard to this commitment.

I visited the site on Monday to see firsthand the progress that has been made. It is incredibly moving and impactful. The space is beautiful and I know will have a significant impact on all who visit it. While funding for the centre has been committed by all three levels of government, the project is being delivered by the Jewish community via a separate entity, the Queensland Holocaust Museum and Education Centre Ltd, established to oversee the creation of the museum and education centre.

The centre will comprise exhibitions, education and training resources about the holocaust. It will empower individuals, particularly school students, to stand up against hatred and prejudice to prevent human rights atrocities from reoccurring. The centre will provide accessible educational programs so Queensland students can participate, either in person or via online programs, including potential conversations with survivors. The site will be home to both tangible and interactive displays and will be strengthened by teaching resources and a virtual museum to ensure global connectivity. A mobile museum, which also includes interactive components, will ensure statewide access to the museum's stories and resources, in particular for students and teachers.

Work to record memories and stories of survivors of the holocaust is now largely complete. These will form part of the displays at the centre as well as the online virtual museum, which is taking shape. I anticipate the opening of the centre will be mid this year. Once operational, the centre will help educate Queenslanders and visitors about the importance of standing up against racism and prejudice in all its forms and to point out the devastating human toll wreaked by bigotry and human rights abuses. I acknowledge the Jewish Board of Deputies, particularly chair of the managing entity, Jason Steinberg, for allowing us to partner on such an important project.

NOTICE OF MOTION

Cairns, Townsville and Redlands Electorates



Mr BLEIJIE (Kawana—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (10.14 am): I give notice that I will move—

That this House notes:

- (a) crime rates in Cairns in the last year have increased, including a 52 per cent increase in unlawful entry and a 38 per cent increase in unlawful use of motor vehicles;
- (b) crime rates in Townsville in the last year have increased, including a 34 per cent increase in assaults and a 22 per cent increase in thefts; and
- (c) the lack of adequate health services in Redlands has resulted in ambulance ramping reaching 73 per cent;

and acknowledges the selection of strong, community-based candidates in Rebecca Young (Redlands), Natalie Marr (Thuringowa)—

Government members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Members to my right, we have made it practice that we will hear these notices of motion in silence. The debate happens this afternoon not now.

Mr BLEIJIE: I continue—

and Yolonde Entsch (Cairns) by the Liberal National Party to champion the interests of the residents of these three electorates and help ease the cost-of-living, health and crime crises facing Queenslanders.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Mr SPEAKER: Honourable members, question time will conclude at 11.16 am.

Specialists, Wait Times



Mr CRISAFULLI (10.16 am): My question is to the Premier. New data released to the opposition overnight shows the number of patients waiting longer than clinically recommended for a specialist has jumped from 104,000 in July 2022 to 122,532 in January this year. Can the Premier explain the reason for the 18 per cent blowout in just six months?

Ms PALASZCZUK: We are happy to talk about our achievements in health. In relation to that data, I will get the health minister to double-check those statistics. We know that the LNP do not stand for workers in this state. They do not stand for nurses. They do not stand for doctors—

Opposition members interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: It is going to be a very clear choice at the next election—whether or not Queenslanders support frontline services, building new hospitals and building satellite hospitals. Queensland went through perhaps one of the worst health issues we have had to deal with in our lifetime, COVID, and we got through to the other side. That is why we announced our \$9 billion Health and Hospitals Plan. That will see the expansion of hospitals—

Mrs Frecklington interjected.

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

Ms PALASZCZUK:—across Queensland, including in regional communities. Also, there will be seven new satellite hospitals across the south-east. I have already tasked the Deputy Premier and the Minister for Health to look at where we can build even more satellite hospitals.

We know very clearly where the opposition stands on infrastructure. The cat is out of the bag. We know they have a secret hit list—it is not secret; it is public now—of \$10 billion worth of cuts for infrastructure. They have \$5 billion in health infrastructure cuts—

Mr POWELL: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order on relevance under standing order 118(b). The question was about patients waiting for specialist treatment.

Mr SPEAKER: Premier, there was a fairly specific question asked. I ask you to come back to the core of the question.

Ms PALASZCZUK: That is why we are working with the federal government to ease our hospitals, to make sure that we are getting people who should not be in our hospitals out of our hospitals and get people the services they need. That is exactly what the hospitals are working on.

On this side of the House we respect our hospital workers. There is no stronger contrast than between a government that grows frontline health service men and women and those on the other side who slash, cut and burn them. I am glad the member for Kawana talks about Townsville and Cairns, because I am happy to go to Townsville and Cairns any day of the week and talk about our record in those communities as opposed to the slashing of staff by those opposite that decimated those regional communities. When they needed their government by their side they walked away from the care that—

(Time expired)

Specialists, Wait Times

Mr CRISAFULLI: My question is to the Premier. When the government announced the specialist outpatient strategy in 2015 it promised to reduce the number of patients waiting longer than clinically recommended for a specialist to fewer than 40,000. Since 2017 the number of patients waiting longer than clinically recommended has increased almost every year. Will the Premier confirm when the long waitlist will drop from over 120,000, which it is now, to the 40,000 the government once promised?

Ms PALASZCZUK: It is as if the Leader of the Opposition did not even realise COVID happened in our state for three years. I will tell you what would have happened if those opposite were in power: the borders would have been opened, thousands of people would have died and our hospitals would have been overwhelmed. That is what would have happened. Of course it is going to take time—

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Member for Currumbin, member for Bonney and member for Buderim, you are warned under the standing orders. The member for Lytton has not been quiet either; you are warned as well.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I am looking forward to going to the member for Currumbin's electorate very soon to see an update on the Tugun Satellite Hospital that our government is building to make sure that people are getting health care out where they live. That is why we are going to build the new Coomera Hospital in one of the fastest growing areas and of course the Toowoomba Hospital as well. As we know, there have been incredible pressures on our hospitals. There has been something called COVID in this state, which those opposite want to bury their heads in the sand about and pretend never existed. Queenslanders also know that COVID did happen and now hospitals are getting back to their full strength—

Mr Purdie interjected.

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

Ms PALASZCZUK: What we have had to do over the years is restore frontline services that they cut. Our government has been making sure that we have the workforce that is needed for the future—unlike those opposite, who cut them. The Leader of the Opposition can sit there and mumble, but let me tell you this: Queenslanders have a long memory and they do not forget. They know that the member for Broadwater sat around the cabinet table with the member for Surfers Paradise and the member for Kawana and they inflicted—

Opposition members interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: It is not a joking matter when they cut frontline health services. It is nothing to laugh about. They should be ashamed of themselves for the way in which they behave in this House and in public because Queenslanders do not forget.

Mr Harper: They called health workers duds.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Thank you, I will take that interjection. They come in here and talk about health and they called regional health workers duds. That was the member for Mudgeeraba, the shadow health minister. That is how much—

(Time expired)

Infrastructure

Mrs McMAHON: My question is of the Premier and Minister for the Olympic and Paralympic Games. Will the Premier please update the House on how the Palaszczuk government's infrastructure big build is setting Queensland up for the future?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the member for Macalister for the question. I already touched on this when we were talking about our over \$9 billion Health and Hospitals Plan—the largest infrastructure build in the health system this state has ever seen. We are setting our state up for the future. We are the government that has the ideas and the vision for the next decade and beyond for this state, unlike those opposite.

It is very rare that I quote the *Courier-Mail*, but it was right today. They have no plans, they have no vision and they are just tired, out of ideas and out of steam. There has not been one private member's bill. They are so lazy. When we had seven members we worked 20 times harder than they work because they are so tired. We had shadow cabinet meetings. We travelled across the state. We put together ideas. We presented an alternative plan to the cuts, the slashing and the privatisation that those opposite put to the Queensland people. It is still the same old tired faces from the Newman government. The member for Broadwater and the member for Kawana, the right hand and the left hand of Campbell Newman, are still there. There are no fresh ideas. There are no women there, and I am quite sure the Attorney-General will have more to say about that shortly.

In the Macalister electorate we are building a brand new hall at Beenleigh State High School, and I look forward to joining the member for Macalister and the Minister for Education to open that new hall, because we believe in investing in education and facilities with the Minister for Education's largest spend across our state. Once again those opposite should be thanking the minister for building halls and putting the infrastructure in their electorates. We know that when it comes to infrastructure those opposite have the \$10 billion hit list they put out and they are going to prune it.

Dr Miles: Pruning!

Ms PALASZCZUK: That is right; I take that interjection from the Deputy Premier. We know that the member for Chatsworth has form. I bet he is sitting there thinking, 'I wish I hadn't said those words: "At the moment there is a range of areas that we know already that we could prune things back."'

Government members: Pruning!

Ms PALASZCZUK: Pruning; that is right. Then the member for Broadwater put out his list of cuts. The backbench must be thinking—

(Time expired)

Emergency Departments, Wait Times

Ms BATES: My question is to the Premier. Figures released to the opposition this week expose that the number of patients waiting longer than 24 hours in emergency departments doubled before COVID and is now 225 per cent higher than 2015. How is waiting more than 24 hours in emergency departments keeping Queenslanders safe?

Ms PALASZCZUK: For a start, I think it is very brave of the member for Mudgeeraba to stand in this House as the shadow health minister and ask a health question when she disrespects every health worker in regional Queensland. It is absolutely disgraceful, and the member should stand in this House and apologise for those words. The member should absolutely apologise. What hypocrisy to stand in this House to ask a question on health when she called regional health workers duds—shame, shame, shame!

Ms Bates interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Mr Speaker, I find the member's words offensive and I ask her to withdraw.

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

Ms BATES: I withdraw.

Mr SPEAKER: Premier, I direct you back to the question.

Ms PALASZCZUK: The health minister addressed this yesterday, but I am happy to repeat it for the House because it is good news. Despite the LNP talking down our health workers, Queensland hospitals are seeing more patients sooner compared to when the LNP was in power. We are seeing 72 per cent of ED patients within the recommended time—the same figure as the LNP budget paper, and that is despite a significant increase in ED demands. They think demand has not increased over the years. They think the population has not increased. That is why we have more ambulance officers, that is why we have more health workers and—wait for it, member for Mudgeeraba—that is why we are building more hospitals. That is why we have the plan for the future.

If I were the member for Broadwater, I would send the member for Mudgeeraba on a campaign trail across regional Queensland. That is what I would be doing, and do you know what? We will give you the bus; we will give you the transport. The Minister for Transport will give you the transport to go across regional Queensland, because regional Queensland—

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Member for Mudgeeraba, I appreciate there is some provocation but your interjections are getting out of hand. Leader of the Opposition, I give you quarter because of the position you hold, but your interjections have been consistent and constant and I have asked you to cease. Next time you will be warned.

Ms PALASZCZUK: We will give the Leader of the Opposition a bus as well so he can go around regional Queensland and we can remind him of all the cuts he made when he was part of Campbell Newman's team.

Ms Grace: He can start in Townsville.

Ms PALASZCZUK: He does not like Townsville much anymore. He is too busy on the Gold Coast after he did not want the woman. Do you remember? He did not want the female member for Broadwater. That is the opposition's attitude towards women. If you do not like them, move them aside. That is absolutely disgraceful. They can have a look here. Look at all the women on this side.

(Time expired)

Regional Queensland, Jobs

Mr HARPER: My question is to the Premier. Can the Premier please update the House on what the Palaszczuk government is doing to support jobs in regional Queensland, and is she aware of any alternatives?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the member for Thuringowa for the question because I know how much he supports his community and how much he recognises the importance of having a job. Having a job allows you to put food on the table, to put a roof over your head and to care for your family. I know how passionate he is about that. He is also very much aware of the devastation that occurred. He was a health worker so he is aware of what happened and he joined the team—

Mr Dick: And he's a real health worker.

Ms PALASZCZUK: That is right; he's a real health worker who was there in Thuringowa every day when he saw the destruction that the member for Broadwater inflicted on Townsville. What we have done is we have restored those workers—

Mr Crisafulli interjected.

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

Ms PALASZCZUK: And the economy has grown. The economy has grown so much. We remember Clive Palmer and the damage that was done. It is as clear as day. We sat around there in Townsville and worked out what we would do for that community because the unemployment was skyrocketing, and it was all the supply chains. What we know now is that unemployment in Townsville is the best across regional Queensland at 2.2 per cent, narrowly beating Mackay. The competition is on. Cairns remains steady at 4.1 per cent, the Darling Downs is at 4.4 per cent, the Gold Coast is down to 2.5 per cent and the Wide Bay is down to 5.6 per cent.

On this side of the House we have the plans for the future. We have the vision for the future about making sure our young children have an opportunity to get a job or to go through TAFE. We do not destroy TAFE like they did. They wanted to sell off TAFE. No, we restore TAFE and now we are giving free TAFE courses because we value skills and their importance in the future. We know there is even more that we can do, and that is why we launched another plan, the \$62 billion Energy and Jobs Plan, with hundreds and thousands more jobs. The CopperString project is going to set Townsville up for the future.

Whilst I am on my feet, I also welcome TEL, Townsville Enterprise Ltd, who will be here this evening. They will be meeting with ministers and we will be at a function with them tonight recognising the importance of that great city to our state economy.

Emergency Departments, Wait Times

Mr BLEIJIE: My question is to the Premier. Figures released to the opposition this week expose Queensland patients are waiting 10, 11 and sometimes 12 hours in emergency department waiting rooms just to be seen by a doctor or a nurse. How is waiting up to 12 hours in an emergency department waiting room keeping Queenslanders safe?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I will ask the health minister to clarify whether or not those facts are true.

Ms Bates interjected.

Mrs D'Ath interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Minister for Health and member for Mudgeeraba, the Premier has the call.

Ms PALASZCZUK: We will check the facts there. We know the member for Kawana has form.

Mr Bleijie interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Resume your seat, Premier. Member for Kawana, you have asked the question. You are continually interjecting. You are warned under the standing orders.

Ms PALASZCZUK: As I said very clearly before, that is why we are recovering after the aftermath of COVID. We are working with the federal government to secure even more funding after the years of neglect under Scott Morrison, Tony Abbott and Malcolm Turnbull. Do you remember them? They were the heroes of the LNP. That is why we are building the extra hospitals and the bed capacity, and that is why we are building the satellite hospitals, especially where there are growing pressures across South-East Queensland—so people can get their care closer to home.

I will not be lectured to in this House by the member for Kawana. When you talk about damage, the person who inflicted the most damage on Queensland after Campbell Newman and the member for Clayfield was the member for Kawana. The member for Kawana again sits there in a leadership team. Both of them sat at the cabinet table with Campbell Newman making these devastating impacts across Queensland.

Mr POWELL: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order on relevance under standing order 118(b). The question was about Queenslanders waiting more than 12 hours in an emergency department.

Mr SPEAKER: Premier, do you have anything further to add?

Ms PALASZCZUK: No.

Housing

Mr HUNT: 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 advise the House how the Palaszczuk government is working with the Albanese government to ensure Queenslanders have access to housing, and is he aware of any other approaches?

Dr MILES: I thank the member for Caloundra for his question. He too represents one of the fastest growing parts of the state and I know he is working very hard with our government to ensure that we deliver the homes for those people flocking to beautiful Caloundra, the infrastructure that they need, the economic development and the jobs. Yesterday the Palaszczuk government hosted the second housing round table because we know that no government can solve this housing shortage alone. We need to work with industry, with local government and with the Australian government to deliver real progress and more homes.

We saw progress yesterday. We saw the steps the Palaszczuk government is taking to unlock 5,600 additional lots in the Ripley Valley PDA. We saw the moves that the Treasurer is leading to deliver tax concessions for build to rent so as to deliver more affordable homes into the Queensland market. We saw the Premier's announcement about limiting the number of times per year that tenants can have their rent increased. There is so much more that needs to be done and so much more support we need from the Australian government, the Albanese government, and they are trying.

They are trying their very best to support us with the task of delivering affordable housing. There is one thing standing in their way and that is the LNP. They have \$10 billion allocated to a housing fund and the LNP continue to block it. Think what a difference those 30,000 houses could make, 4,000 of them for women and families escaping domestic violence. They come in here and pretend they care about housing affordability in Queensland, sitting back while their own party blocks tens of thousands of additional social and affordable homes.

Let's see what some of the Queensland LNP federal members said about it. The Queensland LNP federal member for Forde said, 'If we add a huge number of new houses to the current situation, the problem will only get worse.' Only the Queensland LNP would think adding more houses would make a shortage worse. The LNP member for Bowman argued there was 'not enough being done for wealthy investors', and the LNP member for Fisher called a plan to build 30,000 homes 'a social policy experiment'. It is about time the Queensland LNP got out of the way and let us get on with working with the Albanese government.

Public Hospitals

Dr ROWAN: My question is to the Minister for Health. How many beds are there available today for patient use in Queensland public hospitals?

Mrs D'ATH: I thank the member for his question.

Ms Palaszczuk: Thousands.

Mrs D'ATH: I will take that interjection from the Premier—thousands. As a former president of the AMA in Queensland, one would think he would be absolutely aware when asking that question that those numbers fluctuate on a regular basis as far as the availability of beds. I find it extraordinary because the member also knows as he was part of the government that did not invest in expanding beds in our hospitals. The Palaszczuk government is investing almost \$10 billion for supporting another 2,509 extra beds between now and 2028, with many of those beds—289—being accelerated as part of our Accelerated Infrastructure Delivery Program. There will be another 2,220 extra beds with our three new hospitals and also our—

Mr POWELL: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order on relevance under standing order 118(b). The question was very specifically about today, not some time—

Government members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order, members! I need to hear the point of order.

Mr POWELL: It was very specific about today, not some time in the future.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you, Manager of Opposition Business. I have heard interjections seeking a ballpark and I believe the health minister answered that within the first moments saying 'thousands'. She is also addressing it. She has one minute 55 left. She has been responsive to the question as I hear it. I will allow her to continue her answer.

Mrs D'ATH: We are actually building new beds constantly. We have got 869 beds in the pipeline right now. We have delivered 1,350 new beds since we came into government in 2015. We have 289 accelerated beds coming online, 220 additional beds with our three new hospitals and 11 expansions, and that is not even including the mental health beds that we are bringing online. It is not even including the beds that I announced yesterday through Catherine's House for mothers who are in distress and needing mental health support with their baby—

Mr Powell interjected.

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

Mrs D'ATH: They get even more than that. Of course we know the opposite is what we would get under the opposition. Not only would we have fewer doctors, nurses, paramedics and allied health professionals in our system today, but also we would have fewer beds and, if they are elected—

Ms Simpson interjected.

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

Mrs D'ATH:—we would see beds cut. We would see beds cut because they have their cut list out. It includes a mental health unit on the Gold Coast. I know that the member for Gaven—I will make sure the people on the Gold Coast are well aware that the LNP think that is a waste of money. You have to be living under a rock to not understand there are increasing costs in supply and labour all over this country. It seems to be that if they had an increase in cost, they would just stop building. They think it is a waste of money. What is their solution? To be on time and on budget. 'Well, if it runs over and it costs more, we will just stop doing it. That will mean we are staying within our budgets.' This is why they are irresponsible and should not be in government.

Housing Investment Fund

Mr MARTIN: My question is of the Treasurer. Will the Treasurer update the House on how the Palaszczuk government Housing Investment Fund is delivering for Queenslanders, and is the Treasurer aware of any alternative approaches?

Mr DICK: I thank the member for Stretton for his question.

Mr Mander: This won't take long!

Mr DICK: Member for Everton, as the person who oversaw a 90 per cent reduction in the delivery of social and affordable housing in this state, I would have thought you would keep quiet. However, of course it is the same policy brain that put together the Bruce Highway hoax and the fake Bradfield Scheme. What about those two investment programs? Didn't that set a record? Anyway, keep going, member for Everton. The first rule of deep holes is keep digging, member for Everton. Keep going!

I stand behind every one of the \$2 billion in the Housing Investment Fund because it is an absolutely critical part of our plan to address the challenge of housing in this state. Thanks to Queensland's world-leading Queensland Investment Fund, \$130 million each and every year will go back into our plan to attack the challenge of housing facing Queenslanders. \$130 million each and every year.

The reason that the member for Everton attacks the Housing Investment Fund and the reason that the Leader of the Opposition came in here yesterday, in his very first question, and sought to undermine the fund's very existence and its importance, in his first question to the Premier, is because they want to cut it. That is the truth. They want to cut \$130 million out of social and affordable housing to help vulnerable Queenslanders and help offset the cuts. That is exactly what they want to do.

We have a pipeline of 1,500 homes we are going to deliver with the Housing Investment Fund. It is supported by the property sector, it is supported by the construction sector, and it is supported by the community sector. Of course, the LNP hates the community housing sector which is why they attack the Housing Investment Fund. The only group in this state that opposes the Housing Investment Fund is the state LNP. That is why we saw the attack on it yesterday by the Leader of the Opposition. It is the same tired, old LNP with the same old plan to cut. That is all they have: six former members from

the Newman government, two former assistant ministers, a former Speaker—the worst Speaker in Queensland history—all on the frontbench, all of them. They are the leftovers from the magnificent era of Newman leading us into the glorious future of cutting, sacking and selling. They will not even protect vulnerable Queenslanders who need roofs over their heads.

We know this about the member for Broadwater: he is all talk. He is all talk, no plan, no ideas, no substance, no policy and certainly no action for Queenslanders. Is it not clear now? There is a very clear distinction between a government with a plan for the future and an opposition that delivers nothing.

(Time expired)

Maternity Services, Minister for Health and Ambulance Services

Ms CAMM: My question is to the Minister for Health. In answering a question on how many maternity units have been on bypass, the minister said that the answer would require extensive work. Queensland Health's own website shows changes made in 2019 outline that the health minister must approve any closure or bypass of public maternity services. Why did the minister not know how many maternity services are on bypass when the minister approves any closure or bypass?

Mrs D'ATH: I thank the member for her question. As those on the opposite side know, it is the chief executives and the boards who make those decisions around any bypass. There has been some hospitals that have had to be bypassed for a short period of time and then, as we are well aware, sadly there have been ones that have been longer, like Gladstone, due to a shortage of obstetricians and gynaecologists around the country right now.

I have heard those opposite running around this country and to the media talking about the number of closures of maternity units in this state. Conveniently they go back 10 or 15 years when they provide a figure. They do not talk about in this term of government. In fact, there has been one closed in this term of government, but that was because the previous government made the decision to close it. The decision was made to close the one in Nambour when the Sunshine Coast University Hospital came online. That was the decision of the LNP to—

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Deputy Premier, member for Mudgeeraba, you are quarrelling across the chamber. You are warned under the standing orders. The minister is being responsive to the question asked. I would like to hear the answer.

Mrs D'ATH: This is a serious issue. We are working hard to try to attract and retain obstetricians and gynaecologists as well as nurses and midwives across this state to ensure we can maintain the level of services for these communities when it comes to our maternity units.

I have said time and time again that these services will come on when it is safe to do so based on the clinical advice. We must ensure we have adequate staff and we can sustain those staff so those services are not coming on and off bypass. When those decisions are made they are done in the best interests of women and their babies.

There are many factors that have led to the issues we are facing right now. That includes the fact that there was not an increase—in fact, under the Morrison government medical placements in our universities were taken from us and given to regional New South Wales, so we had fewer doctors coming through the system during that time.

Very quickly I will also touch on the fact that those opposite have asked questions around waiting lists. When we came into government the long waiting list of people waiting longer than two years was 15,000 people; that was left behind by the LNP. We got that figure down to 73 people from 15,000 who waited longer than two years. We got it down to 73 and that was pre COVID. Those numbers have increased as a consequence of suspension of surgery and outpatients and it now sits at 2,481. We will work hard to get that back down again. That is 2,481 people waiting longer than two years compared to 15,000 under the LNP and they have the nerve to come in here and question—

(Time expired)

Women in Leadership

Mrs GILBERT: My question is of 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 putting women's voices at the heart of decision-making, and is the Attorney-General aware of any other approaches?

Ms FENTIMAN: I thank the member for Mackay for her question. She is a tremendous advocate for women and girls in her electorate and in her community of Mackay. As I have said many times in this House, our government values and listens to women's voices. That is why we brought back the target for women to be appointed to government boards and bodies, which was scrapped by the LNP government. When we came into government we were sitting at 31 per cent women across government on boards and now we are at 54 per cent. It is also why we have 40 per cent women on this side of the House and we absolutely value and encourage women into leadership positions.

It seems I hit a nerve yesterday when I called out the Leader of the Opposition for describing the member for Redlands as a 'nodding donkey'. Those opposite really did not like hearing their own leader's words repeated back to them. Just in case there is any doubt about whether or not the member for Broadwater would describe a woman MP like that, I will table this excerpt from Hansard dated 30 November 2021 in which he called the member for Mackay a nodding donkey—in this very chamber—to her face—

Tabled paper: Extract, dated 30 November 2021, from the *Record of Proceedings*, Queensland Parliament [385].

There you go. I hope that clears it all up for them.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Members to my right.

Mr Dick interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Treasurer, you are warned under the standing orders. I had called the House to order and you directed your comments at a member directly.

Ms FENTIMAN: The fact of the matter is the LNP have a serious problem with women. It is evident from the things they say and the things they do. It is why the Leader of the Opposition said what he said about the members for Mackay and Redlands and what he said about Jeannette Young, our now Governor; and it is why his party ran a candidate in Mundingburra in 2020 who was still 'on the fence' about whether women should have an education. That was just at the last election.

Mr SPEAKER: Are you tabling that document?

Ms FENTIMAN: I table that.

Tabled paper: Media article, undated, titled "'Extreme' Queensland LNP vetting allegedly focused on female candidates' sexual histories" [386].

It is why potential LNP candidates were vetted on their sexual histories even though male candidates were not.

Mr SPEAKER: Please table it and not wave it around.

Ms FENTIMAN: I table that.

Tabled paper: Media article, undated, titled 'QLD election 2020: LNP candidate's "misogynist" Facebook post' [387].

Who could forget the LNP having their International Women's Day function at the Tattersalls Club back when it did not allow women members? I table that.

Tabled paper: Media article, dated 4 March 2015, titled 'LNP hosts International Women's Day function at Tattersall's male-only club' [388].

It is why they cut money from DVConnect and the Gold Coast domestic violence service and they cut \$230,000 from DV shelters. They have a problem with women, and the Leader of the Opposition must apologise for his appalling behaviour.

(Time expired)

Maternity Services, Member for Gladstone

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: My question is to the Premier. The member for Gladstone said he would resign if full maternity services were not restored at Gladstone Hospital. Given it has now been 264 days since the Gladstone Hospital maternity unit was closed, has the member for Gladstone sought the Premier's advice on his resignation?

Ms PALASZCZUK: Let me make it very clear: the member for Gladstone is going nowhere. He is a strong advocate for his local community—

Mr Minnikin interjected.

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

Ms PALASZCZUK: I have been advised that there have been two stages in relation to the recruitment campaign and there are national issues at the moment.

An opposition member interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: There are. There is no need to laugh about it because that is a fact. There are national issues in terms of getting specialists out to rural and regional areas. I am advised that phase 2 commenced on 1 February with 24/7 specialist cover to support midwives in emergency situations and the HHS is working on the third and final phase, resumption of normal birth services in Gladstone, for the middle of the year.

Education Infrastructure

Mr BROWN: My question is to the Minister for Education, the Minister for Industrial Relations and the Minister for Racing. Can the minister update the House on the Palaszczuk government's investment in education infrastructure including new halls, and is the minister aware of any alternative approaches?

Ms GRACE: I thank the member for the question and congratulate him on turning the first sod at the Capalaba State College new hall—\$14 million. I look forward to opening that hall with him when it is completed. When I meet with schools or MPs from all sides of the House, the topics that come up more than any other are halls, multipurpose courts and the like. Since we have been in government we have delivered around 66 new halls. I have officially opened halls at Kingaroy, Wilsonton in Toowoomba North, Aspley State High School, Ipswich State High School, Cairns State High School and Hervey Bay State High School. I do not have the time to go through the whole lot, but we are not stopping there.

Our 37 new hall upgrades are supporting 775 jobs. When we add those to what we have already built, that is over 106 halls. Incredibly, that is around 12 halls a year being delivered by the Palaszczuk government. That is one a month—incredible. We have 18 being built in regional Queensland including at: St George in Warrego, Ayr State High School in Burdekin, Oakey State High School in Condamine and Chinchilla State High School in Callide. We have also turned the first sod at the new hall at Miami State High School in Gaven and a new performing arts complex at Pimlico in Townsville. There will be 23 new halls including at Palm Beach-Currumbin—we will look after them at Currumbin; no-one else will. There will also be a new multipurpose hall at Beenleigh State High School. Paddock to Plate will never be as good until that hall is built and I am looking forward to that. There is a hall refurbishment in Caloundra. They have been looking forward to it. It is going to be finished, and it is one of five halls on the Sunshine Coast. I also want to remind schools we are upgrading playgrounds and tuckshops. There is \$20 million in that fund and applications close at the end of this month.

What a stark contrast to those opposite! We have tripled the infrastructure budget since they left government. It is absolutely incredible. What do we see from the members opposite? We see a tweet this week from the Leader of the Opposition about how they are going to deliver infrastructure. They are profound words: 'on time, on budget and world-class'. That is their infrastructure plan. I wonder what they are going to do with halls. I wonder whether that is before they prune or before a debt reduction strategy comes into place. It is very interesting: when you scratch the surface, there ain't much substance. They all come running for infrastructure—they all want it delivered—but I hear nothing from those opposite—

Dr Rowan interjected.

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

Ms GRACE:—including from the Leader of the Opposition, about one thing they will do for schools in the future. It is shameful.

AUKUS, Jobs

Mr KATTER: My question is to the Premier and Minister for the Olympic and Paralympic Games. Earlier this month, Prime Minister Anthony Albanese promised that the AUKUS pact on nuclear powered submarines would deliver a significant injection of jobs for Australia. Given this pledge, can the Premier outline her plans to ensure that the state she leads benefits from this opportunity and that these subs are powered by Queensland uranium?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the member for Traeger for the question, but let me make it very clear: our government does not support uranium mining in Queensland. That is our position, and we will be maintaining that position. What I do absolutely support is the development of the North West Minerals Province, as the member is aware. He came along to the lunch we had with MITEZ. We are

looking very closely at the minerals that are needed to transform our state for our renewable energy future. Those minerals are located in the North West Minerals Province. We know that CopperString is absolutely critical to that as well.

To that end, the Minister for Resources, Scott Stewart, and I will be attending the World Mining Congress later this year in Brisbane. The minister is already organising for key international members of the resources sector to travel to Mount Isa, Townsville and other parts of our state. We will be seeking expressions of interest as to where they want to go. It is an opportunity to showcase our resource-rich state to those countries. We want those companies to know very clearly when they are thinking about batteries and renewable energy technologies that Queensland has those minerals. We have the people; we have the resources; we have the towns and we are providing—

Mr Dick interjected.

Mr POWELL: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I understand that the Treasurer is on a warning. He just interjected across the chamber.

Mr SPEAKER: Treasurer, you know the rules. You will leave the chamber for one hour.

Whereupon the honourable member for Woodridge withdrew from the chamber at 11.02 am.

Ms PALASZCZUK: As the member knows, Mount Isa has just celebrated its 100th birthday. Our announcement about CopperString secures Mount Isa's future. I know that the member—

Mr Janetzki: It's been a tough year.

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

Ms PALASZCZUK: They are always whingeing over there. They have no ideas and no vision. The same LNP is what you get year in, year out.

Mr Skelton: Whinge, whinge, whinge.

Ms PALASZCZUK: That is it: whingeing and whining.

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

Ms PALASZCZUK: On this side of the House, we back the resources industry. We still have not heard from those opposite whether they back our \$62 billion Energy and Jobs Plan. Do they back the development of the North West Minerals Province? What we do know is that when they are talking about \$10 billion worth of cuts to infrastructure projects it means one thing: asset sales. The only way for the LNP to make up that shortfall would be to privatise the electricity industry in this state. Queenslanders know that we are on their side and that we will always keep our energy assets in public hands.

(Time expired)

Rural and Remote Queensland, Health Worker Accommodation

Ms LUI: My question is of the Minister for Health and Ambulance Services. Can the minister advise how the Palaszczuk government is delivering new staff accommodation and infrastructure to help attract health workers to rural and remote communities?

Mrs D'ATH: I thank the member for Cook for her question. The member for Cook knows that accommodation is a critical issue when it comes to attracting and retaining health workers across this state, particularly in her community. It is an issue that was raised when I met with the staff at Thursday Island. I heard how difficult those accommodation issues are if you come from one of the outer islands to work on TI. That is why I am very proud that the Palaszczuk government, as part of our Health and Hospitals Plan, has committed \$115 million to build staff accommodation. Since we came to government, since 2016, we have delivered staff accommodation at Kowanyama, Mareeba, Hughenden, Richmond, Mornington Island, Aurukun and Cunnamulla. We are currently developing accommodation at Mungindi. Plans are currently underway to repurpose an existing building into accommodation for permanent nursing staff and rotational student nursing placements. This project will deliver six individual ensuite rooms.

Ms Leahy interjected.

Mrs D'ATH: I thought the member interjecting might have been supportive of having staff accommodation for health workers so that we can attract and retain health workers. We also have scheduled for delivery 24 units in August this year in Gympie and 10 units in October this year in Biggenden. We are also developing accommodation in Sarina as part of the hospital redevelopment in September 2023. We have a big pipeline—\$1 billion—of rural and remote health facility replacement, and we know that we need accommodation for those staff.

We know that you need to invest in your staff. That is why we are not only employing additional frontline health workers—9,475 over this term of government—but also ensuring they have fair wages and conditions. In fact, we offer some of the best wages and conditions in the country, which we need to attract them. It was Queensland that brought in the nurse-to-patient ratio. Victoria are trying to attract staff with theirs, but theirs are not as good as ours. We have better conditions when it comes to nurse-to-patient ratios. We have the nurse navigators and nurse practitioners. We are investing in our health staff.

If those on the other side had been elected in 2020—we do not have to go back to the 4,400 health cuts—there would be 3,270 fewer nurses and midwives today. They talk about maternity units and about bypass. What do they think 3,270 fewer nurses and midwives would have done to our system over this term of government—not to mention 750 fewer doctors, 850 fewer allied health staff and 155 fewer paramedics?

Mr Head interjected.

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

Mrs D'ATH: That is what they stand for. They have no ideas and no plans.

Dalby South State School, Air Conditioning

Ms LEAHY: My question is to the Premier. The Palaszczuk government has said that all school classrooms in Queensland are air-conditioned. If all classrooms are air-conditioned, can the Premier advise why Dalby South State School B block room 11 has been waiting 18 months for air conditioning—

Government members interjected.

Ms LEAHY:—and why three other learning areas are not air-conditioned this summer?

Mr SPEAKER: Before calling the Premier, I remind the House that questions will be heard in silence. Otherwise, members will be warned.

Ms PALASZCZUK: As that was a pretty technical question, perhaps the member would like the minister to respond directly to her.

Sunshine Coast, Transport Infrastructure

Mr SKELTON: My question is of the Minister for Transport and Main Roads.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: I would ask everyone to become silent so that we can hear the question.

Mr SKELTON: Will the minister update the House on the government's record investment in transport infrastructure on the Sunshine Coast, and is the minister aware of any alternative approaches?

Mr BAILEY: I am delighted to answer that question, and what a great job the member for Nicklin and the member for Caloundra are doing on the Sunshine Coast. It is great to see MPs advocating for better transport infrastructure. This government is delivering more than four times what the previous government did in terms of transport infrastructure for the Sunshine Coast, and that includes the Sunshine Coast rail duplication between Beerwah and Beerburrum which will allow us to have more trains on that line and improve stations along that route.

Today I can update the House that we have awarded a preconstruction and design contract for this project to a John Holland and Seymour Whyte joint venture. That paves the way to ramp up new works packages and more infrastructure for the Sunshine Coast. I thank the member for Nicklin and the member for Caloundra who always stand up for Caloundra and I know that they support our detailed planning study for a direct Sunshine Coast rail line being done at the moment which is jointly funded by the Albanese government and this government after a decade of nothing from federal coalition governments. All we saw from them was a desperate last-minute promise that they would not even vote on in federal parliament. The first funding capital for a direct Sunshine Coast rail line has come from the Albanese Labor government. That is a matter of fact. The fake funding from the LNP was based on three redacted pages from a private business case that has never been published, but I happen to have them here. You cannot read a single figure, so I table that.

Tabled paper: Document, undated, titled 'Executive Summary: The Project Cost Summaries for NCC-60' [\[389\]](#).

Mr Purdie interjected.

Mr BAILEY: That is how thorough they are on their—

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Member for Ninderry, you are on a warning. You are interjecting. You can leave the chamber for one hour.

Whereupon the honourable member for Ninderry withdrew from the chamber at 11.10 am.

Mr BAILEY: We know what those opposite will actually do. They will prune it; they will cut it. They have found a new term. Members can imagine the war room in the LNP: 'We've got to find a new word for "cuts". What will we say? "Slash"? No! "Axe it"? Oh, not so good. What about "pruning"? That sounds so nice.' We can hear the member for Chatsworth now with his little pruning shears: 'We're going to call it something different to see if we can get it through.' At least the member for Chatsworth does not hide from the media like the Leader of the Opposition, the former member for Mundingburra, does. At least he fronts up and tells us about their secret plans to slash billions of dollars for transport infrastructure. At least he is honest with us about that. We cannot even find the Leader of the Opposition at the moment. He has been dodging the media gallery all week. When was the last time a leader of the opposition dodged the media gallery during a parliamentary sitting week to dodge questions about pruning? He is dodging questions about pruning. He is dodging questions—

Mr Watts interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Member for Toowoomba North!

Mr BAILEY:—about apologising to the member for Mackay—

Ms GRACE: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I believe the member for Toowoomba South is on a warning and he interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Look, I have to actually at least hear it myself. Some are obvious and some are not, so thank you for your point of order.

Mr BAILEY: The Leader of the Opposition is dodging the media gallery so he can avoid apologising to the member for Redlands and the member for Mackay—

Mr Watts interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Toowoomba North!

Mr BAILEY:—a big trend in his behaviour and attitude towards female MPs. He should stand up and be a leader.

(Time expired)

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

Horseracing, Broadcasting

Mr STEVENS: My question is to the Premier. Can the Premier explain why Queensland is the only eastern state missing from free-to-air coverage of horseracing on Channel 7 and advise the House what cost this is to TAB turnover and tax revenue to Queenslanders?

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Premier, will you be addressing the question?

Ms PALASZCZUK: Mr Speaker, the last I looked, I was not the CEO of Channel 7. I am happy for the racing minister to raise it with Channel 7, but I am not in charge of that network—happy to if you want me to. I say this to the member for Mermaid Beach: the Minister for Racing is the best racing minister this state has ever seen—absolutely the best minister.

Mr Mander interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Member for Everton, you are warned under the standing orders. You have been here long enough to know that members will be addressed by their correct titles.

Ms PALASZCZUK: There has never been a minister who has backed the racing industry more and those opposite could learn a lot about how you engage with people and how you do stakeholder engagement rather than just attack them. I am quite sure that in relation to Channel 7 the minister can raise the issue with it.

Police Resources, Community Safety

Mr SAUNDERS: My question is to 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 frontline police and community safety and advise if there are any alternative approaches?

Mr RYAN: Best racing minister, best Premier, best member for Maryborough, best team, best government, best investment in police, best investment in fire services, best investment in corrections, and we can see that in the Maryborough electorate of course. We have the visionary strong advocate, the deliverer for Maryborough, the triple threat. He delivers, he advocates, he is a visionary, and we see that in corrections where he helped deliver the best ever EB for custodial officers. They are amongst the best paid in the nation. He has delivered new facilities for the police at Howard and an upgrade at Maryborough. He is delivering new facilities for the fire service and the Rural Fire Service, and what an outstanding facility that will be.


We have the triple threat in the member for Maryborough, but we also have the triple threat in those opposite but for all the bad reasons. They are actually a triple P threat: they are pruners, they are privateers and they are procrastinators—the triple P threat. What will that mean for Maryborough, I wonder, when they come through and they prune all of the investments? That rural fire facility—gone. When the privateers come in, what does that mean for the Maryborough prison? All those public servants gone. When the procrastinators come in, what does that mean for Maryborough? No plans, no projects, no services. It is a triple P threat for all of Queensland and we know they have a secret plan to prune, a secret plan to privatise and a secret plan to do nothing. When we look at the fulfilment of their commitment to deliver a plan on community safety, it has been over 700 days and they have not delivered the plan. They procrastinate, but that suits their ideology to do nothing, to deliver nothing, for Queenslanders.

On the other hand we are delivering. We have a plan for jobs. We have a plan for infrastructure. We have a plan strengthening the police and emergency services right across our state. We are very proud of that plan, and it is not just the member for Maryborough who is delivering for his electorate. Every single one of our members has a proud record when it comes to delivering for their electorates in policing, in emergency services, in community safety. We will continue to support the front line. We will continue to support every aspect of community safety because that is what Queenslanders need, that is what they deserve and that is what we deliver.

Mr SPEAKER: The period for question time has expired.

MOTION

Suspension of Standing Orders

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Leader of the House) (11.17 am), by leave, without notice: I move—


That standing order 87 be suspended to allow the passage of the Police Powers and Responsibilities (Jack's Law) Amendment Bill in its current form.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

CRIMINAL CODE (SERIOUS VILIFICATION AND HATE CRIMES) AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Introduction

 **Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, Minister for Women and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence) (11.18 am): I present a bill for an act to amend the Anti-Discrimination Act 1991, the Criminal Code, the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000 and the Summary Offences Act 2005 for particular purposes. I table the bill, the explanatory notes and a statement of compatibility with human rights. I nominate the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee to consider the bill.

Tabled paper: Criminal Code (Serious Vilification and Hate Crimes) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023 [390].

Tabled paper: Criminal Code (Serious Vilification and Hate Crimes) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023, explanatory notes [391].

Tabled paper: Criminal Code (Serious Vilification and Hate Crimes) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023, statement of compatibility with human rights [392].

I am proud to introduce the Criminal Code (Serious Vilification and Hate Crimes) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023. I want to acknowledge all of the multicultural Queenslanders who are in the gallery today, many of whom have been involved in this process for many years now. These

reforms are the direct result of their hard work and extensive advocacy. In particular, I want to acknowledge the Cohesive Communities Coalition and particularly acknowledge Christine Castley and Rita Jabri Markwell as co-chairs of the coalition for their commitment to achieving these reforms. I am also pleased to be introducing this legislation not only during the holy month of Ramadan but also during the Hindu celebration of Chaitra Navratri. I offer my best wishes to everyone who celebrates these holidays.

In the lead-up to the 2020 election, the Palaszczuk government committed to referring the options paper on hate crimes and vilification to a parliamentary committee for review. Following an extensive inquiry, the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee made 17 recommendations, all of which were supported or supported in principle. I am proud of the framework we are delivering arising from those recommendations and thank the committee for its work on this important issue. These laws will increase maximum penalties for hate crimes, make it easier to prosecute vilification and ban the public display of hate symbols. Importantly, in relation to hate symbols, it is intended that the laws will apply to online conduct and the public display of tattoos.

We know that too many members of our diverse communities continue to experience the devastating impacts of hatred and bias. Events over recent months, and indeed recent weeks, have highlighted the importance of having laws that adequately protect our communities. We have seen abhorrent attacks, such as a pig's head being left at the Arundel Mosque on the Gold Coast and Nazi propaganda distributed in Brisbane suburbs. We have also seen horrifying scenes in Melbourne where neo-Nazis have attended anti-trans rallies to spread fear, hatred and division. I want to be very clear that these views and the hatred they represent have no place in Queensland and no place in our country.

The laws that I am introducing today will not only protect our multicultural community but also our LGBTIQ+ community too. Hatred and bigotry in all its forms must be called out and stamped out at every opportunity. The Palaszczuk government is committed to doing that, to strengthen and protect the rights of every Queenslanders no matter who they are or where they live. I know that for many people sharing their experiences of hatred and vilification can be emotional and often very difficult. I want to thank everyone who shared their stories with the committee, my department or me throughout this process. For example, Elijah Buol OAM told the committee—

I felt helpless of the time because there was no strong law to protect me. It damages my dignity and sense of worthiness in the society that I should feel belong and be part of!

Unfortunately, Elijah's experience is not unique. Whether it is experiences of trans women being misgendered in hospital, Muslim women being threatened with their hijabs being burned or people being called 'terrorists' and told to 'go home', it is clear that our laws need reform. It is vital that our hate crimes and vilification frameworks reflect modern community standards and reflect the wonderful diversity of which we are all so proud.

The legislation I am introducing today will implement four of the committee's recommendations: recommendation 7, to remove the requirement for crown law officer consent to prosecute under section 131A of the Anti-Discrimination Act; recommendation 8, to introduce a statutory aggravation regarding hate and serious vilification; recommendation 9, to relocate the offence of serious vilification to the Criminal Code; and recommendation 16, to prohibit the display of hate symbols. These amendments will make it easier to prosecute vilification and hate crimes while increasing available maximum penalties to better reflect the long-lasting impact these offences can have on victims.

The bill removes the requirement that the consent of the Attorney-General or the Director of Public Prosecutions must be obtained before a proceeding can be commenced under section 131A of the Anti-Discrimination Act while also relocating the provision to the Criminal Code. We are also increasing the maximum penalty for serious vilification from six months imprisonment to three years imprisonment. This better reflects the seriousness of the offence and community expectations. It also allows telecommunications warrants to be issued under federal legislation so police can more easily establish who is responsible for online offending.

In addition, the bill adds a circumstance of aggravation to the offences of going armed as to cause fear; threatening violence; disturbing religious worship; common assault; assault occasioning bodily harm; threats; unlawful stalking, intimidation, harassment or abuse; wilful damage; public nuisance; and trespass. This circumstance of aggravation will increase the maximum penalty where the offender is motivated, wholly or partly, by hatred or serious contempt for someone or a group of people based on their race, religion, sexuality, sex characteristics or gender identity.

The definitions of gender identity, race and sexuality will be tied to their respective definitions in the Anti-Discrimination Act to ensure ongoing consistency. In addition, definitions that are added and amended by the Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Amendment Bill 2022 will apply. A circumstance of aggravation will mean that alleged offenders would be charged with the aggravation to ensure that appropriate data can be collected on these reprehensible crimes and ensure they are called what they are: hate crimes. In relation to the offence of public nuisance, it could be expected that someone performing a Nazi salute in public may be captured within the circumstance of aggravation. In particular, there could be a strong case that a group of neo-Nazis saluting on the steps of parliament, like we saw in Melbourne just a fortnight ago, would commit the offence. But, of course, every prosecution will depend on the circumstances of the incident.

The bill also makes it an offence to publicly display, distribute or publish a prohibited symbol in a way that could menace, harass or offend someone. The offence will carry a maximum penalty of 70 penalty units or six months imprisonment. Unlike other jurisdictions that have specified prohibited symbols in legislation, our framework will prescribe symbols by regulation. This will mean our laws will cover a broader range of hate symbols and we will be able to respond to new symbols or hate movements that may unfortunately emerge.

The bill requires that before prescribing a symbol, the minister must consult with the CCC, the Queensland Human Rights Commission and the Police Service. The minister must also be satisfied that the symbol is widely known by the public or by members of a 'relevant group' as representing an ideology of extreme prejudice. In this case, a 'relevant group' is a group of people who identify with each other because of, or based on, their race, religion, sexuality, sex characteristics or gender identity. Of course, the government will also undertake extensive consultation with appropriate community and multicultural groups during the process of prescribing prohibited symbols.

The offence is intended to capture a broad range of circumstances. There is also a non-exhaustive list of excuses to the offence, including if the display or distribution is for a genuine artistic, religious, educational, historical, legal or law enforcement purpose; a public interest purpose; or to oppose the ideology represented by the prohibited symbol. A defendant relying on an excuse must prove their conduct was reasonable in the circumstances. It is intended that an excuse might be available where the public display is made in books, satire, documentaries, museums and during historical re-enactments.

While the bill does not prescribe a prohibited symbol, we have announced our intention to ban symbols related to Nazi and ISIS ideology. When referring to Nazi symbols, it is important to note that the Nazi hooked cross is the correct terminology for the most widely known symbol. The hooked cross closely resembles the swastika, which has peaceful and profound meaning in some religions, including Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism. I want to especially thank Ms Akashika Mohla from the Hindu Community of Australia for her advocacy on this important distinction. Akashika recently told my office—

The Nazi hakenkreuz has been misappropriated from the sacred swastika, an auspicious symbol which brings good luck and prosperity for Hindu, Jain and Buddhist communities. I support the bill because it will recognise the religious and cultural use of the swastika. That is, the offence will ensure that the swastika can continue to be used for religious and cultural purposes, to acknowledge the swastika's important contribution for Buddhist, Hindu and Jain communities.

To be clear, the 'religious' excuse is intended to ensure that the display of the swastika for genuine religious purposes is not captured by the offence. To support the successful operation of the offence, the bill will also allow a police officer to search a person or vehicle without a warrant where they reasonably suspect the person has committed, or is committing, the new offence. A police officer will therefore have the power to stop, detain and search the person or vehicle and seize any evidence of the commission of the offence.

As I said at the beginning of this speech, these reforms are the direct result of the hard work and advocacy of multicultural community members and stakeholders from across Queensland. In implementing these reforms their input will again be vital. We want to ensure that there is appropriate community education and cultural reform and that these laws achieve the goals they seek to.

In that regard, we will again engage with stakeholders and community members as well as relevant government agencies prior to commencement. We are also committed to continuing to work with stakeholders in relation to the remaining recommendations from the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee's report. This includes recommendations that we committed to considering as part of the Queensland Human Rights Commission's report, *Building belonging*.

These laws will be an important step for Queensland and our diverse communities and will mean we have among the strongest frame works in the country. However, these laws alone will not be enough to stamp out hatred and prejudice. We recognise that law alone cannot deal with social problems such

as discrimination and that removing the threat of vilification and hate-based conduct requires changes in societal behaviours and attitudes. However, the law is a powerful instrument for social change. The courts and the criminal justice system play a vital role in sending a clear message to the community that offending motivated by prejudice is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. In the wake of recent events, it is important that everyone commits to doing what they can to call out and eliminate hate. I commend the bill to the House. I move—

That the bill be now read a first time.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

Referral to Legal Affairs and Safety Committee

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

An incident having occurred in the public gallery—


Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, people in the gallery!

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Resumed from 28 March (see p. 699), on motion of Ms Scanlon—

That the bill be now read a second time.

 **Ms CAMM** (Whitsunday—LNP) (11.31 am), continuing: I must ask: how is the minister for agriculture advocating on behalf of the stakeholders associated with his portfolio given some of the concerns raised and outlined in submissions made to the committee in regards to the Environmental Protection and Other Legislation Amendment Bill? In particular, I refer to the submissions made by the Australian Barramundi Farmers Association and the Australian Prawn Farmers Association. What was important, and it was highlighted consistently in all elements of the submissions, was the lack of transparency, the lack of consultation and the time frame around consultation which, sadly, has become a trend of this government. In fact, when it comes to legislation or changes that impact on industry this seems to be the way in which this government is now doing business.

The concerns that I raised at the start of my contribution are significant. They are significant for regional development and they are significant for the expansion of aquaculture and agriculture across my electorate of Whitsunday and more broadly across the state. I will point to one example from my electorate. Tassal is Australia's largest prawn farm. It was purchased late last year by Cooke Aquaculture, a family-run Canadian company. The farm will employ over 350 staff and its expansion will mean 220 B-doubles entering and leaving the precinct. We are also seeing some of the biggest yields in tonnage that we have ever seen from the ponds in the prawn farm.


The concerns that Tassal raised as part of their expansion application, both through the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries as well as directly with the Minister for the Environment, have gone unanswered. I note that Minister Furner has travelled to the prawn farm. I always acknowledge and welcome the government's visits to my electorate. I certainly hope that the minister is advocating to the Minister for the Environment for this significant project. I was pleased to host our shadow minister in the region as well as our shadow minister for water. Certainly I will be hosting the shadow minister for the environment before 6 May, which is when the prawn harvest season closes.

Mr O'Connor: I don't eat them.

Ms CAMM: I take that interjection. Mr O'Connor, you may not eat prawns but certainly other people all over the nation do eat our farmed prawns. The industry is full of smart science and technology. I cannot wait to showcase the sustainability of the prawn farm and also the smart science jobs being created because of aquaculture. Those smart jobs are being created in regional and rural Queensland, which is what is important.

While my contribution to the Environmental Protection and Other Legislation Amendment Bill has been short, I acknowledge the impacts that it will have and, in particular, the government's policy settings and, more importantly, the department's ideology. While I note some of the changes facilitate a quick, hard and fast 'no' if that is the position to be taken, I certainly hope that such decisions are taken with great seriousness and look at all the elements of an application. In this state we all are stewards of the environment and we all wish to protect it. I hope that proponents and industries are given the opportunity to share their credentials as well as their visions for what they want to contribute to both the state and also environmental management practices as part of their industry stewardship.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Bush): Before I call the next member I will run through the list of those members who are currently on a warning. They are the members for Nanango, Lytton, Currumbin, Buderim, Bonney, Ninderry, Broadwater, Kawana, Glass House, Maroochydore, the Deputy Premier, the member for Mudgeeraba, the Treasurer and the members for Chatsworth, Moggill, Toowoomba South, Nicklin, Callide, Toowoomba North and Everton.

 **Mr WHITING** (Bancroft—ALP) (11.36 am): That is a very long list and it is not one that I wanted to be on. I must be one of the few members who is not on that list.

I rise to speak in favour of the bill because I support these amendments to the Environmental Protection Act 1994. It is an older act and we know that we can improve it. I appreciate the focus on rehabilitation in the bill. When I speak of rehabilitation I am speaking mainly of land that has been contaminated by industrial processes. I appreciate that the bill will make it easier for businesses to do the right thing, whether or not they have inadvertently contaminated land.

I appreciate this bill because my electorate includes the Narangba Innovation Precinct, which is also known as the Narangba industrial estate, which I share with the member for Kurwongbah. It is home to some of Queensland's most important—what we used to call—hard-to-locate industries. The precinct is a hub of chemical manufacturing, mainly involving chemicals used by Queensland agricultural industries such as glyphosate and timber treatments from the old days when copper, chrome and arsenic were injected into timber products. In 2000 I became the chair of the Narangba industrial estate reference group, which is a communications forum of businesses, government departments, councils and community representatives where we share information about what was happening on the estate. As the member for Bancroft, I am still the chair of that group.


I will give the House a bit of history. In 2005, when I was a local councillor, I was on site the night a massive binary chemicals fire happened. At 3.30 in the morning I was helping to brief QFES personnel on how many people were in the path of the smoke plume as we were deciding whether or not we had to evacuate them. The fire destroyed massive tanks of chemicals such as glyphosate. Those tanks were as big as this chamber. That sent a literal river of Roundup down the creek. I can reveal that some quick-thinking action by the Caboolture shire council's works department managers, Allan Hull and Ed Hamill, stopped that glyphosate flowing into Saltwater Creek, Hays Inlet and Moreton Bay. Despite the time of night, they had their workers bulldoze a temporary bund wall across the creek, stopping the chemicals from going into the waterways. If you wanted to do that now, under the current act it would probably take a year to get the permission. The end result of that fire was years and years of action, including administrative action, as the site was remediated. It cost everyone a fortune.

When I talk of contaminated land, I have a vested interest in this and am very interested in how we rehabilitate the land, because my communities have always lived close to those harder-to-locate industries. We live with it every day. It employs 1,800 people, but we want to make coexistence of residents and businesses as seamless and as safe as possible. In that spirit, I want the operation of the Environmental Protection Act to be less cumbersome and more effective. Certainly, within this bill we are doing that.

Under the bill it will be easier to issue a temporary authority in an emergency situation. This is similar to what I talked about previously. The bill will make it easier to trial new or innovative approaches to rehabilitation. I mention the Binary Chemicals example. For years there was a problem of how we deal with this huge reservoir of chemicals sitting underneath those massive concrete pads onsite. That emphasised to me that there have to be new and better ways to remediate these sites. I also welcome the improved contaminated land planning frameworks in this bill, especially when it comes to issues of cost and closure. I remember that we spent probably over a decade with owners and insurers in the Binary Chemicals case talking about cost and closure. There needs to be a better way to do this kind of rehabilitation.

There are many parts of this bill that I do appreciate. I mention the better enforcement powers for compliance officers. Like the member for Lytton, I pay regard to the compliance officers in the department. I know that in the industrial estate of our area they have spent all hours during the night, after hours, trying to find the source of odours coming from the estate. I pay respect to the work that they do.

I thank the minister for bringing this bill to the parliament. I know that she is dedicated to helping protect the wonderful environment of Queensland. The people of Queensland know that it is always a Labor government that will better protect the environment. They know that they cannot trust the LNP to fully look after our environment.

 **Mr LISTER** (Southern Downs—LNP) (11.41 am): I, too, rise to make a contribution on the Environmental Protection and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022. Last night I was enlivened by some of the contributions by members of the government talking about respective records on environmental credibility. As members would know, I represent a country seat in which there is an enormous amount of outstanding agricultural land. Of interest to me and my constituents is how the environment is protected in the face of things such as coal seam gas. In response to something the member for Lytton said last night—words to the effect that the LNP is in bed with big business and we do not care about the environment—I remind those opposite that it was a Labor government that was involved in the Linc Energy debacle. In that part of the world—not far from my electorate—we saw very significant problems with coal seam gas extraction. The government's record at the time is not one which reflects credit upon it.


Mr Watts interjected.

Mr LISTER: I take that interjection from the member for Toowoomba North.

I turn to the process by which this bill has been considered. I acknowledge the words which have come across in many submissions I have received or seen in my committee work—on the committee I am currently on and particularly on the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee during the last term—that in some cases the government pays lip-service to consultation. We have evidence in the submissions which were tendered in consideration of this bill by the committee that when the consultation did occur it was not reflective and was quite divergent from the extent of the bill once it was finally put before the House. Considering the scope and impact of some of the measures in this bill, that is very disappointing.

We heard talk about sovereign risk. This is a serious matter. Business and investment have been made on the basis that we live in a developed democracy where law progresses through the consent of the people and that we do not have surprises and retrospective effects thrown upon us. That does not go to the government's credit, either. I say to the government on behalf of the people of Southern Downs that legislation such as this needs genuine consultation. I even hear that there were confidentiality agreements involved with some of the groups consulted with. That strikes me as being very high-handed. We have to ask: if the consultation is supposed to bring the community with you, why is it that it was necessary for the community to be prevented from seeing what this bill was going to be? I leave that with the House.


I make one more observation regarding the environmental credentials of the government, in response to what some members said last night in this House. I have posed a number of questions to the government—I hope to get answers in the coming weeks—regarding the environmental protections and checks on the extraction of coal seam gas in my neck of the woods. Why is this sort of thing not appearing in the bill? This bill would be a perfect way in which to shore up regulations and checks on holders of approvals to extract coal seam gas: to ensure that their water extraction does not exceed the take limits they have been given under the environmental approval—that is something the state should be doing; whether or not there is protection from the pollution of groundwater, wastewater that is salty and so forth; and to ensure there will be no subsidence on the properties of the many people I represent, in the Cecil Plains area in particular. While this bill has some decent measures, the government could be doing more. I stand on the record of this side of the House on the environment any day of the week.

 **Ms BOYD** (Pine Rivers—ALP) (11.46 am): We are privileged to live in a state with a range of landscapes and environments—from tropical rainforests and arid drylands to mountain forests and coastal wetlands and dunes. This ancient environment and the lifestyle it provides is the reason that so many come to Queensland to live or to visit. Responsible stewardship of this land is the onus of those who enjoy its riches. While we know that there is a good life to be made here, we can protect that life for generations to come. The changes contained in this bill are many and often quite administratively detailed. I will refer to a few that stand out to me as noteworthy.

The Environmental Protection Act increases enforcement powers in a few obvious but important ways—notably, explicitly providing that department of environment officials are authorised persons to use drones and body worn cameras when performing their environmental protection duties in the form of exercising entry powers; requiring a corporation to nominate a person to answer questions on behalf of the corporation; and providing for criminal history checks to be obtained to aid investigations. Clarity around the use of these tools, including publication of guidelines and procedures for their use, will greatly aid environment officers to efficiently conduct their assessments, aid training and deter uncooperative behaviour.

This bill makes changes in requiring publication of amendment applications to environmental authorities that can relate to a resource activity in situations where the assessment level decision is that the amendment is a major amendment. This idea has merit and I believe will serve a purpose beyond courting objections. Seeking community input can have positive effects. It can improve environmental outcomes through ensuring that resource projects meet community standards and help the community's understanding of projects. This change attracted a few submissions. I understand objectors' concerns about increases in cost and time delays through public notification processes being expanded through these changes in the minor amendment threshold definition; however, I also understand that this change clarifies the requirements for notifications and reduces confusion about requirements to notify. In this regard, it is a clearer statement of regulatory intent which is important for an act that has the primary objective of protecting the environment.

Further, in relation to the Wet Tropics World Heritage Protection and Management Act 1993 and the Land Title Act, I join with the submissions received on this legislation in supporting the removal of exemption on mining exploration in the Wet Tropics of Queensland World Heritage Area. For Queenslanders, our Wet Tropics rank alongside the Great Barrier Reef in terms of importance for our natural heritage. People come from all around the world to visit these magnificent areas. There is no need to conduct resource exploration in the Wet Tropics because the community would never accept resource projects in the Wet Tropics. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr MOLHOEK** (Southport—LNP) (11.49 am): I rise today to speak on the Environmental Protection and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. The Environmental Protection and Other Legislation Amendment 2022 aims to improve administrative efficiency and ensure the regulatory frameworks within the environment portfolio remain contemporary, effective and responsive. The bill proposes a number of amendments.

According to the explanatory notes, the bill amends the Environmental Protection Act 1994 to support industry, streamline and clarify regulatory processes, better protect the environment and improve community input and transparency. It is somewhat ironic that the aim of the bill is to improve community input and transparency and yet the consultation process around the drafting of the bill required many organisations to sign confidentiality documents. They were not even allowed to speak to their member organisations about what was being proposed. I think that is incredibly ironic at a time when Queenslanders have been demanding more of their government, when there have been integrity scandals and when so many other issues have been raised in the public arena around transparency and openness.

Ms Boyd interjected.

Mr MOLHOEK: I am not taking those interjections. I do not even understand what the member for Pine Rivers is talking about.

There are six aspects of this legislation that I would like to speak about briefly. While we are absolutely supportive of the need to improve protection of the environment—and I note the member for Bancroft's comments earlier around an initiative undertaken by a local council in a fire event—there are times when local government authorities have to step in in fairly urgent situations and circumstances. Many of our local councils do an excellent job when it comes to taking environmental concerns seriously and dealing with emergency situations.

There were a number of concerns raised throughout the committee's consultation process. In submissions from the Queensland Law Society and a number of other organisations we heard about issues around directors' liability and the impractical working of some of those requirements over the long term, issues around the ability to acquire directors' insurance and issues around what liability should carry forward where a past director has had no say or input into the current behaviours or policies of the organisation that may or may not have created a breach.

I also heard concerns around the potential to put about 8,000 current applications and approvals at risk. That concern was raised by a number of organisations. They said that this bill, if passed, could effectively give the department the power to revoke or overturn some previous approvals. That is why

during the public briefing with the department I raised questions around that and sought assurances from the department that that would not be the case. I was pleased to hear that that certainly was not their intent. That is on the public record. They have recorded their comments around that. Rather, the intent is that where past approvals lapse over a period of time it would be reasonable to assume that there would be some requirement to reapply or for the department to have some further interventionary power or ability to work with those proponents and perhaps review and change some of those conditions.


Concerns were also raised around the divesting of power. This is an interesting issue because it came up at the various times during the debate we had on the special COVID provisions. We have seen different approaches in different states of Australia. Where elected members divest their power to paid bureaucrats in areas of public concern or public benefit, there should be concern because the general public can hold an elected member to account, but it is very difficult for them to hold paid bureaucrats to account.

I am concerned, in moving forward with this legislation, that the minister may ill-advisedly be divesting some of her power to the department. My concern with that is that what we do not want to see is another superpower environment department like we saw a decade ago where they were basically holding sway over every other government department. Environmental considerations are important.

There needs to be balanced and reasoned approaches to applications, but we need the department of transport, for example, to be able to move proactively and plan well when it comes to building new roads. We need to know that the planning laws that we provide across the state and the rules that we set for councils and for the development and other industries carry some weight and that they cannot be held to ransom by a single department over, what can be on occasions, fairly minor issues. Although, it is important that we have a department that can intervene where there are obvious or glaring faults or facts.

I have to say that initially I struggled to understand what this legislation is about so I asked the director-general if he could explain it in layman's terms. I am not really sure that it was explained all that well. My conclusion was that, to some extent, it is just more rules about rules. I made a second attempt during the public briefing. I was taught in the media that you should basically speak as though you are speaking to a 12-year-old and assume that if they can understand that everyone else can understand it. I took it to another level and said, 'Can you provide us with a little detail as to what is in it for my granddaughters?' I am not sure that I gained a clearer understanding after that explanation. There was a bit of banter amongst committee members around our grandchildren and future issues. There was some levity in the public briefing and through the public hearing.

While we are supporting this bill, I flag the concern around divesting power from the minister to the department. I think in matters like that we should hasten very carefully.

 **Ms PUGH** (Mount Ommaney—ALP) (11.58 am): It is always great to rise on matters of the environment. To refer back to the member for Southport's contribution, I will paraphrase in the best way I know how the words of the mighty Taylor Swift. She said, 'It's me, hi. I'm the problem, it's me.' If the member for Southport gets that many explanations then maybe it is not the explanation—I am just saying.


I want to touch on what the member for Pine Rivers said. I was going to leave this to the end of my contribution, but what the member for Pine Rivers said about the Wet Tropics and the community expectation is exactly right. It is not just the expectation of the immediate community, it is the expectation of Queenslanders that we have to protect our special areas. We are lucky; I think we all know that. We are proud of the areas we represent. I represent 35 square kilometres, or thereabouts, of Queensland. I know other members represent much larger parts than that.

My little patch of Queensland is incredibly proud of Far North Queensland and we know how beautiful it is. I think that Queenslanders would support amendments in the bill that enact those environmental objectives. They include amendments to the Wet Tropics World Heritage Protection and Management Act 1993 which ensure mining is prohibited in the Wet Tropics of Queensland World Heritage Area. The Wet Tropics are a mighty long way from my electorate of Mount Ommaney. I hope that one day every Queenslanders gets the opportunity to visit, but every single Queenslanders would know it is vitally important that we act to protect them. I am sure my community will be really keen to see that enshrined in legislation. As I said, even though it is well outside my patch, a lot of people do come to see me about other parts of Queensland. They say, 'I want to see these areas protected,' and protected in legislation is the best way to do that. Queenslanders expect nothing less.

The Palaszczuk government is committed to ensuring this legislation delivers on the government's priorities but also meets those industry needs, so a lot of the amendments in the legislation have been initiated in response to industry feedback. The bill improves the estimated rehabilitation cost and progressive rehabilitation and closure planning frameworks by inserting a process for changing an application for an estimated rehabilitation cost decision. This will support industry by providing a clear process for them to change their application before it is decided. An estimated rehabilitated cost decision is required for particular environmental authority holders for a resource activity, and it is obviously critical that a smooth process is in place to enable these holders to obtain that decision.

The bill also inserts a new transitional provision to clarify how environmental authority holders transition into the progressive rehabilitation and closure planning framework. The transition to the progressive rehabilitation and closure planning framework is nearing completion. This is great news. It means most of the mines that are required to have a progressive rehabilitation plan or a closure plan will have one. For those few mines that are still transitioning, the bill includes amendments to remove the ambiguity around whether the relevant transitional provisions apply. This will address a risk that industry could be operating in noncompliance with the provision.

There is a lot that is really great about this bill. I think my personal favourite parts are the bits that protect the Wet Tropics, because I know that is an issue so many of my local residents and so many Queenslanders will be keen to see enshrined in legislation. With that, I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr PERRETT** (Gympie—LNP) (12.02 pm): I rise to speak on the Environmental Protection and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022. This bill aims to improve administrative efficiency and ensure that the regulatory frameworks within the environment portfolio are contemporary, effective and responsive. Among the changes it proposes are amendments to the environmental impact statement—or EIS—process, including a refusal to allow an EIS process to proceed if the project is clearly unacceptable and for an EIS assessment to lapse after three years. There are also amendments to require public notification of major amendment applications for resource activities, and changes to environmental authority, transitional environmental program and contaminated land provisions.

Whenever this government changes environmental legislation people in agriculture are concerned, because the reality is they are not winners. This is yet another bill which the government has badly managed. It showed little commitment to genuine listening and consultation. The consultation process on an issue which impacts agriculture producers, fishers, landholders and rural and regional communities was botched. Stakeholders were required to sign confidentiality agreements to see a draft of the bill. The consultation period for the bill was minimal, and stakeholders were told in late 2021 that, because amendments were minor, no regulatory impact statement was issued. They were hoodwinked.

It turned out that the first draft of the bill had far-reaching and more significant changes than the department implied. Changes gave the department the power to retrospectively wind back existing environmental approvals, licences and permits to slash production capacity. What is more outrageous is that stakeholders were required to sign confidentiality agreements before they could see the draft. It meant they could not consult with their organisations and membership. It was a cynically manipulative attempt to curtail debate and blind stakeholders to the government's predetermined outcomes. When news of the government's scheme leaked to the *Australian* an industry source said—

It's frankly outrageous. It would give power to a bureaucrat to unilaterally and retrospectively close businesses. It's a sovereign risk of the highest order.

There was a stink around the process and disingenuous commentary from ministers. Last August I asked the Premier a question without notice about whether secret changes to the legislation meant that on a bureaucratic whim farmers would be forced to cut the number of livestock they have. The Premier provided no reassurance about farmers' concerns and instead ignored them. The question was dismissed with the Premier saying that no decision had been made about the final contents of, or the introduction of, any amendments to the bill.

The Premier must have known what was being proposed because the environment minister said confidentiality agreements were needed because it was a requirement to maintain cabinet confidentiality. Presumably, cabinet confidentiality was needed because the minister had taken it to cabinet. When I asked the minister a question on notice about who signed those confidentiality agreements, the minister made the specious argument that the agreements were part of the requirement that 'the ongoing confidentiality of cabinet and related records shall be maintained'. What is even more intriguing is that when the minister for mines was asked about it in estimates in August he said, 'We do not use agreements of that nature and we will not.' What was so significant that it required

the cover of cabinet confidentiality? What required secret deals to discuss something in good faith? What was the government up to? What has it planned, and what will it try to do next time? The draft legislation has the fingerprints of the Wilderness Society and environmental activists all over it.

What makes industry more suspicious is that when the bill was finally tabled in October last year stakeholders were given only nine business days to make a submission. The Australian Prawn Farmers Association said—

Given the extremely short period of time for industry to digest this information and understand its practical implications, and the amount of detailed commentary on the amendments, there is some real confusion about the nature and extent of some of the changes that are proposed and how they will operate in practice.

...

The APFA is a significant stakeholder in this Bill on behalf of our Queensland members and the adhoc and restrictive nature of consultation taken with the Exposure Draft (which is different to the Bill tabled) by the Department and now the time between the introduction of the Bill on the 12th October 2022 and the closing date for submissions on the 26th October 2022 also being extremely short, the timing does not allow a measured and considered response developed through consultation with our members.

The Queensland Farmers' Federation said it was not consulted and was unable to fully or meaningfully raise items with its membership. It said—

QFF supports transparency in legislation that encourages best management practices, and for our farmers to continue to produce world class food, fibre and foliage. However, without detailed consultation, and understanding of how these amendments may negatively affect farming practices, QFF has concerns, if farmers are unaware of changes and are penalised for actions, they are unaware of.

While many of the extreme proposals were removed, stakeholders have been left with little trust in the government. There is no trust that the government will not try to revisit the more contentious issues. Concerns remain about the impact this will have on some of our industries. Aquaculture is one of the most heavily regulated industries. The Australian Prawn Farmers Association and Australian Barramundi Farmers Association are concerned this bill will impact their viability, create unfair burdens without scientific evidence, and squash their efforts through research and development investment to improve efficiencies and reduce their environmental impact.

Ninety-eight per cent of Australian prawn farms are in Queensland. Growth is planned, with the industry being an important economic driver in regional transport and feed manufacture investment, labour and new skills and training. Production figures from the first quarter of this financial year show that the Queensland barramundi sector is estimated to be worth more than \$60 million annually. It is concerning that APFA submitted—

APFA has strong concerns the Bill will impede the achievement of significant growth in aquaculture as a viable food source ... and is also unfairly burdening an industry that is highly sustainable, and science has shown does not adversely impact the receiving environment.

They also said—

The Bill fails to provide equitable regulation for aquaculture generally—

and that it—

... imposes regulatory burden and restriction that is not commensurate to their impact on the environment ...

They contend that this approach is contrary to the government policy to develop aquaculture. The Australian Barramundi Farmers Association echoed those sentiments, saying—

This piece of legislation that has the potential to significantly undermine the growth and development of the industry within Queensland ...

They submitted—

... this Bill creates significant sovereign risk for all businesses ... that possess or must apply for Environmental Authorities—

and that the bill—

... eliminates certainty and undermines approvals and license conditions ...

I look forward to hearing from the minister for agriculture about how he will ensure that this will not be a burden to these valuable industries. The ABFA said—

It is our view that the understanding of aquaculture remains at a rudimentary level within DES ...

They are therefore concerned that—

... the Bill vests an inappropriate level of power within DES and allows proposals to be rejected and EA's to be amended on subjective grounds, thereby, creating untenable investment risk for businesses subject to EA's.


The ABFA do not support the introduction of section 41A, which they say—

... affords DES complete discretion to refuse a project without undertaking an environmental impact assessment, or indeed conducting any evaluation at all.

They said—

This provision eliminates due process by allowing a subjective, premature, and cursory assessment of a draft Terms of Reference (TOR) to be conducted, and a consequent decision to refuse an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIS).

This bill was supposed to be mostly administrative. The environment minister's introductory speech said that the bill would 'improve community input and transparency'. The process to deliver this bill has created much damage. It has caused angst and anxiety and shown the government has treated people and industries with little respect. The importance of consultation should not be underestimated. Lack of integrity, the secrecy, the manipulation and the pandering to vested interests make people lose trust in this government.

 **Hon. ML FURNER** (Ferny Grove—ALP) (Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries and Minister for Rural Communities) (12.11 pm): I am pleased to contribute to the Environmental Protection and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. I want to thank my colleagues, in particular the committee and the chair, and the stakeholders for their contributions to the bill. As the minister for agriculture, I note many agriculture stakeholders made submissions to the committee, and I want to put on record and acknowledge those stakeholders—the Queensland Farmers' Federation, AgForce Queensland, the Australian Prawn Farmers Association, the Australian Barramundi Farmers Association and the LGAQ. I thank them for their contributions. I also want to commend the Minister for the Environment for her leadership on this bill and her consultation with those stakeholders. It was thorough consultation, and she listened concisely and took on board their concerns. I think this is an example of what you can do when you consult with industry.

It is interesting to follow the member for Gympie and to listen to his view on where aquaculture is heading. He needs to go through the Lobbeiger report and see the growth in aquaculture in this state. It was the Palaszczuk government that brought two major companies to Queensland, and I am referring to Tassal and Ornatas, and they are growing substantially. I know the member for Mackay and members in Townsville understand the growth of aquaculture in those areas. There are millions and millions of dollars worth of growth and hundreds of jobs in those areas supporting the aquaculture industry, yet those opposite produce this conspiracy theory that it is in demise. I am astounded by their contributions in respect of that part of the industry. They have little understanding of what this bill does.

The Environmental Protection and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022 sets the foundations to support industry, streamline administrative processes, protect the environment, enable community input, give transparency to the process and establish a more effective environmental regulator. The bill amends the Environmental Protection Act 1994, the Waste Reduction and Recycling Act 2011 and the Wet Tropics World Heritage Protection and Management Act 1993, and includes minor consequential amendments to the Land Title Act 1994.

There are several issues which concern the agricultural industry, but the amendments addressing emergency situations are of particular interest to me as an emergency situation includes disaster management and biosecurity emergency orders. The new emergency provisions assist Queensland businesses and individuals to meet environmental requirements in an emergency situation, such as flooding or biosecurity emergencies.


It is in times of emergency situations, such as floods, that there needs to be certainty for these people so they are not caught out by legislation in circumstances they cannot control. These provisions allow the administering authority to issue temporary authorities where it is deemed necessary and reasonable to respond to the impacts of an emergency situation, such as a natural disaster or major health or biosecurity emergencies. A person may apply to the administering authority for a temporary authority which allows them to carry out an environmentally relevant activity on a temporary basis. I welcome this change as this will bring some peace of mind to those in emergency situations. I note the submission of the Queensland Farmers' Federation states—

QFF welcomes the transparency for numerous changes that will now allow the public to be notified of major changes to environmental approvals, especially those that can have a negative impact on agricultural land and regional communities.

I am sure this bill will go a long way to assist Queenslanders. This morning in a ministerial statement I spoke about a situation in the gulf. There is no doubt that these changes will assist in that process for further weather events down the track. I also note the committee's recommendations. The first is that the committee recommends that the bill be passed. The second is—

The committee recommends the Minister for the Environment and the Great Barrier Reef and Minister for Science and Youth Affairs take note of the committee's comments and, in her second reading speech, address the issues raised about the proposed amendment in clause 105 of the Bill and the adequacy of defences in section 493 of the Environmental Protection Act 1994.

On that basis, I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr BERKMAN** (Maiwar—Grn) (12.16 pm): I rise to make my contribution on the Environmental Protection and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. The Greens are supporting this bill because the vast majority of it will improve our current laws, albeit in fairly minor ways. The bill is too broad for me to cover every single provision that I might like to, so I will focus on what I see are some of the most important changes and how they should go much further, as well as the parts I am concerned could actually take us backwards.

The headline change in this bill is probably the provision that allows for an early no decision for projects that are clearly unacceptable because they are unlikely to proceed under the Environmental Protection Act or another law. Proponents of projects will have to submit a draft terms of reference for an environmental impact statement, or an EIS as they are known, with a summary of the project's potential adverse environmental impacts and proposed measures to avoid or minimise those impacts. The department will then make a decision based on this as to whether the EIS can proceed to the public notification stage. Broadly speaking, it is a positive step that makes a lot of sense and it was supported by submitters like the Environmental Defenders Office, but ultimately it is not the strongest change that it could be while our environmental laws remain so weak and so stacked in favour of proponents and corporate profit.

Despite the histrionics from industry and some in the LNP, this early no provision is actually quite limited in its operation. The bill lists factors like whether the project presents an unacceptable risk of serious or material environmental harm, or an unacceptable adverse impact on a matter of state or national environmental significance or cultural heritage, but believe it or not those factors are not enough for a project to be rejected at this point. Instead, the project has to be already unlikely to be able to proceed. The most significant impact of this is to avoid wasting time and resources—both public resources in the assessment process and private resources in pursuing that—in circumstances where the government is likely to reject the project anyway. These corporations should ultimately be pretty stoked with the changes, since we all know that both Labor and LNP governments in this state will ultimately approve most of their dodgy disruptive projects, and I am thinking Adani, the New Acland stage 3 expansion, the Queen's Wharf proposal and the list goes on.

If this 'early no' provision actually strengthened our environmental protections in a meaningful way in this state, it would not allow projects with unacceptable risks of serious or environmental harm and impacts on cultural heritage to go ahead. That would mean stopping some of the outrageous proposals currently on the table for Queensland, like Toondah Harbour or Clive Palmer's Waratah Coal mine in the Galilee Basin.

Thanks to the hard work of young people, environmental defenders and First Nations traditional owners, the Land Court decided last year that Palmer's coalmine should not be approved because it would unjustifiably limit human rights by making climate change worse. If a project breaches the Human Rights Act, that should, I would suggest, warrant a clear 'early no'. If a project breaches international treaties like Walker Corporation's Toondah Harbour development, which will build 3,600 apartments on top of internationally protected wetlands, that should be the basis for an 'early no' in and of itself. In fact, if a project would blow our ability to meet our obligations under the Paris Agreement, which means any new coal or gas project, that should warrant an 'early no'. However, perhaps it is not surprising that we ended up with this watered-down version after the decidedly opaque process for developing the bill. A number of organisations, including the Queensland Law Society, criticised that process. We have heard the minister go to much effort to justify how it was carried out.

The government's consultation on exposure drafts was only to a targeted group of hand-picked organisations that were then required to sign confidentiality agreements in order to participate in the process and to have their say. Apparently, we understand, an earlier draft included new powers to retrospectively change environmental authorities, but this was removed presumably after some strong feedback from concerned industry groups. We should be able to change environmental authorities if it is necessary to protect our environment and meet our obligations under other laws, agreements, international conventions and the like. It is a shame that yet again Labor has backed away from the possibility of real reform here.

Nonetheless, there are various minor changes in the bill that we do support. EIS public notifications will now be online rather than in a newspaper, which is a pretty commonsense manoeuvre in 2023. Assessment reports for an EIS will lapse after three years so that we can ensure those reports have current information, reflect current standards and take into account current legislation and regulations—also a very positive step.

The bill gives the chief executive the power to extend that period at any time before the three years are up, and it appears to provide no meaningful criteria for that extension. It will be interesting to see how frequently that particular power to extend is exercised. I am sure every proponent would like one and whoever happens to have the right connections within the Labor Party has a pretty easy path to dodge the new responsibility. It may be time to check up on Anacta's rates to see how they can build that into the business case.

The bill takes some small steps to improve transparency for environmental authorities. Additional information about EISs will be kept on the public register, including the proponent's response to the chief executive about a draft terms of reference, summaries of submissions and amendment notices. Public notification will also be required for major EA amendments for resource activities.

As folks like the Wilderness Society pointed out, we do have a long way to go for truly transparent and participatory environmental decision-making but these changes are certainly a start. This is probably a pertinent moment to indicate how welcome it would be to get any suggestion from the minister about progress in terms of the consultation on an independent EPA for Queensland and when we might see a concrete proposal brought forward for that very important step.

I do have some very real concerns about some provisions in this bill and there are a couple of amendments that we cannot support, in particular increasing the thresholds for material and serious environmental harm from \$5,000 to \$10,000 and \$50,000 to \$100,000 respectively. I understand the government's argument that doubling these thresholds is justifiable based on inflation and the fact that they have not increased since 1994 when the act commenced, and it proposes to index these annually with new thresholds to be published on the department's website. I argue that those thresholds are already very high, arguably much higher than the community might expect. What this means in practice is that the department has less ability to enforce against environmental harm where it causes damage worth between \$5,000 and \$10,000. As the EDO pointed out in its submission, the department already seems to struggle with enforcement to protect against environmental harm. We certainly do not want to see steps like this that will just make it harder.

It is also worth noting that even where enforcement happens, the environmental harms caused by big corporations often dwarf the scale of any fines they receive. Inadequate penalties simply mean that these fines or penalties become part of the cost of doing business for reckless profiteering corporations, and our environment and community suffers.

The EDO also raised serious concerns about exempting trial or research activities from providing certain information for an environmental authority. Quoting from their submission, they are absolutely right when they say—

If no information is able to be provided about—

environmental values and potential impacts—

of a project, it should not be allowed to go ahead. If no information is available, it means the proponent has done no research on the proposed site, or doesn't understand at all the activity they are proposing. Neither of these scenarios should lead to the proponent obtaining an EA to undertake the activity.


This bill is supposed to improve community input and transparency of environmental assessment, not decrease the publicly available information.

Other parts of this bill do improve transparency. I welcome those amendments, as well as those provisions that will strengthen enforcement of environmental protection laws and improve implementation of rehabilitation schemes and management of contaminated land. Of course, the Greens also support the prohibition of mining in the Wet Tropics of Queensland World Heritage Area, which is protected thanks to the hard work and direct action—yes, disruptive direct protest action—of environmentalists in North Queensland in the eighties. A number of those groups and organisations are still waiting for the cardinal principle to be restored into the Nature Conservation Act. We know that, as it stands, the act still allows for private developments in national parks and allows leases for exclusive use. It is time for that to change.

For all these reasons, we broadly support the bill, but it must be said again that it does not go far enough to protect Queensland's environment from destructive, unacceptable projects like Clive Palmer's Waratah Coal mine in the Galilee Basin and the Toondah Harbour development on

Ramsar-listed wetlands. This government should not be surprised if ordinary people decide to take disruptive protest action to protect our environment, including from coal and gas, where the law in this state is failing.

(Time expired)

 **Mr KELLY** (Greenslopes—ALP) (12.26 pm): I support the bill. I would like to acknowledge and thank the minister and the committee for their hard work in relation to this. Listening to that contribution from the member for Maiwar and the various contributions from the LNP, I realise why there is a path right down the centre for the Labor Party and always will be. The litany of projects that the Greens listed that they would like to stop would render advancement and development in this state almost nil. If we cast our mind back to the mercifully short time that the LNP were in government in this state, they had an environment minister that the Brazilians would have been proud of with a tree-clearing record that I think Jair Bolsonaro would have given his left arm for. There will always be a path down the middle for sensible reforms in this area. I am proud to be on the same side as this minister who has delivered so much in this portfolio area.

I like to generally start thinking about these issues and these debates by having a look at the statement of reservation. It usually gives you a good basis to get into some sort of debating points, but unfortunately this statement of reservation says little, if anything. In fact, you have to read halfway through it until you finally get to the crux of the statement of so-called reservation where it says, 'The opposition members of the committee support the recommendations in this report.' It hardly sounds like a ringing statement of reservation. It seems to me like it is an exercise in opposition for opposition sake.

I would like to comment on the contribution of the member for Southport. The member for Southport said some things that I think have been reflected by a number of members over there. The notion around the divesting or the delegating of powers to public servants somehow rendering those powers and those public servants away from public accountability seems to me to be a gross misunderstanding of our Westminster system of governance. Of course public servants are accountable to the people of Queensland, just as we as members of this parliament are accountable to the people of Queensland.

The notion that, as governments of all persuasions, we do not always or regularly delegate and divest powers to public servants of all sorts at all levels is just false. It is just not true. In this particular instance—let's put aside the fact that we are divesting a procedural power that has never actually been used—it feeds into this notion that public servants cannot be trusted, that we do not like public servants and that public servants are fair game for politicians. No, the reality is public servants are hardworking, they execute their duties diligently and they are certainly accountable to the broader community, as anybody who has been around public servants or has been a public servant would know.

As I said, I am very proud to be part of this government. I think about the achievements of our government, most led by the minister to my left. There is the investment we put into the Great Barrier Reef, the largest ever investment in the history of Queensland into national parks and then there is the Containers for Change. When I go out on Clean Up Australia Day I do not see containers lying around anymore. Because of the plastic bag bans, our creeks are not choked with plastic bags—and we are going further in that area. Then there was the waste levy, encouraging businesses to actually get into the circular economy rather than just dumping things. I have already touched on tree clearing, but there are our very strong laws in that areas as well as the doubling of the number of Indigenous land and sea rangers. Then we get to our Climate Action Plan including my favourite, which I know the Minister for Education is very fond of, the ACES program which has been rolled out right across the state and the very important Energy and Jobs Plan. All of these are significant environmental achievements. While this bill is perhaps not as headlining as some of those achievements, nonetheless it is still very important.

I will restrict myself to talking about a couple of things in relation to this bill. I think the early refusal provisions are important. Clearly, this bill is about improving efficiency, and this is a significant way that we can improve efficiency. I think it is important that decisions can be made earlier and perhaps give organisations and projects a chance to get back on track and move in a direction that has a better chance of achieving an outcome or abandoning a project at an earlier phase before too much investor money is put into it. In relation to the provisions around requiring public notification on all major amendments to environmental authorities, this is a really important step forward in terms of public accountability and transparency. With those few words, I commend the bill to the House.



Mr HEAD (Callide—LNP) (12.32 pm): The Environmental Protection and Other Legislation Amendment Bill sounds great, but what an atrocious consultation process there was behind this bill. There were non-disclosure agreements where organisations were unable to talk to their paying members about this legislation. This shows how out of touch, chaotic, confused and arrogant this government is. This government talks about transparency and good practice and yet, once again, it fails miserably. This is a party that is meant to represent membership bodies but flatly refused to allow membership bodies to do their jobs.

Not only did the minister enforce a non-disclosure agreement on those representative groups, but through her and her department's comments she had them believing the original proposals would be mostly administrative in nature with no major policy changes. If this were the case, there would be absolutely no need for a non-disclosure agreement, which just highlights the lengths this minister went to in order to try to ram through extreme changes with this bill.

I thank many of those industry groups for their strong advocacy in calling out those appalling actions as it was only because of them fighting tooth and nail that the minister backed down in embarrassment and removed a lot of eyebrow-raising clauses that were initially going to be in this bill. Not only did the initial process fail on all accounts of good governance, but the committee process was incredibly flawed with only nine full business days given for submissions. In the limited time submitters had, they also took the opportunity to call out this flawed process. For example, the Queensland Resources Council said—

It is critical for industry confidence in an open, transparent, consultative government that such arrangements do not become the standard modus operandi for government processes. As a minimum there should be a reasoned explanation of why such a process is occurring, beyond simply stating that it is an exposure bill and thus not finalised government policy. For example, what content is particularly sensitive and why? If the changes are considered so minor that they did not justify a RIS, what is the rationale for the stringent confidentiality requirements?

The Association of Mining and Exploration Companies said—

AMEC also considers the manner in which consultation has been undertaken, combined with consistently short timeframes for responses to various iterations of documents, necessarily means the policy development behind the Bill will suffer from a lower quality and smaller breadth of responses that would otherwise likely be provided.

AMEC would be very concerned if the Department, or indeed the Queensland Government more broadly, were to adopt such practices more broadly moving forward.

The Australian Prawn Farmers Association said—

Given the extremely short period of time for industry to digest this information and understand its practical implications, and the amount of detailed commentary on the amendments, there is some real confusion about the nature and extent of some of the changes that are proposed and how they will operate in practice.

...

The APFA is a significant stakeholder in this Bill on behalf of our Queensland members and the adhoc and restrictive nature of consultation taken with the Exposure Draft (which is different to the Bill tabled) by the Department and now the time between the introduction of the Bill on the 12th October 2022 and the closing date for submissions on the 26th October 2022 also being extremely short, the timing does not allow a measured and considered response developed through consultation with our members.

As a member of parliament who actively consults with various industry groups that represent my constituents, I think it is abundantly clear that this government has set an incredibly dangerous precedent. Many stakeholders in the agricultural sector have made comments in the media about the failures of this government on this bill and other matters. This government is yet to understand that their actions have real environmental, economic and social consequences, especially when they fail to listen to the wider Queensland community. This can be seen in the current environmental degradation occurring as a direct result of this government's vegetation management laws in the mulga lands, as was reported in the *Queensland Country Life* last week. I table an article that appeared in last week's *Queensland Country Life*.

Tabled paper: Article from *Queensland Country Life* online, dated 23 March 2023, titled 'Killing with kindness: Mulga "deserts" prompt calls for changes to vegetation code, P5' [\[393\]](#).

The article notes the mulga 'deserts' that are occurring because of this government's laws. We all know how good the season is in Western Queensland, and the fact that there are mulga 'deserts' just shows how bad these laws really are.

This is a clear example of environmental legislation that is directly detrimental to Queensland's native flora and fauna and clearly needs improving in a way that respects Queensland's 13 unique bioregions. I raise this issue because this is another example of an environmental bill that was meant

to protect our environment but significantly fails to do so. Queensland primary industry leads the world when it comes to environmental protection and they are proud to do so. Long hours are spent each week by many in rural and regional Queensland undertaking best practice to earn a living while feeding the world and taking care of Queensland's unique environment.

Other issues in the bill include clause 105, which seeks to amend section 493 of the Environmental Protection Act to make clear that executive officers can be held liable if they are in office at the time an act or omission occurred that resulted, even at a later time, in the commission of an offence. This is clearly not the right approach, as was also suggested by the Queensland Law Society. This clause will mean an executive can be liable for a decision even if all the best available evidence at the time suggests that it was the right decision. This is something that will be directly detrimental to much of Queensland and the supporting industries. This will significantly deter the very best talent for high-ranking industry jobs as they can now be liable for a decision even if the best available evidence at the time suggests that it was the right decision. This is yet another example of a government department and a minister wiping their hands of any responsibility for their own approvals process.

The lack of meaningful consultation, particularly with primary industry, is a significant oversight and the lack of transparency around the bill's development is concerning. We need to demand better from our elected representatives, and the LNP will continue to hold them to account for their actions.

Farmers are the true environmentalists, and their voices need to be heard when it comes to developing environmental legislation. Let's ensure we protect our environment and our communities for generations to come. I note that we will not be wholly opposing this bill, but we will be moving an amendment in consideration in detail to attempt to bring some genuine common sense into the key part of this bill.



Mr WALKER (Mundingburra—ALP) (12.39 pm): I rise to speak to the Environmental Protection and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022. I thank the Health and Environment Committee for its report No. 27, which was tabled on 25 November 2022. This bill will amend the Environmental Protection Act 1994 to better protect the environment while also supporting industry, particularly through streamlining and clarifying regulatory processes. It will also improve community input and transparency. It allows for stronger and more effective environmental regulation. The Palaszczuk government is committed to ensuring the legislation delivers the government's important priorities and addresses operational industry needs whilst meeting community expectations with improved community input and transparency. I know that those on the other side do not like that, but that is the way it is.


The bill includes an amendment to require all major amendments to environmental authorities for resource activities to be publicly notified—that is mandatory. The community will be better informed to provide greater transparency. If a resource company is proposing a significant amendment to its existing operations, it is fair that the public be notified and allowed to view that proposal and provide comment. Some stakeholders have raised concerns that there is ambiguity around whether an amendment is determined to be major or minor. The Department of Environment and Science has committed to reviewing the major and minor amendment guidelines to provide greater certainty for operators.

The bill amends several sections related to the environmental impact statement process to allow the chief executive to refuse to allow the environmental impact statement—EIS—process to proceed if issues have been identified early. The ability to stop an EIS assessment process early provides benefits to both industry and the department by saving time, resources and money on projects which would not be granted all necessary approvals. It is common sense, and it is the right thing to do. Proponents will be afforded opportunities to amend and resubmit their proposals, so they will not be prevented from progressing if they can make changes to the project that would enable it to legally proceed. The amendment will enable the department to focus on the projects that have a far better chance of progressing, and this will result in improved environmental assessments for those projects.

I refer to the issue of EIS assessment reports that lapse. It is important that the EIS assessment of large resource projects is current and reflects contemporary environmental legislation, policies and standards. To ensure this, this bill provides that an EIS assessment report lapses three years after it is given to the project proponent. Since the assessment of an environmental authority application is informed by the EIS assessment report, the EIS assessment report should not be significantly outdated. Provided applicants commence their environmental authority application within a reasonable period after the completion of an EIS, there will be no impact on the proponent's project. There will be no sitting on an EIS assessment report and letting it become outdated. The department needs up-to-date

information on environmental risk to ensure it can appropriately condition environmental licences to manage those risks. The chief executive may extend the lapse period at any time before the EIS assessment report lapses.

Other amendments in the bill that will support environmental objectives include amendments to the Wet Tropics World Heritage Protection and Management Act 1993 to ensure mining is prohibited in the Wet Tropics of Queensland World Heritage Area. I absolutely support that measure 100 per cent. The bill also includes amendments to the general environmental duty to support the implementation of the Commonwealth's Industrial Chemicals Environmental Management (Register) Act 2021. This important amendment supports the Palaszczuk government's commitment in relation to environmental protections for the risk posed by industrial chemicals. This is the right thing to do and meets community expectations. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr KRAUSE** (Scenic Rim—LNP) (12.44 pm): I rise to make a few comments on this bill. I want to reflect on the contributions by other members of the LNP and on our overall support for the bill. There are a couple of issues that I want to raise. First of all, I would like to talk about the provisions relating to an early decision on EIS. I note that this is, in a broad sense, a good idea to save resource industry participants time and expense on a process that sometimes, unfortunately, spans several years to seek environmental approvals under the relevant legislation when approval may not ever be given. Opening up a way for that decision to be made early sounds like a good idea because that would save that expense and could save some public resources as well. Other members, though, have noted that there should be wholly objective measures put in place for departmental officers to make an 'early no' decision for resource industry participants especially. I reiterate those concerns because, if we do not have objective measures, it introduces another layer of uncertainty. The point of the whole provision is to have more certainty, fewer delays and less expense, but if the criteria around that are not objective then that defeats the purpose. That is one point that I hope can be clarified, if not through this legislative process then certainly in practice in the department.

Many other members have spoken about the messy and unconventional—some would call it shambolic and disgraceful—consultation process. The first that many people in Queensland heard about some very controversial and radical proposals that could have been in this bill was when they read about it in the *Australian*. That is no way to deliver news to people, especially in the agricultural and horticultural sector, many of whom I represent in the Scenic Rim electorate. We have dozens—hundreds probably—of people who are involved in the beef industry as well as many participants in horticulture—some of our nation's leading horticulture industry participants who feed Australia and the world. They would have been very concerned to read in the *Australian* last year that the government was considering retrospectively introducing legislation that would allow environmental authorities to be changed in a backward-looking direction without any real consultation. In fact, the consultation that was taking place was being done under lock and key, subject to confidentiality arrangements. I have no doubt that there were a lot of phone calls between certain members of the government and departments when that news hit the *Australian* and that there was a fast backtrack, but the point is that those provisions should not be considered in secret. In fact, I think they should not be considered at all.

Agriculture and horticulture are the backbone of our state's economy. We always hear government members crowing about the export contribution of those sectors to Queensland and to Australia. It should be supported and it should be grown. There is more that could be done in Queensland to grow agriculture and to grow horticulture. Instead, what we found out through this process is that there are people in the government—whether they are ministers or not—or senior bureaucrats who want to put that process in reverse, and that is unacceptable.


I refer to an article from one of the local papers in my area today which talks about the grazier emissions plan launch for Queensland government's Low Emissions Agriculture Roadmap 2022-2032. The article talks about the government announcements promising to help create the 'best conditions that primary producers need to reach their target across five focus pathways', one of which relates to livestock emissions.

Sometimes in these debates, when it is not exactly clear what has gone on in the government consultation process because it was all done behind closed doors, we need to look at other materials and other things that are coming out of the government to figure out what the real agenda is. Things like the low-emissions road map encouraging graziers to reduce emissions—and that is a good thing and graziers will take up best practice, they will enter into research, they will do what they can to reduce emissions in as many ways as possible—and the things that came out from the *Australian* article where there was talk about managing livestock numbers or regulating livestock numbers in Queensland, combined with programs like this, show that there is an agenda within government, one which it is not

game or not ready yet to lay out to the people of Queensland, about winding back livestock numbers and other agricultural activity in Queensland. That is a disgrace, because our farmers feed us and they feed the world. They are an integral part of our economy, not just in our local economies but also in the national economy, and they need to be supported.

There should be no provisions coming from government that regulate or wind back in a compulsory manner livestock numbers in Queensland into the future. That would place a disproportionate burden on the economies of rural and regional Queensland. We know that in other areas where there are targets to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and carbon emissions they also have a disproportionate impact on rural and regional Queensland. Extending that to agriculture would just be adding another layer of burden to areas that are already hard hit by those measures. I will always stand up for our farmers and our graziers in terms of the work that they do to keep our economy ticking over and to contribute so much to Australia's export earnings.

As other members have said, we are broadly supportive of the bill. It is not perfect but, having made the points about the shambolic consultation process and the need to support our rural and regional industries from efforts to impose undue and severe regulation on them, I will leave it to other members to make their contributions to this bill.

 **Mrs GILBERT** (Mackay—ALP) (12.52 pm): I support the Environmental Protection and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022. This bill will importantly support industry and streamline administrative processes by cutting red tape, and this is something that businesses are always calling for. I was listening to the member for Whitsunday's contribution about the Tassal prawn farms and I am sure she would like to join with me in thanking Minister Furner and the department for the amount of work that they did across Queensland in terms of mapping all of the suitable places across Queensland for aquaculture. It was due to the work that the minister and the department did that big companies set up in Queensland. That was another gain by the Palaszczuk government in setting up more industry in Queensland, so I thank the member opposite for raising that issue. I also want to thank both Minister Scanlon and Minister Furner for the amount of work that they have done across industry to dispel all of the concerns that have been raised with this bill and any confusion where there were instances where it was transposing some of the requirements for mining on to non-mining businesses. I thank the ministers for the work that they have done there.

This bill will also better protect the environment and include improved community input and transparency by requiring public notification for all major amendment applications to environmental authorities for resource activities. This bill provides for a stronger, more effective environmental regulator. The bill amends the Environmental Protection Act 1994 to ensure that environmental values continue to be protected through contemporary and efficient regulations while also amending the Waste Reduction and Recycling Act 2011 and the Wet Tropics World Heritage Protection and Management Act 1993. It is important to keep these precious areas clear from industry that may cause damage like mining. These proposed changes will ensure that the environment and the community continue to be protected through effective and efficient environmental regulatory management.

The bill will also support industry by resolving a range of technical implementation issues with the mine rehabilitation framework, specifically the process for estimated rehabilitation costs and progressive rehabilitation and closure planning. The amendments are needed because there are some potential scenarios where there is ambiguity about whether the transitional provisions can apply. The bill will remove this uncertainty and ensure that all relevant existing sites can operate under a progressive rehabilitation and closure planning framework.

In my area I have witnessed extensive progressive rehabilitation being carried out on mine sites in the Bowen Basin. When done well, the former mine sites are turned into useable land, whether it is for grazing or nature reserves. The rehabilitation provides a range of work and training opportunities for locals. Some of the best rehabilitation sites that I have seen have involved the traditional owner groups and now those lands are covered in native grasses and trees and native animals are returning and providing a very healthy ecosystem. The mining industry will be with us for many years to come. The tailings of metallurgical coalmines in the Bowen Basin are showing traces of rare earth critical minerals, so these sites could be mined a second time to extract a different type of mineral to the original mining. Therefore, we need to ensure that there is a balance between industry and environmental protections and this balance needs to be right. The Department of Environment and Science has committed to reviewing the major and minor amendment guidelines to provide greater certainty for operators and this will relieve a sense of uncertainty that has been expressed currently by some operators.

Our weather systems over the past few years have been large and unpredictable compared to what we have been used to. No matter where you are in Queensland, people tell you how different the weather is. We are living with climate change. To assist Queensland businesses and individuals to meet environmental requirements in an emergency, the bill allows the issue of temporary authorities where deemed reasonable because of an emergency situation. These amendments enable temporary authorities to be granted to ensure that operators that are faced with an emergency can meet their environmental requirements so that they can do what they need to do to deal with the emergency such as floods and cyclones, which are quite prevalent in my area. They will not need to go through the full environmental authority application process, which can be quite long, and this is a win-win for the environment and for business because some of these disasters come upon us quite quickly.

The development of a new operation can be time intensive and costly in order to meet all of the regulatory requirements. When I talk to developers of industry they talk about the long and intensive process of obtaining an environmental impact statement, an EIS. Businesses are willing to go through this, but they talk to me about how long and expensive it can be. This bill will allow the chief executive officer to refuse to allow the EIS process to proceed. This gives businesses some certainty around what they are doing. They know whether they need to change what they are doing. By stopping the process, it does not mean that they cannot continue at a later time. If they are able to come back to the process and show that they can change their practices in terms of what they are planning to do, they would be able to fit within the provisions that would allow them to get their proposal across the line. Some businesses and operations in my area have stopped going through the process because of things that they had noted themselves. I support the bill.

Sitting suspended from 1.00 pm to 2.00 pm.



Ms BOLTON (Noosa—Ind) (2.00 pm): The explanatory notes on the Environmental Protection and Other Legislation Amendment Bill state that the objective is to improve administrative efficiency and to ensure the regulatory frameworks within the Environment portfolio remain contemporary, effective and responsive. However, does it? Parts of the bill make minor and technical changes to the Waste Reduction and Recycling Act 2011 and to the Wet Tropics World Heritage Protection and Management Act 1993 to better protect the Wet Tropics of Queensland World Heritage area. The main changes are to the Environmental Protection Act to streamline and clarify regulatory processes around environmental authority provisions and to enhance and improve compliance and enforcement powers.

Stakeholders raised several issues with the bill, particularly its amendments to the Environmental Protection Act in relation to the process for assessing the environmental impact of resource projects with a high level of environmental risk so the department can reject a project before it proceeds to an environmental impact statement. The Australian Prawn Farmers Association said it would remove due process and the Australian Barramundi Farming Association said it would allow proposals to be rejected on a subjective basis. The department's response was that the act already allows for this and that the amendment ensures proposals can be halted earlier, saving otherwise wasted resources.

The bill also amends the Environmental Protection Act so that executive officers can be held liable if they were in office when an offence occurs even if the environmental impact occurs sometime later, such as a chemical spill. There was criticism of this, including from the Queensland Law Society which noted that it may penalise people even when there is a significant gap between when an event occurs and its impacts. The department's response is that the amendment allows that not being in office is an explicit defence in any case.

There are multiple examples of failings with environmental authorities in Queensland that should have been addressed in this bill but were not. These include that they are not automatically reviewed on a regular basis, as in others states, nor have a mechanism to reopen a review if no longer fit for purpose, as happens in other states. With Queensland being only one of two states where ministerial intervention is prohibited, serious problems have resulted. An example is where an EA is issued for a small development that allows for expansion if it is the same type of development without triggering a review of the EA.

We have seen this in my own community with an exponential increase in output, trucks, noise, dust, damage to infrastructure, and risks to road users and residents through an inappropriate volume of heavy haulage through our Noosa villages. Let us be real here: when independently assessed roads consistently demonstrate that the maximum capacity is 30 to 40 loads per day yet up to 288 loads are allowed and are being experienced then you know there is something seriously wrong with our systems and the environmental authorities attached. An EA should deal with all the impacts of a development and not just those inside the permit area, including wildlife carnage, social and economic impacts, and

the mental and physical health of communities. Instead, we have a system where no department takes responsibility for resolving the impacts being experienced as a result of historical EAs that fall way below community expectations and current standards. In the end, nothing at all gets done. How can the explanatory notes say that the regulatory framework is contemporary, effective and responsive when it fails Queenslanders and does not respond to change? I wish someone could answer me on that.

A review of the EA processes is urgently needed and that is why we have been calling for a mechanism to do that via an environmental protection agency for Queensland. That must be independent with funding and powers to rectify serious historical failings. That would include the capacity to provide compensation or purchase sites that have been identified as critical to endangered species, such as the glossy black cockatoo, and are devastating our communities through impacts outside of the EA permit area. In 2017, Victoria reviewed its own EPA which has been operating since 1971 and we cannot have anything less than what their review found.

Finally, again, several submitters to the bill found that the time provided for submissions was extremely short—12 October to 26 October, which is less than two weeks. That is inappropriate. Simply put, Queenslanders and committees should be given the time to do their work properly and not these truncated inquiries that seem now to be the norm. This demonstrates the need for the fundamental reforms that for four years I have repeatedly requested. I continue to wait for a response from the Committee of the Legislative Assembly as to when that review will be undertaken as a matter of urgency.

In closing, I thank the committee, the secretariat, the departmental staff and the submitters for their work on the bill. Supporting its passage does not mean I support a system that is failing Queenslanders.



Mr KING (Kurwongbah—ALP) (2.05 pm): Today I rise to contribute to the debate on the Environmental Protection and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022. At the outset I want to say that I am really proud of our government's environmental credentials. Since our election in 2015, we have banned the old-style thin plastic supermarket shopping bags, classified the release of plastic balloons as litter under the Waste Reduction and Recycling Act 2011 and introduced the Containers for Change program, which recently hit a huge milestone with over six billion containers recycled. For a couple of years my office has been handing out orange recycling bags and, judging by their popularity, I would say that residents in the Kurwongbah electorate have contributed significantly to that milestone. They are keen to recycle a lot more if the scheme is expanded, as we hear, to include bigger containers such as wine and spirit bottles. They are always on about that.

We have also introduced a five-year road map to ban more single-use plastic items with the following products to be banned from 1 September: cotton buds with plastic stems; expanded polystyrene loose packaging such as those little balls that go in your beanbags—I think everyone gets PTSD from filling a beanbag because they end up everywhere and I certainly do; and plastic microbeads in rinse-off personal care and cleaning products. In researching for this speech I learned that some products that I do not use, such as foundation and blush, contain plastic microbeads.

Mr Saunders interjected.

Mr KING: Luckily I do not take personal offence because I was not listening to him. Microbeads are also in sunscreen, which I do use; having no hair, I have to.

In further protecting our environment, we have started work on more sustainable products for coffee cups and lids. One of the things that people often tell me they want to see a lot less of is plastic drinking cups. If you have been to a Stadiums Queensland facility lately you might have had a beer or soft drink from a polypropylene plastic or aluminium cup, which is possibly a sustainable alternative for the future.

I am pleased to support the bill before the House today as it continues to deliver on our commitment to protecting the environment and our great lifestyle in Queensland. To do that, the bill amends the Environmental Protection Act 1994, the Waste Reduction and Recycling Act 2011 and the Wet Tropics World Heritage Protection and Management Act 1993. While I will not have time to talk about all of the amendments in the bill, I will mention a few under each of those acts.

In amending the Environmental Protection Act we are improving efficiencies through setting time frames for public interest evaluation reports, introducing a process for changing an application for an estimated rehabilitation cost or ERA decision rather than starting all over again, and making it possible to extend the information request periods for EOA decision-making. When we are talking about environmental rehabilitation, we want to get those decisions right—right down to the dollar.

With regards to environmental impact statements, we are allowing the chief executive to refuse one if it is unlikely the project could proceed under the Environmental Protection Act or any other law, which saves people from wasting their time and money. We are also legislating the lapse of an EIS assessment report after three years to make sure that they continue to reference up-to-date laws, policies and standards. To increase transparency and accountability we are also bringing in the requirement for public notices for all major amendments to environmental authorities for resource activities. This bill inserts a power in the EPA to enable authorised persons to compel a corporation to nominate an executive officer or employee to answer questions on behalf of the corporation.

Sadly, we know that some big corporations have a whole bag of tricks they use to avoid environmental responsibility. This change puts an end to one of them, ensuring someone will take responsibility when there is a case to answer. We are bringing in more liability for offences, specifically acts or omissions that result in environment offences, in a company's chain of command. We are empowering courts to order repeat offenders to stop carrying out activities when it is clear they have no regard for the environmental laws around those activities. There will be penalties, including up to two years in prison, for breaching these court orders.

Finally on the EPA, we are amending a section that deals with noise, bringing noise from boats, jetties and pontoons into line with default noise standards. We know that some jobs are carried out by boat. These workers start early and finish late—just like all of us—and that is why noise that can be heard by someone needs to go on for longer than five minutes in order to be a valid complaint. I deal with a fair bit of that in my area with a racetrack in relation to which noise complaints are a bit spurious.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Lister): Member for Kurwongbah, I am sorry to interrupt you but would you please take your seat. The time for the debate has expired. Under the provisions of the business program agreed to by the House and the time limit for this stage of the bill having expired, I call the minister to reply in the second reading debate.



Hon. MAJ SCANLON (Gaven—ALP) (Minister for the Environment and the Great Barrier Reef and Minister for Science and Youth Affairs) (2.10 pm), in reply: I thank all members for their participation in the debate on the Environmental Protection and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. There were many useful contributions from members and also contributions from members who clearly have not properly engaged with the content of the bill currently before the House.

First, I would like to address the issue raised during debate about the consultation process leading up to the introduction of the bill to the House. As predicted, speaker after speaker from the LNP stood up and spent the bulk of their speaking time on the process of consultation rather than the substance of the bill. I guess it is not surprising that, when you have no real desire to be constructive or, for that matter, to protect our environment, the process is all you have to talk about.

I would like to reflect on the contributions of those opposite in defence of transparency and consultation on the proposed legislation.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Lister): Order! The members for Pumicestone and Mudgeeraba will cease their quarrelling.

Ms SCANLON: Let us be clear: when it comes to transparency, the former Newman government, of which 50 per cent of the current LNP front bench were senior members, had an appalling track record, often rushing legislation through with no community consultation and regularly bypassing the parliamentary committee process. In fact, in just one sitting week in October 2013 the LNP forced through three pieces of controversial legislation without community consultation and without a committee process. This included new bikie laws, limiting court powers and changing workers compensation laws. Yet members opposite have the nerve to come in here and complain about—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Members to my left, there will be no further warnings. The warnings will be formal from now on.

Ms SCANLON:—a process that was undertaken for this bill where extensive consultation took place over a period of 14 months before the bill was introduced into this House. Consultation commenced in August 2021. There was a discussion paper in October 2021. An exposure draft of the bill was released in early 2022, with changes made to the bill in response to stakeholder feedback. On top of this, there was the standard parliamentary committee process that gave everyone in the community the chance to have a say on the bill. It is in that context that I take issue with the member

for Bonney's statement that the process was somehow mismanaged and that I somehow pretended there were no issues and misrepresented my department's approach to consultation in my introductory speech. I say to the member for Bonney: just because industry stakeholders do not like all of the proposed changes to environmental laws does not mean that the consultation process was flawed. There were multiple opportunities for stakeholders to influence and shape the outcome of the bill, confirmed by the fact that changes were in fact made to the bill before introduction, directly in response to stakeholder feedback.

It was also clear during the debate that many opposition members simply relied on reading out statements provided as feedback by others during the consultation process. This feedback was often provided regarding previous consultation documents for drafts and in submissions to the committee, further highlighting the extensive engagement these amendments have gone through. Opposition members were often referring to documents from last year that were a part of developing the legislation rather than the legislation this House is actually considering, discussing items that are simply not in the legislation that is in front of the House. The very discussion that was generated through extensive consultation is what has moulded this very bill. For members opposite to continue to oppose items from that fruitful and robust discussion that were not further pursued is disingenuous and demonstrates a lack of understanding regarding public participation in policymaking. Of course, not all opposition members are created equal. We had a rare moment of reflection from the member for Southport earlier today—

Ms Bates interjected.

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

Ms SCANLON:—when he admitted that he did not understand the bill. He did not understand the bill despite being part of the parliamentary committee process on the bill. He did not understand the bill despite having listened to all of the stakeholders and, presumably, having read their submissions. He did not understand the bill yet felt it appropriate to put in a statement of reservation to the committee's report. Having listened to the debate, I have to say that the member for Southport is not alone on the benches opposite but he gets credit for at least being honest about it.

By focusing on the facts of what is in the bill before the House today—its actual content rather than feedback on old proposals—I am sure that we have been able to allay many stakeholder concerns. I can further assure members that I remain committed to the process of seeking feedback and continuing to work with stakeholders to address outstanding problems, because that is what best practice consultation looks like.

I turn to the contribution of members in relation to executive officer liability. Many members referenced the submission of the Queensland Law Society. I advise the House that the QLS's position was given serious consideration. Indeed, my office and the department met with representatives from the society in recent months to hear their point of view directly and to better understand their concerns. The suggestion from the member for Toowoomba South and others that the Queensland Law Society was ignored is not accurate. It is extraordinary but not surprising that the LNP intend to oppose the changes to executive officer liability.

While those opposite made statements about how important protecting the environment is, it does not take long for the LNP's mask to slip. It was very instructive, in fact, to hear the member for Toowoomba South reminisce about the good old days of the Newman-Crisafulli LNP government which introduced a special law to 'streamline a bunch of directors' obligations'. We all know what that means in LNP speak: cutting obligations for their mates in big business. They do not believe in the value of our environment and so do not believe that our environment is worth protecting. It is probably why the Liberal National Party sacked 33 per cent of the environment department staff, including staff in the environment regulator, and why they scrapped environmental laws including strong tree-clearing legislation.

This week we have learned that they do not want to hold environmental offenders to account. The changes being proposed in this bill go no further than meeting the original intent of the act: to ensure that company directors could be held liable for their acts or omissions which result in their company committing environmental harm. This change will make sure that even if a director or officer leaves a company they can still be held accountable for their acts or omissions which resulted in their company committing an environmental offence.

Section 493 requires executive officers of a corporation to ensure that their company complies with the act. If the corporation fails to comply with the act, each of the executive officers is also deemed to have committed the offence of failing to ensure the company complies with the act. Clause 105 of

this bill amends section 493 to make it clear that executive officers can be held liable if they were in office at the time an act or omission occurs, even when environmental harm results from the act or omission at a later time.

The catalyst for the amendment was the Court of Appeal decision regarding the prosecution of former Linc Energy executives. That decision was to the effect that, in order to be liable under the current section 493, a person must be an executive officer of a company at the time the harm materialised. This decision was not in keeping with the original intent of the act, and this bill clarifies the law to make that intent clear. The act is typically reactive to harm, with offences applying only after harm occurs. As such, the proposed amendments to section 493 are intended to ensure that liability for the offence is not limited to executive officers in office at the time the harm eventuates.

There is a compelling public policy reason for these amendments as, in their absence, former executive officers who are responsible for acts or omissions that eventuated in environmental harm, including serious environmental harm, after they left office cannot be held accountable for their actions. This is exactly what the LNP wants by not supporting these amendments. The bill's amendments ensure that the provisions operate as has always been intended and that executive officers cannot avoid liability merely because they left a job before the harm eventuated. This means executive officers can be held responsible when the causative event of the harm was in their control or ought to have been within their knowledge. The current defences in section 493(4) will remain and will be available to all executive officers.

Importantly, the amendments proposed in the bill are consistent with the Council of Australian Governments principles on directors' liability which set out when it is appropriate and in the public interest to hold directors and other corporate officers liable for offences committed by a company. The changes also comply with fundamental legislative principles—contrary to the claims of many speakers during the debate.

Section 493(4)(b) explicitly makes it a defence to prove that the executive officer was not in a position to influence the conduct of the corporation. If the executive officer took all reasonable steps to comply with the act, the defence provisions in section 493(4)(a) would apply. The existing defences are available to executive officers if the causative act occurs before the person takes office, after the person leaves office or if the person took reasonable measures to ensure compliance while in office. The culpability of the executive officer is also to be considered in deciding on the appropriate enforcement action under the Department of Environment and Science's enforcement guidelines and requires consideration of these matters and, as the member for Lytton pointed out, the executive officer liability provisions will continue to be used reasonably and only in appropriate cases such as in the Linc case.

A hypothetical example was provided last night by the member for Toowoomba South whereby if an executive officer is involved in a project at the approval stage and resigns before a causative action occurs that eventually results in environmental harm that the executive officer could be held liable. In this example, the executive officer would clearly not be able to influence the conduct of the corporation in relation to the harm where the causative action occurred after they left and the existing defence is available to them. However, it would be highly unlikely any prosecution would result on the example given under the prosecution guidelines.

It was also incorrectly suggested last night that these amendments will open up liability for historical acts. This is simply untrue. New section 807 in the bill makes it explicitly clear that the provisions will not apply retrospectively and apply only where the act or omission that caused the harm happens after commencement. There is a vital public policy imperative to these changes. The advice I have received is that these changes do not create unlimited liability and, in any event, the current defences provide adequate protection to any officer who may find themselves defending a charge under the relevant section of the act.

I now turn to the removal of ministerial review and the unbelievable statement from the member for Bonney that he 'understands the perspective and agrees with the need for ministerial oversight' that was raised by stakeholders who did not support this change. To be clear, this power has never been used by a minister.

Mr O'Connor interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Lister): The member for Bonney is warned under the standing orders.

Ms SCANLON: I do not agree with the member for Bonney that this change will remove procedural fairness. In fact, this change does the opposite because it removes the potential arbitrary whims of politicians and instead opens the door for internal review conducted in accordance with the act by the independent regulator.

Finally, I will briefly address the issue raised by some speakers that there has been a lack of clarity in the major/minor guideline for mandatory public notification for resource projects. I am pleased to advise the House that my department has been working with industry on this guideline since last year, and the guideline will be released in a matter of weeks.

To conclude, we heard a lot during this debate from those opposite about things they have an issue with. The shadow minister for environment did not provide a single quote from any environmental or conservation group. All we heard was whingeing and whining, with no actual solutions or amendments.

In stark contrast, we take our responsibility to protect the environment seriously. This bill will give the regulator power to give an early no to clearly unacceptable projects. It will provide greater transparency to the community on major amendments to resource projects. It will make clear that mining is prohibited in the Wet Tropics management area and it will hold directors to account for the serious environmental harm of their companies.

This bill is the result of significant contributions from many people both within and outside of government. I would like to extend my thanks to all those who met with and made submissions to the Department of Environment and Science throughout the development of this bill, including members from industry bodies, legal representative bodies and conservation and community groups. Lastly, I would like to acknowledge the teams in the Department of Environment and Science and my ministerial office for their hard work and persistence in bringing this bill together. I commend the bill to the House.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

Consideration in Detail

Clause 1, as read, agreed to.

Clause 2—



Ms SCANLON (2.25 pm): I move the following amendment—

1 Clause 2 (Commencement)

Page 10, line 10—

omit, insert—

- (b) sections 102 and 121;
- (c) section 125(2), to the extent it inserts definition *body-worn camera*;
- (d) sections 140 and 141.

I table the explanatory notes to my amendments and the statement of compatibility with human rights.

Tabled paper: Environmental Protection and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022, explanatory notes to Hon. Meaghan Scanlon's amendments [394].

Tabled paper: Environmental Protection and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022, statement of compatibility with human rights contained in Hon. Meaghan Scanlon's amendments [395].

Amendment agreed to.

Clause 2, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 3, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 4 and 5—



Mr BERKMAN (2.26 pm): As I indicated in my earlier contribution, these two clauses in particular are clauses that we cannot support. They increase the threshold damage value for serious and material environmental harm—they double them, in fact. In the context of a piece of legislation that has now operated for almost 30 years, it is a surprising inclusion in this bill. It is doing some good work to broadly

tighten up both the operation and enforcement of our Environmental Protection Act. It beggars belief that the decision would come now—30 years later almost—to double those threshold amounts and to peg the threshold to inflation.

I can obviously understand in broad terms the rationale for tying legislative dollar values to inflation, but in a circumstance like this I would suggest that it is probably the best example of a situation where we do not want to tie something to inflation. The threshold for harm staying where it is keeps up with community expectation.

Over the last 30 years we have seen, I would argue—I doubt many people would disagree—a dramatic shift in community expectation around the importance of environmental protection legislation and making sure that individuals or corporate operators are not allowed to get away with doing harm to the environment, especially when we are talking about serious harm. To measure \$50,000 worth of damage to the environment is a pretty significant impact on our environment.


I would suggest that keeping the threshold as it is for nearly 30 years has not proved to be deeply problematic. We have already seen that the environment department does have considerable difficulty in bringing an effective prosecution under the EP Act in circumstances where, I would suggest, it should be much more straightforward.

To the start with the threshold should not be doubled. It should remain where it is. To be perfectly frank, I do not think we have heard adequate justification for an increase let alone a doubling of that threshold. I think the rationale for pegging it to inflation is flawed in this instance. On that basis, we will not be supporting these two clauses of the bill.

Clauses 4 and 5, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 6 to 104, as read, agreed to.

Clause 105—

 **Mr O'CONNOR** (2.30 pm): As I outlined in my earlier contribution, the LNP will be opposing clause 105 of the bill. While we support holding executives liable if they have been negligent or acted deliberately knowing the harm that could come to the environment, we want to ensure that the right executives are held liable. I acknowledge the explanatory notes state that this clause is here to ensure individuals who are actually responsible for the offence can be held liable and cannot leave office to avoid liability. If that is what had been achieved by these amendments we would have supported this clause; however, it is not.

Many stakeholders—the ‘whingers and whiners’ mentioned in my contribution to which the minister just referred—such as the Queensland Law Society, the Queensland Resources Council, AMEC and APPEA, did not support the clause as currently drafted. The Queensland Law Society stated, ‘The difficulty in this circumstance is that it takes the approach of saying, “Well, everyone is liable unless they can prove their innocence” because that is the easiest way to achieve the outcome.’ They explained that this wide net could include: where an executive worked on the best evidence available at the time but if there was a change of information or knowledge about the particulars they could still be liable; during a gap in employment, an intervening environmental event may have exacerbated the situation in a way the executive had no control over; or if while in office the executive officer took all reasonable steps to comply with the act but those steps were discontinued on leaving office, they could still be held liable. The proposed amendment also does not require a former executive to have known the act or omission would result in the corporation being liable. Again the department said—

Under the current provision, there is no explicit requirement for the executive officer to have known or ought reasonably to have known that the act or omission would result in the corporation failing to comply with the EP Act.

While this is true, it misses the point. There is already a complete lack of clarity in the defences available to someone. If we are going to widen the scope of liability to try to catch people who do the wrong thing—as most Queenslanders would like to see—we must get it right. Those defences ought to be amended to ensure they are effective before the scope is widened. In relation to the Linc Energy prosecution, which the minister and a number of members raised in relation to this, APPEA said in their submission—

The Linc prosecution was understood to have been thrown out on the basis that alleged impacts could not be substantiated. This proposed change will not improve the process followed by the Dept.

This is not the right framework and we cannot support it given the potential implications. I will sum up with the words of another stakeholder, the QLS, which said—

This far-reaching liability provision will have a chilling effect on the willingness of qualified and capable people to accept senior positions in corporations likely to be affected by these extended liability provisions. This would be a disappointing outcome as environmental harm is best avoided by having experienced and committed people in these senior positions.

Division: Question put—That clause 105, as read, stand part of the bill.

AYES, 51:

ALP, 49—Bailey, Boyd, Brown, Bush, Crawford, D'Ath, de Brenni, Dick, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Healy, Hinchliffe, Howard, Hunt, Kelly, A. King, S. King, Lauga, Linard, Lui, Madden, 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.

Grn, 2—Berkman, MacMahon.

NOES, 35:

LNP, 32—Bates, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Camm, Crisafulli, Frecklington, Gerber, Hart, Head, Janetzki, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Lister, Mander, McDonald, Mickelberg, Millar, Minnikin, Molhoek, Nicholls, O'Connor, Perrett, Powell, Purdie, Robinson, Rowan, Simpson, Stevens, Watts.

KAP, 2—Dametto, Katter.

PHON, 1—Andrew.

Pairs: Butcher, Weir; Furner, Crandon.

Resolved in the affirmative.

Clause 105, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 106 to 145, as read, agreed to.

Schedule—



Ms SCANLON (2.38 pm): I move the following amendment—

2 Schedule 1 (Legislation amended)

Page 117, line 19, 'and (2)'—

omit.

Amendment agreed to.

Schedule, as amended, agreed to.

Third Reading



Hon. MAJ SCANLON (Gaven—ALP) (Minister for the Environment and the Great Barrier Reef and Minister for Science and Youth Affairs) (2.39 pm): I move—

That the bill, as amended, be now read a third time.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a third time.

Long Title



Hon. MAJ SCANLON (Gaven—ALP) (Minister for the Environment and the Great Barrier Reef and Minister for Science and Youth Affairs) (2.39 pm): I move the following amendment—

3 Long title

Long title, '*Waste Reduction and Recycling Act 2001*'—

omit, insert—

Waste Reduction and Recycling Act 2011


Amendment agreed to.

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

Motion agreed to.

SPEAKER'S STATEMENT

Cameras in Chamber


 **Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I wish to advise the House that television cameras will be filming portions of the second reading cognate debate this afternoon on the Police Powers and Responsibilities (Jack's Law) Amendment Bill and the Police Service Administration and Other Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 2).

POLICE POWERS AND RESPONSIBILITIES (JACK'S LAW) AMENDMENT BILL

POLICE SERVICE ADMINISTRATION AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL (NO. 2)

Police Powers and Responsibilities (Jack's Law) Amendment Bill 2022 resumed from 30 November 2022 (see p. 3736) and Police Service Administration and Other Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 2) 2022 resumed from 27 October 2022 (see p. 3142).

Second Reading (Cognate Debate)

 **Hon. MT RYAN** (Morayfield—ALP) (Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services) (2.40 pm): I move—

That the bills be now read a second time.

The Community Support and Services Committee has considered both of these bills and has made a number of recommendations, including that the bills be passed. I table the government's response to those recommendations.

Tabled paper: Community Support and Services Committee: Report No. 27, 57th Parliament—Police Powers and Responsibilities (Jack's Law) Amendment Bill 2022, government response [\[396\]](#).

Tabled paper: Community Support and Services Committee: Report No. 26, 57th Parliament—Police Service Administration and Other Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 2) 2022, government response [\[397\]](#).

On 17 February 2023, the committee tabled their report on the Police Powers and Responsibilities (Jack's Law) Amendment Bill 2022 and recommended that the bill be passed. The second recommendation by the committee has three parts in relation to the expansion of the wandering trial to include public transport vehicles and public transport stations: firstly, that all police regions are adequately resourced and that police officers are supported with training; secondly, that the Queensland Police Service implement a clear, appropriate and concise public awareness campaign in cooperation with Queensland's public transport providers; and, thirdly, that the independent review also examine the operation of the wandering trial, specifically in relation to public transport vehicles and stations.

The committee's third recommendation is that a public education program is developed in consultation with key stakeholders in targeted areas around Queensland relevant to local safe night precinct areas and communities consistent with the extension of the wandering trial. The committee's fourth recommendation is that the extended and expanded trial be independently evaluated. I can advise the House that the Queensland Police Service has already commenced procuring metal detection devices and there is sufficient funding and resources to support the expansion of the trial to all safe night precincts and relevant public transport vehicles and stations.

The Queensland Police Service will also conduct a public awareness campaign and consult with stakeholders so that the public can be educated about the expanded wandering trial. Finally, the Queensland Police Service will initiate an independent review of this trial with the terms of reference determined in consultation with the Department of the Premier and Cabinet and the Department of Justice and Attorney-General.

I will take this opportunity to express my thanks to the committee for its support of these bills and to the officials from the Queensland Police Service and the Queensland Fire and Emergency Services who made themselves available and assisted the committee in their consideration into the bill. I also extend my thanks to every person and organisation that submitted to the committee or participated in the development of these bills.

In particular, I would like to thank two people who are in the gallery right now, Brett and Belinda Beasley, who, with others, have worked tirelessly in establishing and running the Jack Beasley Foundation. As the House knows, Jack's Law is named after their 17-year-old son, Jack Beasley, who was tragically killed in a knife attack on the Gold Coast in 2019. Their foundation's motto 'Detect Knives, Save Lives' is exactly what Jack's Law is about and is needed to combat knife crime and the terrible consequences that can arise from one moment of senseless violence.

I have been advised by the Queensland Police Service that they are eagerly awaiting the passage of Jack's Law. Police will be ready with resourcing, training and a public awareness campaign to support the extended and expanded trial to use handheld scanners to detect knives. I have seen firsthand the professionalism in which the Gold Coast police use these extraordinary police powers when they stop and scan people for knives in either of the two safe night precincts at Broadbeach and Surfers Paradise. This trial was welcomed and embraced by the Gold Coast community who saw it as a positive step in reducing violence. The expansion of the trial will continue this collaborative approach by working alongside the community to combat knife crime. I can also advise that the expanded trial will be subject to a further independent review during the two-year trial period.

If a person chooses to unlawfully carry a knife in a public place, then they are putting the community at risk of serious harm. This is not good enough, and the bill will directly address this. As I mentioned when I introduced the bill back in November last year, Jack's Law will extend the trial for police to use handheld scanners to detect knives for another two years. It will also expand its application to all 15 Queensland safe night precincts and public transport stations, including public transport vehicles.

On 3 February 2022, the committee made three recommendations when tabling its report on its examination of the Police Service Administration and Other Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 2), the first recommendation being that this bill should be passed. The second recommendation was that the Police Service Administration Act 1990 be continually monitored to ensure it remains effective and efficient and, where improvements are identified, consideration is given to amendments that maintain optimal operational efficiency. I am satisfied that the Queensland Police Service continually evaluates its governing legislation and actively considers where improvements may be made. I endorse this practice and the government accepts the recommendation made by the committee.

The committee has recommended that the government continues to engage with other Australian jurisdictions to ensure a consistent, efficient and safe approach to weapons licensing practices. This government's first priority is the safety of the members of our community. In our recent history, we have very stark reminders of the dangers that firearms can represent to human life. We must take all necessary steps to do what we can to ensure these tragedies do not happen again.

This government, as party to the National Firearms Agreement, has recognised the importance of a national firearms register. This government has been in consultation with leaders of the Commonwealth, states and territories to obtain their support for the creation of a national firearms register and intends to continue to advocate for this reform until it is established.

In relation to the Police Service Administration and Other Legislation Bill, its purpose is to deliver efficiencies and improvements for the Queensland Police Service. The bill introduces a range of changes, each of which will bring incremental improvements. I will emphasise that small changes can lead to big outcomes. The collective impact of amendments in this bill will be significant. For example, one tranche of these amendments affects the new police discipline system established through significant reform by this government. One constant criticism of the old police discipline system was the delay in finalising matters. This is addressed in the new discipline system, where there is a statutory requirement for a disciplinary proceeding against a subject officer to start within one year from the date the ground of disciplinary action arose. Of course there are exceptions to this rule, and they are detailed in the bill.


The bill will also provide for the immediate dismissal of a police officer or police recruit upon being sentenced to a period of imprisonment by an Australian court for an offence, including a suspended imprisonment sentence. This amendment will be strict but also reasonable. This amendment sends a strong message to our police officers and our community. Our community supports our police; our government supports our police. We recognise that our police do a difficult and occasionally dangerous job. We respect them for their professionalism and the high standards that they maintain, but if a police officer is in jail then the Police Service is not the right place for them.

The bill will also improve upon offence provisions employed to protect the confidential information held by the Queensland Police Service. This will be achieved through increasing the maximum penalty for this offence to 100 penalty units or two years imprisonment and expanding its applicability to a wider range of persons, including contractors, subcontractors and recruits performing a function for the Queensland Police Service as well as other persons who access the confidential information held by the Queensland Police Service as authorised under an act, law or arrangement with the Queensland Police Service.

In considering this bill, I also endorse the comments made by Acting Deputy Commissioner Shane Chelepy before the Community Support and Services Committee. He said—

These amendments have to be examined in their entirety, not in isolation, to determine their impact. Collectively, these amendments will significantly enhance the operations of the QPS and create a range of efficiencies that will serve our officers, our organisation and the community well into the future.

Before I conclude, I would like to return to Jack's Law. As I said, Jack's parents, Belinda and Brett, are in the gallery today. It is not often that something so overwhelmingly positive for the broader community can follow something so terrible as the loss of someone's life. But thanks in a big way to the efforts of Brett, Belinda and the Jack Beasley Foundation, we all find ourselves here today with Jack's Law, a law that will benefit all Queenslanders, a law that supports safer communities, and a law that is testament to the very best of human qualities—Brett and Belinda's capacity to rise above their personal heartache to achieve a lasting legacy for both their son and the broader community. In honour of Jack, I commend the bills to the House.

 **Mr LAST** (Burdekin—LNP) (2.51 pm): I, too, rise to contribute to the cognate debate for the Police Powers and Responsibilities (Jack's Law) Amendment Bill 2022 and the Police Service Administration and Other Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 2) 2022. I say at the outset that the opposition will not be opposing these bills because we on this side of the House want to ensure the safety of Queenslanders and because we value integrity.

I will first address the Police Powers and Responsibilities (Jack's Law) Amendment Bill 2022. I want to put on the record my own and the LNP's support of any actions to make safe night precincts and the public transport operations safer. I note the reference in the title of the bill to Jack Beasley and whilst I know that this bill will never fill the hole in the hearts of Jack's parents, Brett and Belinda, it may very well prevent a repeat of that horrendous incident. When this bill passes, it is the commitment and dedication of Jack's family that will be forever etched in stone. I acknowledge their foundation and all those members, including my colleague, the member for Bonney, who have worked so hard to get this bill here before this parliament today. On behalf of all members on this side of the House, I want to thank the Beasley family and those who have assisted them. I want to put on the record my admiration for your work in making our community safer, especially given the pain you have felt. I also want to acknowledge Raymond Harris who, just a few months after the death of Jack, also lost his life after being stabbed.

Safe night precincts are an important vector in addressing alcohol-fuelled violence. I know that because I oversaw the implementation of the safe night precinct in Townsville during my tenure as the officer-in-charge at the Townsville police division. It is that experience and insight, along with the work of the Jack Beasley Foundation, that has led to the amendments circulated in my name, and I will speak to those amendments later in my contribution.

What we know from the trial of wandling is the true extent of weapons being carried in public areas. The committee, in a submission from the Queensland Police Service, was told that 242 weapons were seized between 30 April 2021 and 29 January 2023 in the Surfers Paradise and Broadbeach safe night precincts, including inter alia 68 bladed articles, 53 weapons offences and 101 other offences detected whilst scanning for knives. Of those weapons seized, eight were household knives, 59 were other types of knives and one was an axe. Other weapons seized included a replica handgun, a baton, two hand tools, five knuckledusters, one screwdriver, tasers and machetes. It is absolutely frightening when you think about the weapons that have been seized as part of this trial that had been carried around in our public places. Statistically what we saw was that for every 100 people wanded, at least one was carrying a weapon. Make no mistake, these are weapons that can cause serious injury or death. As Assistant Commissioner Mark Wheeler—and I note the assistant commissioner's presence in the gallery today—told the *Brisbane Times* if that replica firearm was aimed towards police 'it could have been a devastating outcome'.

A positive flow-on from the wanding trial has been an eight per cent reduction in the number of persons charged with unlawfully possessing a knife in a public place in the 2021-22 financial year when compared to the previous 12 months.

Regardless of people carrying weapons because they intend to offend or because they have fears for their safety, we must get these weapons off the streets and especially out of the hands of people who may be affected by drugs or alcohol. The abundance and types of weapons seized is just one reason that the primary objective of my amendments is to make the wanding provisions permanent. I table a copy of my amendments, statement of compatibility and explanatory notes.

Tabled paper: Police Powers and Responsibilities (Jack's Law) Amendment Bill 2022, amendments to be moved by Mr Dale Last MP [398].

Tabled paper: Police Powers and Responsibilities (Jack's Law) Amendment Bill 2022, explanatory notes to Mr Dale Last's amendments [399].

Tabled paper: Police Powers and Responsibilities (Jack's Law) Amendment Bill 2022, statement of compatibility with human rights contained in Mr Dale Last's amendments [400].

It is not just about weapons. In addition to the 216 Weapons Act offences, the trial also resulted in 431 drugs charges, identified persons wanted for questioning by police, persons subject to banning notices and persons with warrants for their arrest. According to the My Police website, the first weekend of the trial led to two people facing court for breaching police banning orders, identified two breaches of bail offences and three possession of a dangerous drug offence as well as other minor offences, in addition, I might add, to two weapons being seized.

We know that breach of bail is a touchy subject for those opposite and we know that Labor certainly have done a backflip when it comes to that particular law being passed in this parliament, a breach of bail amendment that I brought to this parliament some two years ago; however, we know the benefits of bringing forth that particular provision to this parliament.

It is worth noting that the committee heard from several submitters who raised concerns surrounding the government's extension of the trial, and the second part of my amendment is designed to ensure their concerns are given full and proper consideration on a regular basis. This trial commenced on 30 April 2021 and clearly the results speak for themselves. The opposition firmly believes that extending this trial is not warranted and that these changes regarding scanning provisions, increased scope of prescribed public places and the criteria that a senior police officer must consider before approving the use of a handheld scanner device should be made permanent. Whilst noting the safeguards built into the original bill, my amendments also include a legislative requirement for a review two years from the commencement of this bill and goes on to ensure that the minister must table the review in this House to ensure that the oversight of these provisions continue.

I note that the bill extends the scope of prescribed public areas where scanning for weapons can be utilised. In addition to the Surfers Paradise and Broadbeach trial sites, safe night precincts where scanning can be undertaken would be extended to include: Airlie Beach; Brisbane CBD; Bundaberg CBD; Cairns CBD; Fortitude Valley; Gladstone CBD; inner west Brisbane, including Caxton Street; Ipswich CBD; Mackay CBD; Rockhampton CBD; Sunshine Coast, including Caloundra, Maroochydore and Mooloolaba; Toowoomba CBD; and Townsville CBD.

As we know, crimes do not just happen in the south-east of the state. It is vitally important that all safe night precincts in Queensland are included in this particular legislation. In addition to expanding the scanning in all safe night precincts, the bill also extends the powers to apply to public transport stations and public transport vehicles within one scheduled stop of a public transport station. Given the statistics provided by the Queensland Police that in 2½ years we saw more than 360 incidents of unlawful possession of a knife on Queensland Rail infrastructure, we support the inclusion of transport places and services where the relevant criteria have been met.

I mentioned earlier my involvement in the establishment of the Townsville safe night precinct, and I specifically note that committee recommendation 2 refers to the need for adequate resourcing of police. That is where this government has again failed spectacularly. Since the inception of safe night precincts, additional funding for overtime was made available to ensure the operation of those areas would not impact on other policing duties. If we use Townsville as an example, that ensured there were additional officers stationed in the safe night precinct to police that particular area. That meant that officers at suburban stations like Mundingburra, Kirwan, Stuart or Deeragun can continue conducting patrols and responding to incidents like the increasing numbers of unlawful use of vehicle offences and break and enters in that community. However, this government removed that additional funding and, in the minister's own words, made safe night precinct duties business as usual. When there are several

thousand patrons in the safe night precinct on a big night out on a Friday or a Saturday, those extra officers are needed in that precinct and they need to be there for the duration of the shift and not be tasked away from that precinct.

Queenslanders know that under this government the concept of business as usual when it comes to crime has gone out the window. In fact, hundreds of thousands of Queenslanders have signed petitions presented in this chamber calling for action on youth crime. This government's scrapping of the additional funding for safe night precincts means that instead of responding to the calls of those Queenslanders, our police resources are being even more stretched. It means that in order to operate safe night precincts, police are being diverted from proactive policing or responding to someone's house being broken into or their car being stolen or, heaven forbid, a domestic violence incident out in the suburbs.

It is not just victims of crime in the suburbs who have been let down by this government's decision to scrap the safe night precinct funding. The government's own review showed that, combined with other policies, the actions of police in safe night precincts had contributed to a 49 per cent drop in assaults. I call on the minister to explain how he intends to comply with the committee's recommendation of adequate resourcing while also ensuring adequate resources to respond to incidents outside the safe night precincts. Frankly, the minister must provide a full and transparent response to this chamber. It is simply not on for the minister to deflect blame to the Police Commissioner because, just like all Queenslanders, the minister knows that our police will do their best to serve the community no matter how overstretched they are. To properly implement this bill and to ensure the safety of the wider community, the minister must answer that question and the minister should reinstate the previous funding arrangements that were pertinent to safe night precincts.

The demands placed on police officers and police staff have without question increased over recent years. For that reason, the LNP welcomes actions to deliver operational improvements and efficiencies offered to police and Queensland Fire and Emergency Services by the Police Service Administration and Other Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 2). No-one can question that the Independent Commission of Inquiry into Queensland Police Service responses to domestic and family violence highlighted issues with the police discipline system. Given the bravery shown by victims and other witnesses, it is absolutely necessary that an appropriate and effective discipline system is in place that is transparent, robust and timely. This is not only for the benefit of the community and necessary given the trust placed in police; but it is also essential for the overwhelming majority of police officers and staff who do the right thing.

I note in the minister's introductory speech that he referred to remaining eternally vigilant. Unfortunately, there are aspects of this bill that illustrate where this government has failed when it comes to vigilance. To a large extent, portions of this bill are more about cleaning up the government's own mess, something confirmed by the minister's statement that the bill 'does not amend vast tracts of law or make revolutionary changes' and his reference to 'incremental improvements'.

When it comes to the amendments to the Weapons Act we have a clear indication of an area where improvements were and still are drastically needed. It is beyond debate that this government's inability to plan and deliver led to a major backlog of weapons licensing applications, and it must be remembered that these applications for licences and permits to acquire are being made by law-abiding Queenslanders with a valid reason for making the application.

I have personally spoken to graziers who, due to the delays, were forced to wait for a vet to visit their property when an animal was sick or injured. Honourable members have to remember that for some of these properties the nearest vet can be hundreds of kilometres away and, as we see with many professions in regional Queensland, the demand for their service can mean they are not immediately available. The issue also impacted feral pest animal eradication as well as sporting shooters and businesses.

The delegation of authority to a suitably qualified authorised officer who is not a police officer is logical, but it does not take away from the need for this minister to provide assurances that Weapons Licensing will be adequately resourced. I also call on the minister to clarify the reasoning behind the need for retrospective approvals who were not authorised officers at the time of making those decisions. Call me cynical, but given the vast array of issues in areas for which this minister is responsible, it appears that here we are again acting to clean up what has become an inordinate mess within Weapons Licensing.

I met with a well-known dealer recently who informed me that he has, in fact, almost \$2 million worth of firearms at his premises currently on hold waiting for permits to acquire and firearms licence applications to be processed, and that is not good enough. This issue within Weapons Licensing has been raised in this place now for almost two years. It is about time that this issue was sorted out, that the resources this particular section needs are put in place, that the processes are streamlined and that red tape which currently exists within Weapons Licensing is removed.

Insufficient staffing and resourcing issues are also highlighted in the changes to the Police Service Administration Act—issues with reference to staff provided by labour hire companies on a 'surge' basis. We are referring to a government agency whose primary role is protecting our communities but, despite all the minister's claims, we apparently need to engage staff from labour hire companies to manage demand. It is abundantly clear that this government has failed to properly manage staffing, especially given that it is only the passage of this bill that will enable the commissioner to consider the criminal history of external service providers. To be clear, these are checks that are almost commonplace in many industries, but until now the need for these checks for external service providers working in the Queensland Police Service has been overlooked—a shocking omission.

I note that the changes seem primarily focused on the disciplinary process, but I welcome the changes to the act that make it easier for medically unfit police officers to transfer to staff positions. Policing is a demanding and sometimes dangerous job. There is a physical toll paid by every officer. When we take into account some of the incidents that police attend, there can also be issues regarding mental health. Add in the undeniable fact that police are currently stretched beyond breaking point and it is inevitable that some police officers will reach a point where a role as a sworn officer is no longer an option. Being able to retain their knowledge within the organisation is invaluable, and making it easier to transfer to a staff position is one way of achieving this.

The addition to existing legislation of an offence of impersonating a member of the Rural Fire Brigade is also one of the more minor amendments included in this bill, but it is one that I welcome. It is a fact that rural fire brigades currently protect 93 per cent of Queensland's land area. To put it simply, their contribution to the safety of our communities cannot be overstated. I also welcome the clarification of circumstances surrounding the sharing of information between QFES and the Queensland Police Service with regard to investigations.

It is a sad fact that data breaches are becoming more common, and it is clear that personal and private information is now sought by criminal groups and legitimate groups due to its value. Those of us on this side of the House welcome integrity measures and we recognise the importance of ensuring that sensitive government information is not improperly disclosed. We also support the public interest disclosure process as a measure to mitigate against corruption and protect whistleblowers. We also recognise the importance of ensuring that process is effective and robust.

The amendments contained in this bill are important and will play a role in protecting sensitive government information, but any claim that these amendments address recommendation 10 of the CCC's Operation Impala are simply misleading. Let's be crystal clear: recommendation 10 of Operation Impala was that misuse of confidential information by a public officer be made an offence across the whole of government. These amendments do not deliver that, as confirmed by the CCC and the Queensland Police Service. If this government wanted to implement recommendation 10 of Operation Impala it could have done so at any time in the two years since that report was tabled in this House. It is this government that has the numbers to push this legislation through this House whether it is supported by this side of the House or not.


This government, due to those same numbers, has the power to prevent legislation passing through this House. My attempt almost two years ago to reinstate breach of bail for young offenders is a perfect example. The same amendment that was passed in this House at the last sitting of parliament was stopped by those opposite simply because it did not have their name on it. These amendments are not recommendation 10 of Operation Impala and I, for one, will not let Queenslanders be told that they are. The truth is: this government has failed to act on the recommendations of the CCC that address improper access to, and dissemination of, confidential information.

This government's inaction when it comes to securing information continues today and was highlighted again by the Queensland Audit Office, whose recent *State entities* report states—

Entities have taken some corrective action to address the recommendations we made in our report last year. Despite this, we continue to identify weaknesses that require further action with regard to procurement, payroll processes, and the security of information systems.

These amendments go a small way towards addressing the safety of sensitive information but they do not go far enough, and I call on the government to commit to taking necessary action.

As I stated when I began my contribution, the LNP will not oppose these bills but this government is on notice: Queenslanders have had enough of paying the price for the messes this government has created. We on this side of the House will continue to speak out for them and for the victims of crime in this state. We owe it to those victims and to the families of those victims. For that reason, I urge all members to support the practical and commonsense amendments proposed here today.

 **Ms McMILLAN** (Mansfield—ALP) (3.11 pm): I rise to speak on the Police Powers and Responsibilities (Jack's Law) Amendment Bill 2022 and the Police Service Administration and Other Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 2), addressed in cognate. With respect to the Police Powers and Responsibilities (Jack's Law) Amendment Bill 2022, I acknowledge Mr and Mrs Beasley, who are in the gallery tonight. No parent would ever wish to suffer the loss of a child. On Friday, 13 December 2019, Mr Brett Beasley and Mrs Belinda Beasley received news that their son Jack had been stabbed on a busy street in Surfers Paradise. Jack passed away shortly after, just three months before his 18th birthday. The bill is named in honour of Jack Beasley. His family established the Jack Beasley Foundation and have since advocated for reform to youth justice laws and to educate young people about the dangers of carrying knives in public places. The bill also remembers the passing of Raymond Harris, who was fatally stabbed in Surfers Paradise in September 2020.

Knife crime is a concern for any community, particularly in safe night precincts. The bill proposes to extend and expand the trial of handheld scanners, or wands, to detect the unlawful possession of knives which was carried out in Broadbeach and Surfers Paradise SNPs. The trial will be extended for an additional two years and be expanded to include all 15 SNPs in Queensland as well as public transport stations and public transport vehicles.

The committee's task was to consider the policy to be achieved by the legislation and the application of fundamental legislative principles—that is, to consider whether the bill had sufficient regard to the rights and liberties of individuals and to the institution of parliament. The committee also examined the bill for compatibility with human rights in accordance with the Human Rights Act 2019. The committee considered the views expressed in submissions and by witnesses at the committee's public hearing as well as briefing material from the Queensland Police Service. The committee recommended that the bill be passed.

Additionally, the committee recognises that using wands to search for and detect weapons is an extraordinary and nation-leading power to give to any police service. The Queensland government acknowledges the scope of these powers and will ensure evidence-based decision-making always prevails. Rights and liberties must be protected throughout the state of Queensland. For this reason, the committee recommends that the extension and expansion of the trial be externally reviewed so that future legislative options may be carefully considered. The committee acknowledges the work of the Queensland Police Service and the support of the Queensland Police Union on the architecture of this bill and the strength and courage shown by Mr and Mrs Beasley and the Jack Beasley Foundation in their tireless commitment and advocacy for these laws in Queensland.

I turn now to the Police Service Administration and Other Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 2) 2022. Queensland's first responders are part of a Public Service that is constantly evolving to deliver essential services to the people of Queensland effectively, efficiently and responsibly and with the best possible outcomes. The administration of these services is complex and must continually anticipate, reflect and improve its processes in line with community expectations. Accordingly, the bill's proposed changes aim to improve the operation and effectiveness of the Queensland Police Service and Queensland Fire and Emergency Services by amending the legislation that impacts on their operations, including the Police Service Administration Act 1990, the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000, the Weapons Act 1990 and the Fire and Emergency Services Act 1990 as well as the Disaster Management Act 2003.

Again, the committee's task was to consider the policy to be achieved by the legislation and the application of fundamental legislative principles—that is, to consider whether the bill has sufficient regard to the rights and liberties of individuals and the institution of parliament. The committee also examined the bill for compatibility with human rights in accordance with the Human Rights Act 2019. On behalf of the committee, I thank those individuals and organisations who made written submissions on the bills. I also thank the officers of the Queensland Police Service and Queensland Fire and Emergency Services who assisted the committee during the course of its inquiries and the Parliamentary Service staff for their ongoing support. I commend these bills to the House.



Mr O'CONNOR (Bonney—LNP) (3.17 pm): Jack Beasley is a name that I wish none of us had to repeat in this place today. With all of my heart, I wish that we did not have to create laws in his name. Jack should have been allowed to grow up like any other Gold Coast teenager. He should have been allowed to finish his apprenticeship. He should have been allowed to keep playing footy for the Helensvale Hornets. He should have been allowed to fall in love and to create a family of his own. This Sunday, 2 April, Jack should have been allowed to turn 21. At just 17 years of age, Jack was taken from us in the most horrific way. Jacko's murder in a senseless random knife attack was devastating for so many people from my part of the Gold Coast: his brave young friends who were with him when it happened; his brother, Mitch; the police who first responded, including those on holiday from interstate who were passing by; the workers at GCUH who did all they could to try to save him; the close-knit footy club he played for since he was a junior; and the school he went to, Pacific Pines State High.

The decision those young men made to take a knife into Surfers Paradise that night and the split-second moment they decided to use that knife destroyed so many lives. Jack's Law to expand police knife detection powers is a result of my community saying 'this is unacceptable'. It is unacceptable for a 17-year-old to go out with their friends into Surfers Paradise—or anywhere—and not come home safe. Jack's Law is in this parliament today because the people I represent did everything they could to make sure no other family has to go through the nightmare that the Beasleys have endured. Today I dedicate my contribution to Jack's mum and dad, Brett and Belinda. They are in the gallery with us, and it is a proud moment to see them there as we finally achieve what we set out to just over three years ago. You two are the strongest people I know. It has been an honour to get to know you so well over the last few years, and I am proud to now call you friends.

It is not every day that you have laws come to this place driven by your community, and in this case they have been driven by people who lived in the same suburb as me, Parkwood. This all started when our organisation, the Jack Beasley Foundation, was established just weeks after Jack's death. Reaching out to me as his local MP not long after going through the most traumatic of events gives members a good idea about the type of bloke Brett is. He wanted to do something about what happened, he wanted to make sure he did everything he could to stop any other family going through this, and he wanted me to shout him a beer. I can tell this House that I have shouted him many beers since then because, like many good things, this all started with a meeting at our local pub, the Arundel Tavern. We gathered a group of friends and supporters there to try to figure out what we could do about knife crime in our city. We have held many more meetings there, trivia nights, the annual Ride for Jack, the annual Walk for Jack and so many other fundraisers to support this cause. I will declare for full transparency that I proudly serve as an executive board member of the JBF and I want to acknowledge the other volunteers I serve with on that board—Brett and Belinda of course, Deb Frugtiet, Wayne, Griffio, Trace and Anne-Maree. This has been community-led from the start, championed by incredible, selfless people who give up so much of their own time.

We started with an online petition calling for metal detecting to happen at Helensvale station. That was the place where Jack's murderer and his group got on the tram into Surfers Paradise after catching the train down to the Gold Coast. What that petition wanted to achieve was 'detect knives, save lives', and this has now turned into the bill we are debating today. I also want to acknowledge the member for Nanango, who has been a tireless supporter of the JBF and has been there from the very earliest of days to warmly and generously embrace the Beasleys. The member for Broadwater has also continued that, always taking Brett's many phone calls, like I do, and I thank every other shadow minister whom I have got down to the coast to visit us and hear our calls for change.


The LNP has been there from the very beginning. Laws like these and better police resourcing play a big role in deterring knife violence, but this is just part of the solution. To really create the change, we realised we needed to change the mindset of the people who think they need to take a knife when they leave their house. We must stop young people from even thinking about using a knife, and that is why we put together our education program. Over the last 18 months the JBF has engaged with thousands of students at 23 schools across South-East Queensland and northern New South Wales and requests have come in for visits from around the country. It is delivered in partnership with the QPS and it is called the One Moment presentation. It is all about educating young people on the consequences of carrying a knife and the impact that it could have on the victims, their families and friends and on the offender themselves. Brett and Belinda share their story before a police officer talks about the laws in place around knives. We know the decision to take a knife when they are heading out is often a split-second one and it is often because they think they need it for their own protection. Hearing Brett and Belinda talk about their loss will surely make some of these young people think twice about doing this.

I want to particularly pay tribute today to Jack's friends. Last year I went to court with Brett and Belinda and all of their supporters and sat in on as many days of the trial as I could. Jack's mates went one by one into the witness box telling their story, reliving the most traumatic night of their lives. Their courage is something I will never forget. Nothing quite prepares you for seeing the small details of such a horrific event replayed over and over again, and nothing prepares you for having to sit just metres away from those who are accused of murdering someone so special. Jack's murderer and the other young men with him left Jack to die on the footpath at barely 8 pm in the full crowds of school holiday-makers in the middle of Australia's tourist capital.

The two-year trial of these powers so far has clearly worked. Some 241 weapons are no longer on the streets of the Gold Coast because of these powers. There has not been a single police complaint in over 21,000 interactions with the public. When we think of the state that some people are in at the Surfers and Broadbeach safe night precincts, that is a commendable reflection on the professionalism of our Queensland Police Service. These powers should be targeted in the time, the place and the broader circumstances that they can become activated under. This is not a general search power for police; these powers are specifically about stopping knife crime. They will apply to safe night precincts and public transport vehicles and stations because they are where crowds of people are. That is the last place you want someone to bring a knife. Every single person who is caught with a knife in these areas or who is deterred from taking one into these areas because they know the police have these powers is a potential life saved.

It is a big step up to go from essentially a few streets on the Gold Coast to 13 other party precincts across our state as well as every single public transport vehicle and station, so we need these police knife detection powers to work, and for that we need police to have the best possible resources and training. It has been a great privilege to get to know some of the Queensland Police Service's finest officers on this journey. It started with now Acting Deputy Commissioner Mark Wheeler. A couple of days after I met Brett at the pub I ran into Mark at an event at our local mosque in Arundel. It was a fundraiser for bushfire relief. He had just arrived to the coast and I told him about the Beasleys' story and what Brett had opened up to me about, and I asked if he could meet with them. There was no hesitation. I gave him Brett's number, and at every single meeting or event we held Mark would be there. He championed these laws internally so that when the government was looking for an option to respond to the youth crime crisis in early 2021 this was ready to go. Rhys Wildman continued Mark's exceptional work when he took over the chief superintendent job on the Gold Coast. He is a thoroughly decent man, incredibly genuine in his support and again he has shown up every time and gone above and beyond. For the detectives who worked on Jack's case—Ash, Shane and Nat—again, they are just the best. The support they provided us, especially during that murder trial, was so very appreciated.

I thank the government for agreeing to these powers and for naming this Jack's Law at the request of Brett and Belinda. I thank the committee for its consideration of the bill and for allowing me to appear as a witness alongside Brett and Belinda on behalf of the foundation which I know is unusual. However, the way the government has drafted this bill means that Jack's Law will end in April 2025. That bit should be removed. Jack's Law should be permanent. This should be reviewed in two years but the end date should not be included. I will vote to try to remove it. I will strongly support this reform that my community has championed and I urge all members to do the same in the name of Jack Beasley.

 **Ms LUI** (Cook—ALP) (3.26 pm): Today I rise to speak in the Police Powers and Responsibilities (Jack's Law) Amendment Bill 2022 and the Police Service Administration and Other Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 2) cognate debate. These are two very important reforms and I am proud to stand here today to support both bills in this House. Both bills are about supporting community safety, they are about preventing harm to individuals in our community and they are also about improving operations and effectiveness in our Queensland Police Service and the Queensland Fire and Emergency Services. I want to start my contribution today by speaking on Jack's Law. I acknowledge Brett and Belinda Beasley in the gallery today and want to thank both Brett and Belinda for their passion to influence change and for bringing this important legislative reform to the House because without people like Belinda and Brett in our communities it would be very hard to influence any change. Given that this bill came to the House because of a very sad situation, I pay my deepest respects to both Brett and Belinda. As a parent myself, it is really important that we all support this bill to prevent lives being lost.

On Friday, 13 December 2019 Brett and Belinda received the news that their son Jack had been stabbed on a busy street in Surfers Paradise. Sadly, Jack passed away shortly after, just three months before his 18th birthday. This bill is named in honour of Jack Beasley. His family established the Jack Beasley Foundation and has since advocated for reform to youth justice laws and educated young

people about the changes of carrying knives in public spaces. I want to again thank Brett and Belinda for their contribution to our public hearing. It was invaluable. I cannot imagine that it would have been an easy process to relive what happened to their son, but I thank them for having the courage to share their experience with everyone with the aim of creating positive change in our community.

In their contribution on the day, the Beasleys spoke about influencing the lives of young people through education and creating awareness. This is about teaching young people about positive relationships. I have always said that it takes each and every one of us to stand up, especially when we can prevent such situations from happening. The bill also remembers the passing of Raymond Harris, who was fatally stabbed in Surfers Paradise in September 2020. The bill ensures that community safety is upheld, that we prevent harm from being done to human lives, that we continue to educate young people about safety for themselves and for others and that we create a society where we can all feel safe in the community that we live in.


One of the main objectives of the bill is to extend and expand the trial of handheld scanners, or wands, to detect the unlawful possession of knives. The trial was carried out in the Broadbeach and Surfers Paradise safe night precincts. The bill proposes amendments to the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000 to extend the expiry date of the scanning provision to 30 April 2025; to increase the scope of prescribed public areas for scanning to include all 15 safe night precincts and all public transport stations, including public transport vehicles; and to strengthen the criteria that a senior police officer must consider before approving the use of handheld scanning devices.

The committee put forward four recommendations. It recommends that the Police Powers and Responsibilities (Jack's Law) Amendment Bill 2022 be passed. Recommendation 2 relates to the expansion of the wandering trial to public transport vehicles and stations. The committee recommends that in all regions the wandering trial be adequately resourced and supported by training for QPS officers; that the Queensland Police Service implement a clear, appropriate and concise public awareness campaign, which I think is really important, in cooperation with Queensland public transport providers; and that the independent review of the extended wandering trial also examine the operation of the wandering trials specifically in relation to public transport vehicles and stations. There are many facets to this bill that I think will certainly enhance community safety. I fully support the bill going forward.

Before I close I would like to speak on the Police Service Administration and Other Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 2). Queensland's first responders are part of a public service that is constantly evolving to deliver to the people of Queensland essential services effectively, efficiently and responsibly. Especially given that we are also talking about Jack's bill—two very different scenarios—it is really important that we have the right mechanisms in place to support our community in the best way that we can because they rely on our public service and on policymakers to set in place the right foundations to make sure that we uphold community safety.

The committee recommends that the bill be passed. The main objectives of the bill are to deliver operational improvements and efficiencies for the Queensland Police Service and the Queensland Fire and Emergency Services by amending the following acts: the Police Service Administration Act 1990, the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000, the Weapons Act 1990, the Fire and Emergency Services Act 1990 and the Disaster Management Act 2003. The explanatory notes to the bill state that the QPS evaluated the PSAA to identify opportunities for improvements and to consolidate the definitions of terms used within the act. Amendments in the bill address some of the administrative issues identified, for example, by removing duplicate or obsolete provisions.

I want to highlight a couple of key issues that were raised by stakeholders during the committee's consideration of the bill. In relation to the police discipline system under the PSAA, the bill will delay the commencement of police disciplinary proceedings until related applications for domestic violence protection orders are finalised. Given everything that is happening in the domestic and family violence space, we need to ensure that the agencies responsible for responding to certain situations are equipped to respond in the most effective and efficient way possible. In relation to reducing the legislative burden on the QPS under the PSAA and the PPRA, the bill will create a new offence in relation to the unauthorised use of confidential information and will allow medically unfit police officers transferred to staff member positions to be employed under the Public Service Act 2008. That is a reflection of the operation modernising itself to keep up with the demands and expectations from our community. On a final note, the committee supported the purpose of the bill to enhance the operational effectiveness of the QPS and the QFES to ensure that both the QPS and QFES are able to meet the needs and expectations of Queensland communities. I support both bills and commend them to the House.

 **Mr BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (3.36 pm): In speaking to the Police Powers and Responsibilities (Jack's Law) Amendment Bill 2022 I wish to be associated with the remarks made by the honourable member for Bonney in his contribution. His steadfast determination to see these laws come to this chamber should be acknowledged by all members of the House. I note that without the tireless effort of the member for Bonney, as the local member of Jack's community, and without the support of other parliamentarians going back many years now this law would not be debated today.

We are aware that over 240 weapons were found just through the Gold Coast trial alone. That shows me that the trial has been a success because if you find and take off individuals 240 weapons—knives and other weapons, and some of the other weapons I saw included axes and all sorts of things—

Mr O'Connor: Machetes.

Mr BLEIJIE: I take the interjection from the member for Bonney—that is preventing possible deaths in our communities. Through this legislation, the trial is being extended to areas such as I represent on the Sunshine Coast—that is, the safe night precincts of both Maroochydore and Caloundra. That is great news for young people on the Sunshine Coast.

I also wish to associate myself with remarks by the member for Bonney with respect to the Beasley family, who are in the gallery today. I am a parent. I have three children. I cannot begin to understand what they have gone through in terms of losing a son and what many Queensland families have gone through with respect to knife crime. Today is my son's 13th birthday. While I mention that, I reflect on the fact that the Beasleys and others in my electorate will never celebrate certain birthdays with their families because of knife crime and the culture that is now developing with many young people.

It is on that note that, as I have in this parliament before, I speak about a 16-year-old lad from my electorate, Balin Stewart. Balin was born on 8 September 2005 and tragically passed away on 20 January 2022. Just before midnight on 20 January 2022, 16-year-old Balin Stewart was fatally stabbed outside his home in Buddina. That happened in the middle of my electorate, around the corner from my office. Balin was a hugely popular 16-year-old lad from the Sunshine Coast. He had hundreds of friends. He was stabbed to death out the front of his home in a suburban street. He died in the arms of his father, Michael. Balin was killed in a knife attack because someone brought a knife to a fight.

What many people may not realise—I am beginning to understand it more often now because of my association with Michael and Kerri-Lyn Stewart—is that many times we are not talking about hunting knives, rigid pocketknives or serrated knives; we are talking about kitchen knives—steak knives or butter knives. I completely underestimated the culture in our communities until I started talking and listening to the education campaign of the Jack Beasley Foundation and the Balin Stewart Foundation—how prevalent this is in our community with young people, whether they are an aggressor and want to take a knife for deliberate purposes or they take a knife for fear of their own safety. The Jack Beasley Foundation and the Balin Stewart Foundation are trying to educate young kids that if you do not carry a knife with you, no-one will die. If you do not carry a knife with you, no-one will get stabbed. That is the message we need to send to young people. I reflect, as I did, with my 13-year-old boy. I have now talked to him about this and he said, 'Dad, you wouldn't believe how many people in schools bring knives around for whatever reason.' It is real and it is a real issue. That is why I completely support the extension of this law into areas such as the Sunshine Coast to better protect the young kids in my electorate.


After their son Balin passed away, Michael and Kerri-Lyn started the Balin Stewart Foundation. As I said, it is about educating young people about knife culture and crime. They have also started a campaign—[#binthebladeformalin](#). I completely support that. We recently did a walk raising money for the Balin Stewart Foundation. Through the foundation his parents have set up, there is the memorial chair at Buddina Beach where he loved going, just up from the Kawana Surf Club. Recently the foundation launched a petition to install a plaque there. The council bureaucracy about allowing a family to put a plaque on a chair is unbelievably ridiculous. We are talking about a small sandstone structure with a beautiful plaque to recognise a beautiful boy who passed away a year ago in Kawana.

The family have had to launch a petition to try to convince council to allow them to put a sandstone structure and a plaque next to a chair that they paid for. They paid for the park bench because they could not get the funds from council to do it. I call on the Sunshine Coast community to support the Balin Stewart Foundation petition, by parents Michael and Kerri-Lyn Stewart, to install the sandstone memorial and plaque. It gives people pause for reflection when they are walking past the

popular Kawana beaches in Buddina. Families can walk past the chair and plaque with their young children, who might ask what it is about. That to me is part of an education process: 'That is a memorial chair and a plaque for young Balin Stewart, who was killed in a knife attack. If the offender had not had the knife, Balin would be with us today.' It is so unfortunate that we have to have legislation like Jack's Law, named after people who have passed away. This could very well be Balin's Law. That is the reality of the situation, because we have had Jack, Balin and many other Queenslanders pass away.

As the member for Bonney and the shadow minister, Dale Last, indicated, we absolutely support the extension of these laws but they should be permanent. The Griffith report conducted after the trial indicates that 242 weapons were taken off people, and that has prevented lives being lost in that community. We can extrapolate that in terms of the extension of these powers to the Sunshine Coast and all of the other safe night precincts. I wish the government had not reduced funding to the safe night precincts, particularly in Maroochydore and Caloundra. At the time, the police told us how concerned they were about safety in the communities when the government reduced funding for the safe night precincts. Now we have a level of support from the government for these safe night precincts, which is good. When you consider the 242 weapons located on people through this winding trial and extrapolate that across all of the other safe night precincts, in 12 months or two years these statistics will reflect what is happening in our community at the moment.

I thank the Beasleys for pursuing this in the name of their son. I thank Kerri-Lyn and Michael Stewart for pursuing education on behalf of their son, who last year was also lost to knife crime in my electorate. I congratulate the member for Bonney, the shadow minister and a former opposition leader, who also was speaking about this very issue before the 2020 election. It has been on the agenda for many years and it is good that the parliament is finally dealing with it. I say to the Labor members in this chamber: suspend any extension of the trial and make it permanent across our communities. Just end the trial and make it permanent. That is all we should be doing in this parliament today to protect young people and prevent any more of the tragedies we have seen over the last few years Queensland.

 **Mr SKELTON** (Nicklin—ALP) (3.45 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Police Powers and Responsibilities (Jack's Law) Amendment Bill and the Police Service Administration and Other Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 2). I acknowledge the Beasley family in the gallery and offer my condolences for their loss. I also pay tribute to all the members who have spoken with great heart about other victims of this prevalent crime. I thank the police officers to whom I have spoken. I acknowledge that it is not only in safe night precincts or on public transport where people carry knives. The work that Brett and Belinda are doing to educate young people about carrying knives and what that could mean is extremely valuable.

This bill will expand the trial of handheld scanner provisions to detect unlawfully possessed knives beyond the Surfers Paradise and Broadbeach safe night precincts. The proposed legislation aims to: amend the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000, PPRA, to extend the expiry date of the scanning provisions to 30 April 2025; increase the scope of prescribed public areas for scanning to include all 15 safe night precincts and all public transport stations including public transport vehicles—that is an extremely important issue that has come up in most members' electorates; and strengthen the criteria a senior police officer must consider before approving the use of a handheld scanner device.

The original trial, in Surfers Paradise and Broadbeach, was launched following the tragic murders of two young men in 2019 and 2020. The 12-month trial allowed police to use handheld scanners to detect unlawfully possessed knives in those areas. The primary goal of the trial was to detect and deter the unlawful possession of knives in those areas of the Gold Coast, providing public safety benefits by reducing the opportunity for serious violent offending involving knives and other bladed weapons. Expanding this trial to include all 15 safe night precincts is justified by the record levels of unlawful knife possession in these areas. During the period between July 2021 and June 2022, 542 persons were charged with unlawfully possessing a knife across those precincts in Queensland.

Areas intended to function as entertainment precincts can result in the congregation of large numbers of people. The congregation of people in these areas increases the risk of harm being caused through the carriage of weapons, warranting particular attention. We should remember that everyone should be able to go out in public and feel safe. The proposed legislation also aims to expand the trial to areas of public transport stations, including vehicles. This is to provide the public safety benefits of reduced unlawful knife possession and the consequent reduced potential for offences involving a knife to be committed.

During the original trial an array of concealed weapons were detected, resulting in 68 bladed articles being seized, 53 weapons offences and 101 other offences detected while scanning for knives. Of those weapons seizures, eight were household knives, 59 were other types of knives and one was an axe. Other weapons seized included a replica handgun, one baton, two hand tools, knuckledusters, one screwdriver and one other tool. The police also seized one acoustic and one electronic antipersonnel device while scanning.

Parallel to this trial has been the 'I live my life ... without a knife' statewide crime prevention campaign led by the Queensland Police Service in collaboration with external agencies as local partners. I suggest that was because of the keen advocacy of the Jack Beasley Foundation. The campaign provides community awareness of the risks and penalties of knife carrying in public places. This was done through advertising, community events and engagement and school presentations. I thank my school-based police officer, Marty Hunt, for taking that on board in Nambour.

The Police Service Administration Act and Other Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 2) aims to improve the administration of the Queensland Police Service by providing for its maintenance, membership, development and administration. The QPS has conducted an evaluation of the act to identify opportunities for improvements, and a number of provisions have been identified as suitable for amendment. These amendments address a wide range of administrative issues within the QPS, including clarifying employment arrangements, improving the police discipline system and removing duplicate or obsolete provisions.

The bill proposes amendments to the act that will improve the police discipline system by allowing the commencement of a police disciplinary proceeding to be delayed until related applications for DV protection orders naming the subject member as the respondent are finalised. This will clarify the time frame that will apply to the discipline process when an abbreviated disciplinary proceeding is initially offered but later fails. The bill also expands the definition of 'prescribed operation' to include investigations using surveillance devices and similar operations conducted by other law enforcement agencies.

Furthermore, the bill provides for the dismissal from the QPS of a police officer or recruit immediately upon being sentenced to imprisonment, including a suspended sentence, for an offence. These amendments reflect the unique position in the community that police officers and police recruits hold—a position of power, authority and, most importantly, trust. A conviction for an offence resulting in a sentence of imprisonment is inconsistent with the high standards expected of a police officer. The proposed amendment would avoid a situation where an offender in jail continues to be employed.

The bill also aims to reduce the legislative burden on the QPS through amendments allowing medically unfit police officers to get transferred to staff member positions, inserting the new offence provision 'unauthorised use of confidential information' to address the misuse of police information and removing the obligation for police officers to obtain a written approval from the commissioner prior to instituting proceedings for certain offences. The amendments also omit a number of outdated provisions, which I will not go into.

This bill allows for public safety based on strong evidence. It is based on community advocacy. It is based on the will of parliament. I thank the committee, which I am a member of. It is always an honour to be on committees but it is also very difficult when dealing with such sensitive matters and people show such courage and resilience in advocating their cause.

I hope the bill can become another example of government listening and addressing community expectations, addressing the needs of our hardworking Police Service and paying proper respect to the victims of crime.



Mr BENNETT (Burnett—LNP) (3.53 pm): At the outset, I point out that this is a cognate debate for two bills that I had carriage for through the committee process. I will start by addressing the most powerful reform—Jack's Law. It is important that the House shows respect to the process. I acknowledge all those who took an interest in this important extension and expansion of the knife detection trial to all the safe night precincts and some public transport networks. It is now going to be expanded.

This has been a grassroots campaign by many, including the families who have suffered tremendous loss. Work on the ground and reports from police have shown that the knife violence deterrent trial has seen successful outcomes. We should be commending all those involved. I acknowledge Brett and Belinda Beasley for the tireless work they do to honour their son Jack.

What was important to me during the committee's deliberations were those who opposed the proposed reforms. I always get confused when those stakeholders turn up to committees with reasons and some sort of ideologically driven nonsense about why we should not keep our community safe. This is about community safety. This is about real outcomes. This is about real people trying to make a difference in Queensland. I will not go on because I will probably say something that I will have to apologise for.

I was confused and frustrated by these stakeholders. When there are no alternatives brought forward, I wonder why they bother. I am frustrated by their ideologically driven position because from April 2021 to January 2023 police have used the wandering process in searching for knives or weapons on 22,000 people. This has resulted in the seizure of 242 weapons and 656 offenders being charged with various offences. The weapons included folding knives, flick-knives, machetes, a bush saw, a tomahawk, sharpened screwdrivers, replica firearms, knuckledusters and tasers. I am confident the legislation is not an inconvenience and our police will conduct the wandering process appropriately.

Our police are ready, trained and committed to community safety. Our communities are ready. I hope we expand this further and remove any time lines on this legislation. This needs to continue into the future. These issues are important.

I want to again promote the work of the Jack Beasley Foundation. The foundation has fought for changes to youth justice laws and has important education programs where it works with young people educating them on the dangers, repercussions and effects that a single act of violence can have on them and families into the future. I acknowledge the member for Bonney's contribution in representing the Jack Beasley Foundation at the committee hearing. It was honourable, credible and incredibly powerful. Belinda and Brett's contributions were incredibly important to the committee's deliberations. We have to make sure that we never forget how important the police role is in community safety. I acknowledge just how important their work is.

I turn now to issues around police administration. At the outset, I voice my support for the members of the Police Service. I acknowledge that the Queensland Police Service's reputation has been in question recently. It reflects on members and their families when there is negative publicity. We heard from the police that the QPS is hurting right now. We all have a role to play in showing our support for the QPS and recognising that they do a great job, many times in difficult circumstances. The actions of a few do not represent the actions of many.

The Police Service Administration Act provides a legislative framework for the QPS by providing for its maintenance, membership development and administration. Improvements have been identified that will assist in the management of the QPS, introduce specific efficiencies and update the QPS's legislative frameworks by omitting duplicated and outdated sections. These improvements have been collated into this bill and will address a wide range of administrative issues ranging from clarifying employment arrangements for specific staff and improving the police disciplinary system through to making the technical changes needed to maintain contemporary drafting standards.

The QPS has monitored the new disciplinary system and has identified improvements that may be made while remaining vigilant for further enhancements in the future. The bill makes a number of minor amendments to assist with the operation of the Police Service discipline system. For example, one improvement made with the new police discipline process is making timely decisions. As a generalisation, a discipline proceeding against the subject officer must start within one year from the date the ground for disciplinary action arose.


Generally, all submitters, including the Police Union of Employees, were supportive of the bill. Most police we have spoken to at committee hearings and outside committee hearings are supportive of the bill. One of the big things that a lot of members in this place have been fighting for for a long time is amendments to the Weapons Act. It might not sound a big issue for many, but for those people who rely on weapons as part of their daily toolkit to run their properties or operations it is a big issue. Now we will see permits to acquire by QPS Weapons Licensing. This is an overdue reform that will be welcome by many. Weapons Licensing has responsibility for managing the regulation of weapons and licence holders.

It is an important role and it has to be done in a timely and proficient manner. The high volume of demand has led to challenges in processing these applications. At issue are limitations within the Weapons Act that only allow authorised officers to approve applications for licences due to the considerations that must be made during the process. Currently, the weapons licensing team manages 214,593 licence holders across the state. These are current figures. They also manage 992,589 registered firearms. At the moment, on average on a weekly basis they receive about 350 new licence applications, 360 requests for renewal of a current licence and about 1,100 permits to acquire.

A permit to acquire is an application that must be completed and authorised as a precondition to transfer ownership of a firearm from one party to another. This process was taking up to 30 days and some were taking up to 31 weeks.

Many of the unsworn staff who work at Weapons Licensing have extensive experience in the processing of applications and in applying the provisions of the act to the licensing process. The current ratio of civilian customer service officers to sworn officers is approximately seven civilians to one police officer. The bill will capitalise on the expertise of these staff by allowing the licensing functions of an authorised officer under the Weapons Act to be delegated to a police officer or a QPS staff member. These delegations may be made by the commissioner and executive officer or a commissioned officer. As a further safeguard, the powers that may be exercised by the delegate will be limited to the licensing function outlined in part 2 and division 3 of part 3 of the Weapons Act. We are now in line with New South Wales, Victoria, Tasmania and South Australia, which have comparative legislation. I think that is important; we should not have dragged our feet on this for years. A further amendment in the bill will confirm that any firearms licences, renewals of firearms licences and PTAs issued by an authorised officer prior to the commencement of this bill will be valid.

Cognate bills are never really exciting or important, but we come back to the important thing: remembering that in this place our Police Service deserves our utmost respect and support. As we move forward, we again thank all those who brought Jack's Law to fruition. I am sure that many members will be able to speak about tragedies in their own electorates and issues that could have and should have been prevented. As we go forward into the future, whether it is in high schools or mainstream precincts, we hope that through education programs run by foundations around the state we can start to see a change in the behaviour of young people so we can all go out on the town and have a great time safe in the knowledge there will be no weapons to cause death and destruction. With that, I commend both bills to the House. I thank everyone involved for their hard work.

 **Mrs McMAHON** (Macalister—ALP) (4.02 pm): I rise to speak in support of the two bills before the House: the Police Powers and Responsibilities (Jack's Law) Amendment Bill and the Police Service Administration and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. Queensland's vibrant night-life economy is dependent on maintaining patrons' safety. We acknowledge that people have a right to have a good night out and that they should have the freedom to eat, drink and be merry. The luxury of youth is learning about one's limits and the consequences of overstepping them and overimbibing. This should be able to be done without too much damage to one's safety other than the repercussions of the next day. In this space, with alcohol on board and a healthy amount of hedonism as the clear priority, people are vulnerable, judgement is impaired, poor decisions are made, tempers can flare and arguments and altercations can happen, but no-one should lose their life over it.

I spent my formative years in the night spots of Broadbeach and Surfers Paradise—working, I might add, for the benefit of the House. My first police posting was to the Gold Coast and those were my first two stations. As a 21-year-old police officer, I was entrusted with ensuring community safety in these locations. To say that Gold Coast night-life in the 1990s was a bit like the Wild West is a bit of an understatement. It was certainly an eye-opener. The night brings out all sorts of night-life—most of it good, fun and vibrant, but there was always an edge to it—one where a night could turn in an instant. I certainly conducted my fair share of searches of individuals and seized my fair share of weapons in the course of my duties.

Safe night precincts in our entertainment and hospitality zones were created with the understanding that areas where large numbers of patrons consume alcohol created a number of public safety concerns. Initially dubbed drink safe precincts, safe night precincts have undergone a number of evaluations and reforms in the last 10 years. Today we seek to continue to improve aspects of the safe night precincts. I would like to acknowledge the initial Tackling Alcohol-Fuelled Violence strategy released in 2016 through the hard work of the former member for Stafford, Dr Lynham, who did an amazing amount of work in that space. An evaluation of that strategy did show a reduction in violence and hospital presentations after the introduction of a number of those reforms.

In 2021 a trial using metal scanners, or wands, to scan patrons in Surfers Paradise and Broadbeach safe night precincts commenced. It was introduced to curb a spate of knife related violent crimes and it was authorised to run for two years. An examination of the trial by the Griffith Criminology Institute was published in August 2022, just one year after the trial started. While the Griffith report certainly made recommendations on improving processes involved in the trial, it also noted that the trial time line did not provide a significant period of time to determine the efficacy of the trial. Accordingly, this bill seeks to extend the trial in terms of time and locations to ensure that the best possible data is captured as we continue our attempts for continual improvement in public safety.


I would caution those opposite who would like to see the end of the trial to go back and read the evaluation of the original drink safe precincts that were introduced when the LNP was last in government. It does show the error in not doing a proper evaluation. Not only will the trial roll out in all safe night precincts throughout the state but it will also include public transport vehicles and stations. Having policed the safe night precincts subject to the trial, I am aware that patrons there are accustomed to travelling on public transport to and from the precincts, and their safety in the precinct should also extend to their travel to and from. I note the improvements made to safeguards and the recording of data that are also contained within the bill and acknowledge the training that will be required for police officers working within the safe night precincts.

I would now like to briefly turn to the amendments to be considered in the Police Service Administration Act. This is the act under which police officers are employed and derive their powers and entitlements of office. Therefore, in relation to discipline and the potential misuse of police assets and resources this is a primary bill for the Queensland Police Service. There have been some significant changes to police disciplinary processes in the past few years, but much of that focus has been on investigations around potential criminal charges.

Recent commissions of inquiry have detailed significant concerns around police officers named as respondents on domestic and family violence order applications. To be clear, to be named as a respondent on an application is not in and of itself a criminal matter, so those names have largely been out of the scope of many of the disciplinary process improvements; however, this should not be without consequence if an officer is found to have committed domestic and family violence. In all of this the balance between natural justice and the community's expectations of the behaviour of police officers must be considered. In this instance, the amendment will allow the domestic and family violence application to run its course and be finalised in the DV courts before the internal investigation commences. Given that DV applications are generally finalised within a few weeks, this is not considered an onerous delay to any potential disciplinary process. Further, it is likely to enhance and expedite the internal investigation as all relevant evidence is likely to have been adduced during the application hearing. I note that the Queensland Police Union of Employees is supportive of this. I think we have the balance right here.

Additional amendments to the Police Service Administration Act include the ability for the commissioner to summarily dismiss a police officer who is convicted of an offence and sentenced to a term of imprisonment or a suspended sentence. Currently, it is possible for an officer still in the employ of the Queensland Police Service throughout a criminal trial to be sentenced to a term of imprisonment before the administrative processes of dismissing the officer and all associated administrative appeals take place. This means that a serving officer might actually find themselves imprisoned, and this is something that is certainly not a good look for the Queensland Police Service or in line with the community's expectations.

By having this change in the act, the dismissal becomes an automatic one, not an administrative one subject to appeals—although I do note the safeguards in effect in the event that the sentence is overturned. These amendments are about ensuring the community's expectations of police officers are upheld—the expectation that our police are highly sought after and highly respected. I commend the bills to the House.

 **Mrs GERBER** (Currumbin—LNP) (4.09 pm): Knife crime is tragic and it is a reckless scourge that has ruined many young lives and continues to threaten the safety of our communities. The need to act on this has become devastatingly apparent over the past few years, and as the youth crime crisis continues there has never been more need for legislation like this. I too would like to align myself with the contribution made by the member for Bonney in this House and thank him for his efforts. This law is a direct result of the advocacy of the Jack Beasley Foundation and the support of their local member, the member for Bonney, along with a number of other LNP members in this chamber, including the member for Nanango, when she was the Leader of the Opposition, and now the member for Broadwater, as the current Leader of the Opposition.

Brett and Belinda Beasley, supported by the member for Bonney, have done an incredible amount of work to bring the issue of knife crime to the attention of the community and this government. They created the Jack Beasley Foundation following the tragic death of their son Jack, and they have worked relentlessly and tirelessly both in the community, focusing on grassroots education through school presentations, and for legislative change focused on their motto 'Detect knives, save lives'. This is exactly why we are in this chamber today debating this bill, Jack's Law. Knife crime and knife related

offences continue to rise sharply. Blood is being spilled on our streets, people are dying, and it seems a near weekly occurrence that we hear media reports of another stabbing. Knife use is also a significant aspect of youth crime.

I will never forget hearing Belinda Beasley tell her story at the Gold Coast public hearing back in 2021 as part of the first inquiry into these laws. I was part of the committee that was hearing Belinda's testimony. She spoke so bravely, appearing in front of our parliamentary committee to talk about her trauma and the trauma her family has gone through. This was compounded by the fact that the committee hearing, completely inadvertently, was held barely 100 metres from where Jack was killed. Belinda bravely put herself through this, walking past the spot where her son lost his life to tell her story to our committee. I am going to read extracts of what Belinda said because it is the reason we are here today. It is the reason we are here with Jack's Law. Belinda said—

On Friday, 13 December 2019 at 8.27 pm we received a call that changed our lives forever and that call should never happen to any parent. Jack headed out, as many young people do, with a group of friends. They hopped on the G:link and headed into Surfers Paradise. Just after 8 pm, Jack and his friends stopped at the IGA before they were heading to a friend's apartment.

Outside the IGA Jack and his mates were set upon and attacked by five youths for no reason. These five youths had travelled down by train from the Logan area. They were aged 15, two 16-year-olds, a 17-year-old and an 18-year-old.

...

Jack ... had been stabbed and had been taken by ambulance to Gold Coast University Hospital. We raced up to the hospital as soon as we got the call. Sitting in that hospital room that night was just the beginning of our nightmare—not knowing if Jack was going to make it or not, constantly being updated on his condition by the great staff at Gold Coast University Hospital and then the cardiac surgeon walks in the door and says one word: 'Sorry.' Our world shattered with that one word, and seeing our son Mitch fall to the floor at being told Jack, his little brother, did not make it through surgery was heartbreaking. There are so many traumatic images that we have imprinted on our minds forever.

Jack was 17. He was three months off turning 18.

The Beasley's bravery in fighting for change, trying to prevent another family from going through what they have been through, is why we are here today. This bill extends the trial of handheld scans to detect knives for another two years. It expands the trial outside just the two safe night precincts of Broadbeach and Surfers Paradise to all 15 safe night precincts in Queensland, and it expands the trial to public transport and public transport stations.

In 2021 when the trial was proposed for the Broadbeach and Surfers Paradise safe night precincts, I initially expressed concerns that the trial needed to be larger, that it needed to include those parts of the Gold Coast where knife crime starts, where there are tram stops and bus stations. I was concerned that, because the trial only applied to Broadbeach and Surfers Paradise, it might not catch all the knife crime in Queensland and it might not produce the data that is needed to truly convey the reality of knife crime in Queensland. Here we are today talking about expanding the trial further for those exact reasons.

As of last month, the two-year trial under its current narrow parameters, in just the safe night precincts of Broadbeach and Surfers Paradise, resulted in approximately 242 weapons being seized, 336 arrests and 467 charges. Even given the narrow parameters of just applying to the Surfers Paradise and Broadbeach safe night precincts, these are pretty big numbers for those areas. I think it tells us how prevalent knife crime is across our state and how much we need Jack's Law to be permanent.


This bill, as it stands, will expire in two years. Jack's Law should be made permanent. Yes, it should be reviewed in two years, but I think the data that has been conveyed already in the safe night precincts trial in Surfers Paradise and Broadbeach demonstrates the prevalence of knife crime across our state and demonstrates that we do need to make this permanent. We have heard far too many devastating stories of knife crime at train stations and tram stations. As the committee heard from Belinda Beasley, the youth that took Jack Beasley's life had travelled on public transport to Surfers Paradise, illegally armed with a knife that would ultimately end Jack's life.

The LNP's amendment making Jack's Law permanent would strengthen the police's ability to keep our community safe and act as a strong deterrent for youths to be carrying knives. We on this side of the House understand the need to give police the ability to maintain community safety. It is a priority for us. The police need the resources, the funding and the capability to ensure strong action can be taken on knife crime and crime in general, but remarkably and regrettably what we have seen from this state government is the funding for our safe night precincts being cut.

Safe night precincts are designed to keep locals safe and it is a huge part of having a highly visible police presence. Labor knows that, but in the state budget papers for this financial year we see that the state government has removed some of the funding for our officers in our safe night precincts. As a result of these cuts, we are hearing reports of police stations having to beg for more officers to cover shifts in their safe night precincts. The additional funding is crucial as it will enable officers to be on duty in these areas without pulling on local resources. We do not want to see a scenario where other important police operations in different areas—such as responding to break and enters and the rising crime of thefts—are hindered and resources are strained. Police numbers are dwindling as a direct result of this Labor government's inaction. Cutting funding at a time when crime is on the rise and when there is a greater risk of alcohol fuelled violence in these safe night precincts simply makes no sense.

I welcome this bill. It is the culmination of incredible community groundwork by the Jack Beasley Foundation and the Beasleys, and it is the culmination of incredible advocacy by the member for Broadwater and other members in this chamber, as I have acknowledged. I thank the state government for bringing this law to this chamber. I want to also acknowledge the broader part of what the Jack Beasley Foundation does around cultural change. They have developed an education program to explain to young people the consequences of their action and to urge them to think before taking a knife with them when they head out.

Brett and Belinda Beasley, this House thanks you sincerely for all the work you have done in the aftermath of your son's death. The foundation has already contributed so much to the safety of the community through the awareness and education programs you have developed. This legislation is an important part of achieving the meaningful change you have spearheaded, and the LNP will continue to fight for Jack's Law to be made a permanent law in this state.

 **Mr KELLY** (Greenslopes—ALP) (4.19 pm): I would like to start by acknowledging Mr and Mrs Beasley in the gallery and offering my sincere condolences. I do not think any of us can truly appreciate how difficult it must be to lose a child in these circumstances, but to pick yourself up and to advocate strongly on an issue that will prevent this from occurring again is truly something special. I have had some experience of seeing this in action through the Hannah Clarke matter, the Small Steps 4 Hannah Foundation in my own electorate, and I know what tremendous courage it takes for people to do what the Beasleys are doing. I would like to sincerely thank all those people, whatever their political stripe or persuasion, who have advocated strongly in relation to this issue.

We have seen around the world, particularly in countries that have taken serious steps to curb gun violence, a significant growth in knife crimes. I do want to acknowledge former prime minister John Howard and former deputy leader Tim Fischer and the courage that they showed in the aftermath of the Port Arthur massacre, taking strong action. Unfortunately, that then creates other challenges that we have to deal with as we move forward.

Before I get onto the substance of this bill around the wandung trial and the extension of that, I wanted to share some personal reflections on my own family situation because I have a child—not a child anymore, a young adult—who has hit this stage of life. I think everybody who has been through that experience would know the actual trepidation and fear that all parents feel when their kids start heading out at night on the town, but also the joy—maybe it is not always joy—when they come in at 3 am and wake you up, that joy that you feel that they have been out with their friends and had a good time.

One of the things that I have appreciated and noticed, and I have seen it roll out in a lot of my local schools, is that the young people who are in my life through friendships with my daughter, thanks to a lot of the work that has been done in the schooling, they are quite good at conflict resolution in a way that I and my friendship group certainly were not when we were at that stage of life. I think that is down to a lot of the work that is done in schools to really work with kids to show them, teach them and educate them that there are other ways to resolve disputes and conflict rather than resorting to violence. That will not solve every single problem, but I think it is an important step forward and it is part of a multifaceted response to issues like this.

The bill anticipates an extension of the trial, and I think that is a good thing. If you have read the Griffith report, which I did take the time to do, it is clear from that report that we do need further information and data to really validate and support this law moving forward. My instinct and my gut feeling is that wandung works and it logically is something that we should be making available for police. We know, from other bodies of research around the world where strong action has been taken around gun control and gun violence, that there is an uptick in knife crime, so it would seem logical that we have this capability and we should be allowing police to employ it.

I read the Griffith report but did not draw the same conclusions as those contained in the statement of reservation from the member for Maiwar. I took a very different view. I certainly acknowledge the concerns of the people who wrote the Griffith report around police perhaps applying the powers based on stereotyping et cetera, but I think that is a broader problem that needs to be also resolved. It is not necessarily a reason not to move forward with utilising this particular technology and this particular technique to keep young people safe.


The other thing to note is that very early in the report they talk about the limitations of the report due to the time frame in which it was done—that is, COVID—and the small number of sample spaces et cetera, so I think there is a very strong argument for extending the trial.

I certainly do not have any concerns as expressed by the member for Maiwar around impacting on people's human rights. I do not think you have a right to carry weapons in public and threaten other people or, worse, assault and kill them. I just do not think you have that right. If we have to infringe on a small number of people's privacy to wand them and check if they are in that situation, I do not see that as a major issue. I have been pulled over many times and breathalysed, and thankfully have never been convicted or caught—never done it, I should say!

Government members interjected.

Mr KELLY: Careful! But my serious point in relation to that is that I do not feel my rights have been infringed. What I feel is that community safety has been enhanced, and if I have to suffer some inconvenience, so be it. If I was doing the wrong thing, as someone who has seen the outcomes of motor vehicle accidents, I would want me taken off the road and I would want me to face the full force of the law. I do not share the member's concerns in relation to that. I think this technology is a useful tool for police. It will help young people to go out and do what young people do, which is to enjoy life and have a great night out with their mates. It will help parents to perhaps rest a little easier at night, knowing that their kids can engage in a safe night out.

I do want to thank all those who have advocated strongly in relation to this. I want to thank the committee for their work. It would have been difficult, tricky and challenging emotionally to sit through an inquiry like this, but they have done that work diligently and they have respected the witnesses, whether they are for or against, and listened to them and have come up with what I consider to be an excellent report. With those few words, I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mrs FRECKLINGTON** (Nanango—LNP) (4.26 pm): Sometimes in life you get to meet some pretty amazing people. Two of the most special people I have met in my role in this House is Brett and Belinda Beasley. I will add another one there—Mitch Beasley—and their extended family and friends. I was introduced to these incredible people through my great mate, Sam O'Connor, the member for Bonney. As much as I love these people, I really did not expect to meet people in the circumstances that these guys had gone through. I met the Beasleys just after the tragic incident that took Jack's life. It will affect his mates for the rest of their lives. It affected the Beasleys and it affected Mitch; it has affected so many in our community. I met them through the process of wanting to do something about an issue that is so prevalent in our society—that is, knife crime. I met them at the pub over a schnitzel—well, we did not have a schnitzel that day; I was promised it.

Mr O'Connor: Another day.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: Another day. We talked about the serious issue that is knife crime and what we can do about it. At the time Sam and I went away and we really discussed it. I want to acknowledge Mark Wheeler as well, and the three police officers—Ash, Shane and Nat—who have also worked with the Beasleys through Jack's case.

Mr O'Connor: The detectives.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: The detectives. I think they were granted a homicide award through this as well, so I want to congratulate them.

Jack was taken way too soon, just before his 18th birthday. It was on my daughter's 18th birthday—it was on Elke's birthday—on 3 October 2020 that I went to the Gold Coast to stand with the Beasleys and announce the need to do something about knife crime. I did that in the hope that we could one day bring Jack's Law into this parliament to recognise that great young man who was innocently going around doing what 17-year-olds do: out with his mates, innocently catching public transport just having a great night out. Jack's life was cut too short.

So much can be said, but what the Beasleys have been through and what they will continue to go through is just horrific. I, for one, really want to thank them for looking out for all of our kids when they go out. These guys have a goal and that goal is to stop knife crime, and that is what we all need

to do. That is why I am backing the view that this should not just be a trial; let's make it permanent. Throughout the trial in just those two areas, 242 weapons were seized by police but more than that, 68 were bladed instruments. They included eight household knives and an axe. Other weapons were also seized including a baton, two hand tools, five knuckledusters, one screwdriver and one handgun replica. That is no doubt having an impact on juvenile crime.

I attended Cloyna State School the other day. It is a little primary school in my patch and they asked me what I do as a member of parliament. We can talk so much about what we do in this House, but this is why we are here: to make our kids' lives safer and better. The Jack Beasley Foundation—and I acknowledge the work of the Jack Beasley Foundation—through its education campaign is ensuring that the next generation understands the dangers of carrying a knife and the long-term impacts of youth violence on victims, families and their friends. As has been stated, the Jack Beasley Foundation is all about Detect Knives, Save Lives. When Cloyna State School kids grow up, let's hope they get to go to the Gold Coast and to other areas across Queensland and have that safe night out because they will have learnt through the Jack Beasley Foundation that it is not okay to carry a knife or a weapon in public.

Over these last couple of years many members on this side of the chamber, particularly the Leader of the Opposition, the member for Broadwater, the member for Bonney and I have really enjoyed heading down the coast for Walk 4 Jack. I encourage every single member of this chamber to support the Jack Beasley Foundation and get to the Walk 4 Jack—

Mr O'Connor: Walk 4 Jack in December.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON:—in December. It is a great day and a fabulous way to continue not only Jack's legacy but also the advocacy against knife crime in this state and the education that goes with that.

Mr O'Connor: Have you got your pink hat?

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: I have got my favourite pink hat with JBF on it. I wear it a lot and it is just fantastic.


Through my contribution I want to also acknowledge the comments that were made by the member for Kawana in relation to the loss of Balin Stewart also through knife crime. One child is enough. Two children is way too many and any more is just unacceptable. These two incredibly wonderful young men are probably the only two that this House is talking about in this debate. However, we know if more is not done about juvenile crime and knife crime more people will be killed.

I also had the honour of being in this House when as a government we introduced the One Punch Can Kill legislation. That is another piece of legislation that was introduced to try to keep our community safe. It is shocking that we even have to bring in legislation that has a wounding trial to ensure people are not carrying knives on their person with an intent to harm. Unfortunately, that is the society we live in.

I do acknowledge the comments made by the member for Kawana in relation to the cutting of the funding for the safe night precincts by the Labor government. It is just not okay. We need to make sure that our police officers are resourced properly. We need to make sure that they have every single tool at their hands so they can keep our community safe. Those hardworking police officers—like the detectives in this case, like Mark Wheeler, like all of the other officers who work in these safe night precincts—need every tool possible, and that is why wounding is so vitally important. We know it works—242 detections weapons were seized in that trial. Let's make it permanent.

I ask all members in this House to please support the amendment. Make this trial permanent. More than that, I urge members to please go into their schools and communicate the good work that the Jack Beasley Foundation is doing in relation to education.

Again, I really want to acknowledge Jack's parents, Brett and Belinda, as well as Mitch. It was great to see Mitch's car hanging around Wondai and Kingaroy. I saw it at Kingaroy with the Jack Beasley Foundation sticker. I went up to the new owner and said, 'Hey, what are you doing driving Jack Beasley's car?' It was Mitch's car but he has sold it. This young man who bought it has refused to take the sticker off because he now knows how important Jack's legacy is.

 **Mr HARPER** (Thuringowa—ALP) (4.36 pm): I begin by acknowledging Brett and Belinda who are upstairs in the gallery with whom I met earlier. We commented on the bipartisan approach to this particular law, Jack's Law. It is great for people to see the parliament working together to bring in a law that will help save lives across this state. I know I gave the member for Bonney a fair old crack yesterday

on a different bill, but I do acknowledge his advocacy on this matter—and I will get to that point in a minute. He has been a staunch supporter of this, so I say well done to him as well as to the previous speaker.

I have always pushed hard for measures that support a safer community and I always will. We saw what happened on the Gold Coast with the introduction of the wandering trial. It made a real difference, just as the Beasley family have made a real difference. To Jack's parents here today, Brett and Belinda—and I saw Mark Wheeler, the Assistant Commissioner of Police, earlier—I say well done on continuing to push for reforms that support community safety. Despite their grief, they have continued to advocate for measures that can prevent and disrupt knife crime.

I am so pleased that the legislation we are introducing will be called Jack's Law. It will always be Jack's Law. It will be Jack's legacy to his fellow Queenslanders. Out of the tragedy of Jack's death some good has come with the introduction of this law.

Many people would know that, as the member for Thuringowa, I had a former career of 30 years in health, mainly as a paramedic. I have seen the very worst effects of knife crimes firsthand and the devastating impacts they have had on our broad community. They are images you can never forget. Having worked very closely with police over many of those years in some of those instances and as an MP, I was approached last year by some security officers who were very concerned about youth in my community in Townsville carrying knives into shopping centres.

I knew I had to act. I had a conversation with Assistant Commissioner Mark Wheeler where I made representations. I table the letter that was sent in June last year to the police minister asking for an extension of the wandering trial to our community.

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 30 June 2022, from the member for Thuringowa, Mr Aaron Harper MP, to the Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services, Hon. Mark Ryan [\[401\]](#).


I commend the minister for his work, because today it is happening. I make the point that you stand up for your community, and the member for Bonney has done that. I can see that there are some connections across the board.

Again, I thank the minister for ensuring our police have both the capability and the capacity to use these tools, particularly in our safe night precincts right across the state and in our community in Townsville. The expansion of these powers will include public transport hubs and associated infrastructure. That is also welcome, because we should continue to do all we can to make our community safer.

Wandering involves police using a handheld scanner to detect knives or other metal objects being carried on a person. The legislation will require the Police Commissioner to publicly publish details of wandering operations across the state such as the number of people who were required to submit to the use of handheld scanning; the number of knives or other weapons that were detected using the scanners—we know from the trial that hundreds of knives were detected on the Gold Coast; the number of times the power to search a person without warrant was exercised as a result of scanning; and the number and types of charges as a result of the scanning. The bill will extend and expand the initial trial of handheld metal detection scanners by police for another two years. I acknowledge the committee that held the public hearings and all of those who came before the public hearings to share their stories. They have also helped to get this law to the point it is today where we are debating it in the House.

I want to touch on the Police Service Administration and Other Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 2). I know that there is a contrast here with weapons licensing, particularly for permit to acquire. The electorate of Thuringowa borders the Kennedy electorate. I speak to a lot of primary producers pretty regularly. Recently a recent gun supplier who established a new business in Thuringowa raised concerns with me about delays in the permit-to-acquire process. Following further representations with the police minister—I thank him for his work in the space—I am pleased to see that this bill will include more resourcing and a restructure to form the newly commissioned Weapons Licensing group. A workforce boost consisting of an additional 50 personnel has been extended for an extra 12 months to assist with the backlog and reduce application processing times. In addition, work is continuing on the development and implementation of the new weapons licensing management system, which will streamline application and approval processes to support the introduction of the national firearms registry. The processing time for new licence applications is currently around 20 weeks and is forecast to reduce, given the additional staff who will be trained to issue permits. The QPS is committed to delivering a weapons licensing regime that supports both community safety and the interests of stakeholders.

We are here in this House today in order for a very serious law to be passed on the back of significant representations from the family. I say to them: I look forward to welcoming you in our community of Townsville to provide some education to the youth in our schools about the risks of knives. Whether it be knife crime or weapon safety, these bills are all about providing public safety in Townsville and in every other community across our state. I commend the bills to the House.

 **Mr BERKMAN** (Maiwar—Grn) (4.44 pm): I will use what little time I have in this cognate debate to first register my objection—as usual—to bills like this being debated in cognate. I will use my time to outline my concerns that the Police Service Administration and Other Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 2) will not go far enough to stop the rot in Queensland's Police Service and that the Jack's Law bill will expand police powers and derail more people's lives for nonviolent offences without actually achieving the very worthy aim of reducing knife crime to prevent further tragedy.

This government's response to both community feedback and formal inquiries into police misconduct is characteristically dismissive. For example, it has been more than two years since the CCC published its Operation Impala report, which recommended the government introduce a bright-line offence for inappropriately accessing confidential information. Instead of implementing this offence, this bill merely expands the application of the existing inadequate offence for disclosing or misusing confidential information to persons such as contractors and increases the related penalties.

It is not unreasonable to expect that police officers refrain from accessing information that they are not authorised to access. The government's failure to implement even this most straightforward of recommendations from the CCC suggests serious contempt for the people of this state, for our oversight bodies and for the victims of police misconduct and crime. There are good reasons why the Crime and Corruption Commission makes the recommendation that it does. The inquiry into QPS responses to domestic and family violence highlighted one instance where an officer accessed the details of a domestic violence complainant and then went to her place of work, where he requested a massage from her. In another high-profile case of egregious misconduct, Senior Constable Neil Punchard deliberately leaked details of a domestic violence victim to her abusive ex-partner. The senior constable texted his friend the confidential details of his friend's ex-partner, who had a number of domestic violence orders in place. In the text message, Senior Constable Punchard said—

She will be pissed ... tell her you know where she lives ... Lol.

In another he told the abuser—

The police will contact you if they want to speak to you ... then you give them my name. This is your get-out-of-jail-free card.

QPS took no action. Senior Constable Punchard remained on active duty for two years and no charges were laid until outside pressure calling for action made a continuing cover-up untenable. Even when Senior Constable Punchard was charged, he continued receiving a pay cheque. We will come to the absolute inadequacy of police disciplinary procedures in a moment, but it is important that we recognise the impact this misconduct had. The senior constable's friend—the abusive ex-partner—went on to use the information he received to threaten his victim, saying that he would kill her and strap bombs to their children. The victim had to move house a further two times due to the improper disclosure of her information to her violent ex-partner by police. In speaking out about police misconduct the victim said—

I have no faith left that the Queensland police can protect me. Officers have tried to minimise the domestic violence, and they do not accept accountability. I know there are women out there who are at high risk who have nowhere they can go. I have heard similar stories from other domestic violence victims. Now I understand why so many women are dying in this country.

Like all police who have received complaints against them, Senior Constable Punchard was investigated by his own colleagues in the QPS ethical standards unit. The government has ignored perhaps the most significant recommendation from the inquiry into police responses to domestic and family violence: to implement an independent police integrity unit led by a civilian, with civilian investigators, to deal with complaints relating to police.

We in Queensland give the police an inordinate amount of power over our lives and our communities. Tinkering around the edges while still allowing police to investigate themselves is simply not good enough. Despite some minor changes to internal disciplinary procedures, this bill does next to nothing to address the systemic police misconduct. This government, police leadership and the police union would like to sweep this under the rug and say that it is just a few bad apples, but the saying, as we all know, is that a few bad apples spoil the whole bunch. If this government wants to support communities and police, then it needs to get rid of the rot before the situation deteriorates further. While the rot continues, so too does the expansion of police powers.

The rationale behind the changes to police search powers in safe night precincts in the Police Powers and Responsibilities (Jack's Law) Amendment Bill is undeniably well intentioned. Knife crime in safe night precincts is rare, but when it happens the consequences can be absolutely tragic. I acknowledge the Beasleys' presence. I thank them for their appearance at the committee and acknowledge the unimaginable loss they have experienced.

I want to thank community members involved in advocating for safer nights out for our young people. To Jack's parents in particular, I just cannot imagine the grief that you must have felt and still feel to have lost your son to knife violence. Your fight to prevent this from happening to anyone else is absolutely commendable. While I understand and empathise with those welcoming these changes, I want to respectfully express my concern that they will not do what the government promises. The expansion of these wand and search powers to all safe night precincts and public transport was not recommended by the Griffith Criminology Institute's review of the trial. The review found some limited evidence during the initial trial that it increased detection of knife carrying in only one of the two locations, but it found no evidence of deterrence nor any evidence to suggest any significant effect on other violent offences. That is consistent with analysis of similar powers in other jurisdictions, including Victoria and the UK.

Having heard the stories of families who have lost loved ones to knife crime, I certainly do not want to underestimate the value of preventing even one fatality, but I worry about politicians claiming that these laws will do something for the community that, based on the evidence, they will not. I also worry about the evidence that these powers have led to thousands more young people being detained and charged for drug offences, many of whom would otherwise have never come to the attention of police. The Griffith review included interviews with police openly admitting that they used the powers to target people for nonviolent offences like drug possession. Regardless of your position on the morality of smoking a bit of pot or taking party drugs on a night out with friends, the evidence is clear: being exposed to the criminal justice system is destabilising, often traumatic and, where there is a damaging relationship between drugs and the user, interactions like this with the criminal justice system only exacerbate the issues that lead to substance abuse.

There is an incredibly low bar in this bill about where and when authorisation for these powers can be given. This will ultimately lead to a large amount of police resources being committed to searching persons without cause or suspicion, with limited efficacy and mostly for nonviolent offences. As a member of the committee considering this bill, I heard evidence from human rights experts that this bill unreasonably and unjustifiably limits human rights not just because it allows searches without reasonable suspicion but because there is insufficient evidence to suggest that it will achieve its objectives, the objectives used to justify that limitation—that is, these powers will breach human rights but they will probably not reduce knife crime.


I am also not convinced, given the findings of the recent inquiry into the QPS as well as a number of high-profile incidents of racial profiling, including the recent killing of Aubrey Donohue, that these new powers will be applied in a way that is not subject to racial bias by police officers. A number of whistleblowers have come forward in recent years alleging racism in the QPS. Late last year audio captured from inside the watch houses and police facilities was published in the media and much of what police officers were captured saying in these recordings is the exact kind of thing that the Attorney-General says she wants to target with the new laws introduced this morning. If we want to stamp out Nazism and racism in Queensland, history suggests that we need to apply a really fine toothcomb to the QPS. The Police Service Administration and Other Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 2) fails to do that. We support those minor changes to prohibit the misuse of confidential information and improve dismissal processes for police, but we need to see more, including an independent police investigation body.

When it comes to the Jack's Law bill, we support the intent but we worry about the efficacy. There is justification for an extended trial to gather more information—more evidence—on these wandering powers, but that is because we still have no evidence that they actually work.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr BERKMAN: We have no evidence to indicate that they work to reduce knife crime. That is what the evidence says. There is no justification to expand suspicionless searches to more areas, especially when we know they are mostly being used to charge people for nonviolent offences like carrying—

(Time expired)

 **Mr WHITING** (Bancroft—ALP) (4.54 pm): I rise to speak in favour of the Police Powers and Responsibilities (Jack's Law) Amendment Bill and the Police Service Administration and Other Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 2) before us today. With regard to the Jack's Law bill, I want to thank the minister and all of the Beasley family. The family has made a true and lasting change in Queensland: it has made our state safer for every Queensland family. As the minister said, this is a law that protects all Queenslanders and is a lasting legacy. It is welcome news from the minister that the QPS is ready to go as soon as Jack's Law is passed. They will be back out on the streets, always vigilant, always making sure that our streets are as safe as possible. I want to pay tribute to my local police who are on the streets working hard, as always. I asked the officers in charge of the stations in Bancroft—Mick Moate in Mango Hill-North Lakes and Jason Higgs at Deception Bay—if there was anyone at those stations that I should mention in particular today. Mick Moate said that all of the people working for him should be commended. He said—

The troops will be out and about tomorrow evening from 6 pm until 10 pm for extreme high vis patrols around North Lakes.

This flows from the changes that we made last month. He said that Detective Senior Sergeant Guy Ford now works out of North Lakes in the VPIU and that it is working hard on deterring or interrupting any young offenders. Jason was just as effusive about his officers. He said—

Honestly, I am so proud of all of the troops here it would be hard to single anyone out.

They work hard in a challenging environment but always yield great results in striving for a safer community.

Well said, Jason. Thanks to Jason and to Mick and all of the QPS members who work in our local communities.

I want to touch briefly on the police service administration bill. The changes in the bill will not only improve the operation of the QPS; they will increase public confidence in the Police Service. Queenslanders would surely support the initiative that we brought in of summary dismissal of a police officer or a police recruit upon being sentenced to imprisonment. It will also boost the confidence of the public to know that we have improved the framework around disciplinary hearings. It will make it fairer, more effective, more responsive and ensure that there are consequences.


I know that police disciplinary proceedings can be complex, and in a way that is how it should be. We need to be careful when we are dealing with people's careers and people's rights and we need to make sure that we get everything right whilst ensuring that victims are supported as well, and that will mean that there is better protection for our officers and better protection for the public. People will be relieved to know that we have also focused on the improper use or release of information. Once again this helps build confidence in our police and it makes sure that there is a consequence if something does go wrong.

Ever since I became a member of this parliament my appreciation of our police has grown and grown. I see their bravery. They show me what dedication to duty is, but I also see their human side. I see beyond the blue uniform; I see the very human people inside it. I know that at once they are remarkable and yet also ordinary Queenslanders doing an extraordinary job. I commend the bills to the House.

Debate, on motion of Mr Whiting, adjourned.

MOTION

Cairns, Townsville and Redlands Electorates

 **Mr BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (4.58 pm): It gives me absolute pleasure to move—

That this House notes:

- (a) crime rates in Cairns in the last year have increased, including a 52 per cent increase in unlawful entry and a 38 per cent increase in unlawful use of motor vehicles;
- (b) crime rates in Townsville in the last year have increased, including a 34 per cent increase in assaults and a 22 per cent increase in thefts; and
- (c) the lack of adequate health services in Redlands has resulted in ambulance ramping reaching 73 per cent;

and acknowledges the selection of strong, community-based candidates in Rebecca Young (Redlands), Natalie Marr (Thuringowa) and Yolonde Entsch (Cairns) by the Liberal National Party to champion the interests of the residents of these three electorates and help ease the cost-of-living, health and crime crises facing Queenslanders.

As honourable members know, the motion that I gave notice of this morning talked about accountability and the crime crisis in Queensland, particularly in Far North Queensland, North Queensland and the Redlands area. In Cairns, for instance, we have seen unlawful entry rise by 38 per cent and the unlawful use of motor vehicles rise. In Townsville we have seen crime rise, including a 34 per cent increase in assaults and a 22 per cent increase in thefts. The motion also calls on the government to address the lack of adequate health services in Redlands which has resulted in ambulance ramping reaching 73 per cent. That is the bad of the motion.

The good of the motion is, of course, the LNP candidates who have moved to address these issues in their communities. We have preselected fantastic candidates to address the issues because, as members in this House know and as the people of those communities know, in Thuringowa, Redlands and Cairns representation from the Labor members has been zilch. It has been bad. They have failed to bring the issues of their electorates into this parliament. Of course, they say one thing in Far North Queensland, one thing in North Queensland and one thing in Redlands, but another when they get here. When they are here they are just the political puppets of the Labor Party. They are not champions for their communities—not at all.

Let us look at the member for Cairns and his history in this place. In an article in the *Cairns Post* he said—

I'm not singing the party line, I'm going to take down to Brisbane what's going on.

Well, I am waiting for that. I am waiting to see all of these issues that he is going to bring to Brisbane and take to the government, because we have not seen him do that. He says one thing to his Cairns community and another thing when he gets down here.

It gets better. The member for Thuringowa likes fighting with his local newspaper. In fact, he likes fighting with his community. When we were raising the issues of the crime crisis in Thuringowa, the member did not say, 'We need to address the issue.' Do you know what he said, Deputy Speaker? He said, 'We should stop talking about it so no-one knows about it.' He did not want his local paper to report on the crime crisis because he sees nothing that will fix all of the problems in his electorate. No way, Jose.

Mr McDonald interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: I take the gesticulatory interjection from the member for Lockyer. That is what he is doing: 'Sh! Don't tell anyone. No-one will know.' Well, Thuringowa residents know. Thuringowa residents know that they do not have good representation from the Labor Party at the moment.

Of course, the community of the member for Redlands has seen ambulance ramping reach 73 per cent. I repeat: ambulance ramping has reached 73 per cent. She thinks that a satellite hospital will fix all of those problems. A satellite hospital will have no overnight beds and offer no major surgery, but the member for Redlands tells her community, 'Don't worry because the satellite hospital will fix everything.' I table an article, which members will remember, headlined 'Budget paper blooper over new \$40 million Redland hospital address'. The budget put it in the wrong location. That is the member for Redlands for you: 'We're going to build a hospital and we've put it in the budget, but we forgot the location.' That forced the member for Redlands to clarify their position for her community.

Tabled paper: Article from the *Courier-Mail*, dated 4 December 2020, titled 'Budget paper blooper over new \$40 million Redland hospital address' [\[402\]](#).

I refer to another article headlined 'Thuringowa MP Aaron Harper needs refresher on his job'. I will table a copy of that article. Basically the article says that the member for Thuringowa does not deliver for the people in his electorate because he says one thing in Brisbane to appease the Labor Party and he says another thing in his community.

Tabled paper: Article from the *Townsville Bulletin*, dated 2 May 2019, titled 'Thuringowa MP Aaron Harper needs refresher on his job' [\[403\]](#).

The great news is that we have fantastic candidates on the ground who will get things moving in those electorates. I mention Rebecca Young who, incidentally, today was out in the community talking to the good people of Redlands. Natalie Marr will bring a real voice to the people of Thuringowa. She is a true champion of that community. Of course, in Cairns Yolonde Entsch, a great local businesswoman, will provide fantastic representation for that electorate. The Labor Party are not delivering in those electorates but the LNP candidates will.

(Time expired)



Hon. SM FENTIMAN (Waterford—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, Minister for Women and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence) (5.03 pm): I move the following amendment—

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

- '1. notes:
 - (a) the crime statistics publicly available on the QPS website and the strong community safety laws and investment by the Palaszczuk government;
 - (b) the record \$2.9 billion Palaszczuk government police budget to support community safety;
 - (c) the record \$23.6 billion Palaszczuk government health budget to support all Queenslanders;
 - (d) the Satellite Hospitals Program, including a satellite hospital in Redlands to provide health care to Queenslanders closer to home;
 - (e) the \$6.79 billion in concessions to support Queenslanders in the recent Palaszczuk government budget;
 - (f) the LNP opposition are the same, tired old team, with the same plan for Queenslanders—to, cut, sack and sell;
 - (g) that the Leader of the Opposition abandoned North Queensland and replaced the youngest female MP to take the seat of Broadwater;
 - (h) the Leader of the Opposition in a press conference with and regarding the LNP Redlands candidate said, "you're not going to see a candidate who stands behind the leader like a nodding donkey, I want someone who fights for the area and is a strong voice";
 - (i) the Leader of Opposition in 2021 referred to the member for Mackay in the parliament as a "nodding donkey";
2. calls on the Leader of the Opposition to withdraw his comments regarding "nodding donkey" and apologise; and
3. acknowledges and endorses the continued dedicated work for their communities of the members for Cairns, Thuringowa and Redlands.'

I am very pleased to speak to this amended motion. Firstly, the Leader of the Opposition must absolutely apologise for the comments that he made about the member for Redlands and the member for Mackay. I know those opposite are going to jump up and down and whinge and whine and say, 'No, no, no! Those comments were not directed at any particular individual.' If that is honestly true, why does the Leader of the Opposition not stand up and say, 'That was not directed at an individual. I did not mean to cause offence but if I did I apologise'? He needs to take responsibility. The Leader of the Opposition hides behind the member for Kawana. The 'conveyancer from Kawana' rushes to his defence. A real leader would apologise. He would take responsibility and apologise.

This morning I said that the LNP clearly have a woman problem. Can I say that it is not just that they have a problem with women; it seems that they are unable to even mention the word 'women'. Until the last 10 seconds of the contribution of the member for Kawana, in which he talked about their wonderful community candidates, he did not say that they are women. On Sunday, when the Leader of the Opposition announced those candidates, how many times did he mention that they were women? For 10 minutes yesterday—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Order! You may continue, Attorney-General.

Ms FENTIMAN: For 10 minutes yesterday the Leader of the Opposition stood in this chamber and talked about his new candidates. In 1,400 words did he mention once that they were women? He cannot even bring himself to say the word 'women'.

Ms Bates interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Member for Mudgeeraba, you are on a warning. You can leave the chamber for one hour.

Whereupon the honourable member for Mudgeeraba withdrew from the chamber at 5.07 pm.

Ms FENTIMAN: The Leader of the Opposition is clearly afraid to admit that the LNP has a problem with women. There are only six women in their caucus and only five in the chamber now.

Ms CAMM: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I take personal offence at the Attorney-General's comment that there are only six women here in the LNP. There are six women, but I take personal offence at those comments that are repeated in this chamber to vilify and bully us.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: The taking of points of order is not an opportunity to engage in debate. I will take some advice regarding the substance of the point of order. Member, you cannot take personal offence on behalf of a group.

Mrs Frecklington interjected.


Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Member for Nanango, you are warned under the standing orders.

Ms FENTIMAN: My point is, how can you hope to represent modern Queensland with so few women in your party? They had an opportunity with the Callide by-election to actually put a woman into a safe seat. It was a failure of the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr Head interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Member for Callide, you are warned under the standing orders. That was unnecessary and extreme.

Ms FENTIMAN: The LNP cannot hope to represent modern Queensland with so few women in their party room. The reason women are turned off politics is because of the comments of the Leader of the Opposition. He must apologise.

 **Ms CAMM** (Whitsunday—LNP) (5.09 pm): I am proud woman representative of the LNP, which has many strong women members of parliament and candidates for election. We will have some incredible women candidates. Those opposite do not like it, because the women on this side of the House are not puppets of the unions. The women on this side of the House achieved their positions on merit. The women on this side of the House are supported by men of the LNP. I will not be lectured to by the women opposite about the position I hold representing my community as a proud conservative LNP woman.

Another proud and talented conservative woman is Natalie Marr. She is coming for the seat of Thuringowa. I am just waiting for the 'Glass Jaw' to take personal offence. I am sure it will happen more than three times during my speech. Natalie Marr is our candidate endorsed on merit by the LNP because we are not beholden to unions. Grassroots members elect candidates on our side.

Ms King interjected.

Ms CAMM: I will ignore the member for Pumicestone's interjections. Natalie Marr is in fact the former regional vice-president of the Liberal National Party. She achieved that position on merit via grassroots voting of the LNP, along with the other incredible vice-president, Amanda Cooper, who has also served this great state of Queensland. In the LNP we acknowledge merit, talent and the grassroots values of our party.

I am not sure which union the member for Thuringowa represents—I have not checked his register of interests—but I know he is not a woman.

Mrs Frecklington interjected.

Ms CAMM: I take that interjection from the member for Nanango. I am pretty confident that the member for Thuringowa is not a woman. What I do know is his track record. His track record, as pointed out by the deputy leader, is that he tries to shut down the media in his own town because he is so worried about how things look and about perception. Members should just read the *Townsville Bulletin* editorial of 2 May 2019 titled 'Thuringowa MP Aaron Harper needs refresher on his job'. It states—

When Mr Harper stood up in Queensland parliament and berated his local paper and peak economic development organisation Townsville Enterprise—

which I think the government are hosting, quite hypocritically—

Mr Mander: Led by a woman.

Ms CAMM: I take that interjection. There are a lot of members opposite who should be very concerned about the women of the LNP who might stand at the next election. That is for sure. I refer to the member for Thuringowa's own Facebook post on 18 September. It shows how serious he was about crime in his community, about reform of the Youth Justice Act and about breach of bail. It states—


The LNP have a track record of telling lies when it comes to 'community safety'

I see they are promising to bring back their so called 'Breach of Bail'. What a joke!

Who is the joke on now, member for Thuringowa? There has been a lot of talk about donkeys in the last 24 hours, but let's talk about jokers in this House. By his own admission and his own words, the member for Thuringowa now has to go back and face his community. I respectfully acknowledge the chair for not taking offence. I will not have the Leader of the Opposition, who has been nothing but supportive of LNP women—my colleagues—being taken out of context with regard to some statements in the media because it suits the government's agenda. I want to relate some Facebook quotes

regarding the member for Mackay. In relation to the hydro plan someone said 'what a joke'. These are direct quotes; this is not my opinion. I can tell members: there is a good woman coming after the seat of Mackay at the next election.

(Time expired)

 **Mr HARPER** (Thuringowa—ALP) (5.15 pm): I will enjoy the next five minutes, quite seriously. I do not know what is worse: getting hit with a wet lettuce leaf by the member for Whitsunday or a kerchief by the member for Kawana. Listening to their contributions was like getting hit with a feather! This debate is called 'the scream'. They should bring something to the game—anything! I will tell members why the people of Thuringowa back me in—

Ms CAMM: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I believe that the member just called me a wet lettuce. I take personal offence and I ask that it be withdrawn.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): The member has taken personal offence. I ask you to withdraw.

Mr HARPER: I withdraw. The good people of Thuringowa backed me in in 2015, 2017 and 2020 because I deliver for Thuringowa, unlike former LNP member Sam Cox—the good mate of the Leader of the Opposition—who wanted to sell off the port to deliver Riverway Drive. Where he did he go? The Katters? One Nation? Where is Sam now?

A government member interjected.

Mr HARPER: I will get to the Leader of the Opposition and I will do him slowly. Let us look at the record of those opposite. On crime, the LNP failed. With their breach of bail, every single one of them reoffended. It did not have teeth. They failed with their boot camp, but they did take a donation from Lincoln Springs, didn't they, 'Mr Helicopter Man'? Was it because he could not drive all the way to Lincoln Springs or because he had to bring back the donations?

An opposition member: Why don't you stick to your written notes?

Mr HARPER: That's my scribble.

Mr BLEIJIE: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. To accuse one of corruption and secretly taking money is highly offensive. I take personal offence and I ask the member to withdraw.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I will take some advice.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, members! Member, I ask you to withdraw. You have also used incorrect titles. I ask you to refrain from using incorrect titles. All members will be addressed by their proper parliamentary titles. I ask you to withdraw before you continue.

Mr HARPER: I withdraw. The member for Kawana knows exactly the failures of the boot camp. Those opposite know that during their term the LNP sacked police. They cut programs. They cut funding to Project Booyah. Conversely, we have restored funding for a range of programs such as Clontarf, Stars and Silver Lining. We also just got funding for Street University and we have brought back the stronger laws that were needed.

We brought back breach of bail that had teeth, and it will have an effect. I refer to the Leader of the Opposition. The opposition front bench reminds me of the *Wizard of Oz*. I am not sure if he is the Tin Man—no soul, no heart, no ticker—because he will not get up and apologise—

Mr POWELL: I rise to a point of order—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Member, I asked you to use correct titles. What is your point of order?

Mr POWELL: Mr Deputy Speaker, I was going to draw attention to the fact that the member continues to not direct his comments through the chair.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Manager of Opposition Business. Member, I would ask you to use correct titles. If you continue to use non-parliamentary titles, I will sit you down.

Mr HARPER: I take your guidance and apologise, Mr Deputy Speaker. The hypocrisy of the member for Broadwater, the Leader of the Opposition, is breathtakingly amazing when he can stand with three women candidates and purport to stand for women and at the same time make awful remarks about my friend the member for Redlands. The member has form. We heard today, and it is in *Hansard*, the member for Broadwater has made the same disparaging remarks about my friend the member for Mackay. The member has form.

The member for Broadwater should man up and apologise to the member for Redlands for those disparaging remarks, but I do not think he can because he does not seem to have the ticker. He does not have a heart. He does not have a soul. He wants to attack women. That is a true representation of the man who cut and run from Mundingburra. The former member for Mundingburra cut and run to take out the then sitting member in Broadwater. The former female member, Verity Barton, was a good young lady. I cannot believe the member can sit there and try to defend his disparaging remarks. They were unparliamentary. The member should man up. Everyone can see that the Leader of the Opposition—

Mr MANDER: I rise to a point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker. The member continues to use sexist language. He should be using the saying 'person up' and not 'man up'.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): I will take some advice.


Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, members!

Ms Pease interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Lytton, I had called the House to order and you continued to interject. You can go on a warning. I will take the advice in silence. The language used is not unparliamentary. There is no point of order.

Mr HARPER: I take the interjection from the member for Everton who said there should not be women on boards. The hypocrisy is breathtaking. I say to all members opposite that the people of Thuringowa know that I will continue to deliver. They know that I have delivered hundreds of millions of dollars in infrastructure and I will keep going.

 **Dr ROWAN** (Moggill—LNP) (5.22 pm): I rise to support the motion as moved by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, the member for Kawana, and I will try to bring some decorum and rationality to this debate unlike the puerile and facile contribution by the member for Thuringowa. The reaction from members opposite to this motion completely exposes the hypocrisy and duplicity of the Labor government.

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

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Pause the clock. Before I take the member's point of order, I appreciate your attempts to bring some decorum to the debate but your own side is actually interjecting so much I am having difficulty hearing you.

Mr HARPER: I take personal offence at the remarks of the member for Moggill and I ask him to withdraw.

Dr ROWAN: I withdraw. With regard to the Attorney-General's comments in relation to the candidates who have been selected, it is important to understand that the reason that the Liberal National Party has had to preselect candidates so early is the desperation of these communities around Queensland in relation to a myriad of issues. Unlike the Labor Party, these candidates have been selected on merit. Yes, they are all women, but they have been selected on merit. Rebecca Young in Redlands, Natalie Marr in Thuringowa and Yolonde Entsch in Cairns are excellent community champions who are there to address the issues that are occurring in all of those communities across Queensland.

We will see this more and more because, as issues continue to arise as they have been neglected by this government, communities across Queensland are crying out to get action. Let us run through a few of those issues because the state Labor government is refusing to be held to account.

Labor's track record speaks for itself. With respect to health and ambulance services, as has been revealed by the Liberal National Party today, new data shows that the number of patients waiting longer than the clinically recommended time frames for a specialist appointment has jumped from 104,000 in July 2022 to over 122,500 in January 2023. This is a blowout of 18 per cent in just six months. That is why this government should be listening to Queenslanders. This means something to the Queenslanders who are waiting on lists for the services they need. Whether that is in the Redlands or Cairns or Thuringowa or right across Queensland, this has a real impact on their lives.

Patients across Queensland are waiting longer in emergency departments. Figures released to the LNP opposition have revealed that across Queensland the number of patients languishing in emergency departments for more than 24 hours has skyrocket by 225 per cent since Labor was first elected. When it comes to ambulance ramping, as we have heard as part of this debate, we have seen it reach as high as 73 per cent at the Redland Hospital. Three out of four patients are waiting in

ambulances and not being taken out of ambulances and getting the care they need within the clinically recommended time frames. It is not just happening in the Redlands. In the December quarter of last year ramping at the PA Hospital was 50 per cent, at Ipswich Hospital it was 55 per cent and at the Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital it was 51 per cent.

Just weeks ago we also saw the ambulance dispatch system suffer a mass outage. What did Labor do at the time? Labor chose not to inform Queenslanders until the issue was raised by paramedic and ambulance officer whistleblowers.


Mr Harper: What a load of rubbish.

Dr ROWAN: I hear the member for Thuringowa interjecting on that. The member for Thuringowa should understand that this is an important issue for Queenslanders. They do not like hearing the truth that in Queensland they are failing when it comes to hospital and health services. Whether that be in Thuringowa, in Cairns, down in the Redlands or right across Queensland, Queenslanders are crying out for action when it comes to resolving these issues.

The member for Thuringowa should listen to this. Paramedic hours lost has been soaring by 20 per cent to over 134,000 hours as a result of ramping. In the five years to July 2022, the total number of patients waiting longer than the clinically recommended time frames to see a specialist increased by 177 per cent. The fact that the Palaszczuk Labor government has not met statewide ambulance ramping targets in the past eight years is an absolute disgrace.

When it comes to all of these communities across Queensland there needs to be action when it comes to our health and hospital services. That is before we get to the crime crisis. As we know, crime has been running unabated in North Queensland. It has been affecting communities whether in Townsville, Cairns or Thuringowa. What has been happening up there over the last eight years? Car theft, break and enters and a range of other crimes have been committed. We have seen some terrible instances of crime down in the Redlands.

That is why communities are crying out for candidates. They are crying out for local champions. Cost-of-living pressures are skyrocketing as well. This Labor government is doing nothing about that. That is why these communities need community champions. It is why the LNP has had to select candidates early. We have candidates who have been selected on merit. These three women who have been selected will be outstanding representatives for their communities in this parliament and they will get the legislation, policies and framework implemented to deliver for their areas.

 **Mr HEALY** (Cairns—ALP) (5.27 pm): I want to acknowledge the member for Moggill bringing a sensible approach. It is quite entertaining. There are times when I would like for the people of Queensland to see what happens at this time in this chamber.

We hear a significant amount of spurious and disingenuous statements from the opposition when it comes to crime. When we scratch below the surface there is no genuine concern or meaningful solution with any of their banter. We are still waiting for a plan. It is a shameful situation that the opposition's dubious attacks are based on fear and scaremongering, cuts and chaos. This is something that only makes matters worse for our community—

Mr O'Connor interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Pause the clock. Member for Bonney, you are on a warning. You can leave the chamber for one hour.

Whereupon the honourable member for Bonney withdrew from the chamber at 5.28 pm.

Mr HEALY: Those who serve and protect us on the front line really do not appreciate these allegations. However, let us consider this government's responses to community safety based on responsible and pragmatic initiatives that meaningfully tackle the issues both at their root cause and at the coalface.


We have: recently announced tough new laws to target serious repeat offenders; introduced breach of bail which has teeth and actually works, unlike something that is popular and does not work at all; invested more than \$100 million extra in diversion and rehabilitation; and targeted investment in community safety.

If we look at the figures out of Cairns, police tell me that from January 2022 to January 2023 we are 52 per cent down on car thefts. That is not good enough, but we are working towards that. It will be harder for serious repeat offenders to get bail and there will be even more investment in tackling the

complex causes of youth crime. That includes a significant funding boost for the Queensland Police Service—unlike those opposite who cut funding—including a new \$25 million injection for high visibility police patrols and \$17 million for expanded joint flying squads.

Logically, that builds on the proposed laws announced in December 2022, including: increasing the maximum penalty for unlawful use of a motor vehicle from seven years to 10 years imprisonment with even more severe penalties of up to 14 years for aggravated offences; amending the Youth Justice Act, requiring courts to consider previous bail history, criminal activity and track record when sentencing—obviously something the community has been expecting; and increased penalties for criminals who have boasted about these crimes on social media. We acknowledge the complexities and we know they use social media as an influence. It is vitally important that we continue to commit—and we are committing—money. We are looking at the results, what works and what does not. We have built a new police station; we have additional police. We are ensuring we are getting the numbers.

I must say, there is one thing. The shadow minister for transport recently said, 'We have already identified a couple of billion dollars worth of savings. There are a range of areas that we know already that we can prune things back.' I suspect I am glad you have allocated somebody to represent your dysfunctional group in Cairns, because we want to ask what you are going to prune. What services are we going to see pruned? What roads aren't you going to invest in? What schools aren't you going to build? What little things are you going to come up with and try and cloud? The people of Queensland are absolutely on to you, and all you can do is sit here with your childish humour and scream and carry on. You have no substance. When you leave this chamber you do not have to win what happens here: it is what happens out in the street. You have absolutely no substance. You have no credibility. You have not brought a plan and you have a dysfunctional leader. The only thing that is more impressive than your dysfunction is your consistency. It is absolute and it has been going on and on. Regardless, we will continue to invest. I will continue to listen and work with the people of Cairns, who like a hardworking, honest and genuine representative. I will continue to work for them. I will continue to provide because that is what Labor governments do. No shadows, no fibs; we tell the truth.

 **Dr ROBINSON** (Oodgeroo—LNP) (5.32 pm): I support the motion moved by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition that the House notes that the lack of adequate health services in the Redlands has resulted in ambulance ramping reaching a record 73 per cent. The motion further acknowledges the selection of three strong community-based LNP candidates: Rebecca Young, Redlands; Natalie Marr, Thuringowa; and Yolonde Entsch, Cairns. These women are championing the interests of the residents of their electorates and helping ease the cost-of-living, health and crime crises facing Queenslanders.


Labor's health crisis continues to impact patients at our local Redland Hospital. The worst ever ambulance ramping at 73 per cent, the worst in the state and the worst in Redlands history under this Labor Party government, will never be forgotten. It is an extreme low in health service delivery in the Redlands and a stain on the Palaszczuk government. There has been nothing new built and opened at the hospital in eight years, no new overnight beds and no intensive care unit, which was promised by this government to be up and running in 2022. As of right now, today, it is still not built and operating during one of the worst health crises in Queensland history. Our amazing health workers at the hospital were put under greater pressure than they should have been.

Labor's failure to deliver at Redland Hospital is brought into sharper focus when you consider that they prioritised the building of a medical centre instead of the more critical hospital upgrade and expansion. Redlanders were also alarmed when they heard that Redland Hospital was the worst performing in Queensland when it came to waiting for more than a whole day in the emergency department to be admitted to a bed, the only exception being Hervey Bay. AMA Queensland president Dr Maria Boulton called for urgent action to address alarming concerns about risks to patients at Redland Hospital. Dr Boulton said the expansion of Redland Hospital must be delivered, not mothballed indefinitely. I agree with the AMA president who said, 'The people of Redlands and the doctors, nurses and other healthcare workers who strive against the odds every day to deliver quality and safe health care deserve better.'

Redlands definitely deserves better treatment from the government, whether in the provision of health services, cost-of-living relief or to be kept safe from Labor's youth crime crisis and in many other ways. That is why I am happy tonight to talk about the newly endorsed LNP candidate for the Redlands, Rebecca Young. Born and bred in the Redlands, Rebecca has built a life in the community she loves. Educated at Victoria Point State School and Ormiston College, Rebecca has blended raising kids with building a successful business career in the Redlands. Rebecca has always been actively involved in the Redlands community through local sport, as have her parents who are life members of the Victoria

Point Sharks Sporting Club. She has volunteered for the Redlands Women in Business initiative and is the recent past president of the Redlands Coast Chamber of Commerce, where she served as a volunteer for five years. In 2021 she was named Redlands Australia Day local community hero.

Rebecca Young's passion for the community is what drives her to stand up for the Redlands. She knows there is broad community frustration with the severe lack of government investment in the Redlands Hospital and local road infrastructure coupled with growing anger about the youth crime crisis. Rebecca states that energy must be channelled towards lasting change that will unleash the power of the local economy and improve the lives of those who love working and living and running small and family businesses by the bay. Being a small business owner and mother, she has a lived understanding of the pressures being placed on households and businesses. Rebecca is a strong voice for the Redlands. She will continue to engage and listen to her community when they tell her what is most important to them. Easing cost pressures facing families and small businesses is an important value that she has lived out. Redlands deserves better, and with the LNP candidate Rebecca Young as part of an LNP government they will get it.

 **Ms RICHARDS** (Redlands—ALP) (5.37 pm): Well, it is always a delight to follow on from the member for Oodgeroo, the never-to-be-forgotten member of the Newman government. We have the member for Clayfield, who was the treasurer; we have the member for Surfers Paradise, who was the minister for education, training and employment; we have the member for Kawana, who was apparently the worst AG; we have the member for Broadwater, who was the minister for local government; we have the member for Everton, who was the minister for public works and housing; we have the member for Glass House, who was the minister for environment; we have the member for Mudgeeraba, who was the minister for science; we have the member for Mermaid Beach; we have the member for Nanango, who was assistant minister to the premier, Campbell Newman; we have the member for Chatsworth, who was assistant minister for public transport; and we have the member for Maroochydore, who was the Speaker. As I have said time and time again, 50 per cent of that side of the House sat in the Newman government. What is their track record? I will tell you what it is: it is cut, it is sack and it is sell, and it has never been played out more largely.

Honourable members interjected.

Ms RICHARDS: Member for Everton, I am sure you are indeed proud of your track record in the housing and public works space. You decimated the department of housing and public works. I am very aware of your track record, member for Everton. The member for Kawana talked about the satellite hospital. I wonder if he realises that his candidate was absolutely delighted to stand beside me and the Minister for Health at the sod turning. Oh my goodness! What? Who would have thought that a satellite hospital was a great idea! The LNP candidate loves our satellite hospital program.

Let us talk about our chamber of commerce and delivering the fantastic Regional Jobs Committees because, again, the candidate was absolutely delighted to stand beside me and Minister Farmer. Wow! When you talk about delivering, it is very telling that in the very first media release she said, 'I've seen Labor MPs work really hard in the Redlands.' Yes, indeed. It is an absolute endorsement of the work I have done over the last five years.

Let us talk about roads, because under the assistant minister for public transport the Cleveland-Redland Bay Road was never going to be looked at until 2025. That is well documented. We are getting on with the job. Thank you very much, Minister Bailey. We are duplicating the Cleveland-Redland Bay Road, so do not talk to me about your focus on roads. Let us talk about health care. I said this yesterday—you closed the Wynnum Hospital, you closed the Moreton Bay nursing home, you closed the Barrett centre, you sacked nurses. Seriously, if you think you have got any credibility on your track record—Deputy Speaker, they are deluded in that space.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Through the chair.

Ms RICHARDS: The track record speaks for itself. I am happy to talk about our beautiful brand new satellite hospital that will take pressure off the Redland Hospital. I am happy to talk about the car park that will unlock the site at Redland Hospital. I am happy to talk about the \$62 million intensive care unit and 37 beds. I am happy to talk about the 28 new beds that are coming through Hutchinsons. I am happy to talk about—

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Resume your seat, member for Redlands. The level of interjection is far too high. Leader of the Opposition, member for Kawana, member for McConnel and member for Miller, please stop quarrelling across the chamber.


Ms RICHARDS: As I said in my contribution yesterday, I will sit my five years next to their previous 10 years any day of the week. I am happy to put my track record side by side the 50 per cent of the Newman government any day of the week. Honestly, their track record speaks volumes, and my track record in delivering in education, in roads—

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Member for Kawana, you are warned under the standing orders.

Ms RICHARDS: As I said, I will put my track record side by side with theirs. I want to refer to the 'donkey-gate' matter. It is on the record in *Hansard* that he called the member for Mackay a 'nodding donkey'. It was stated in that press release on Sunday. You have had two days to stand up and clarify.

(Time expired)

 **Mr LAST** (Burdekin—LNP) (5.43 pm): I rise to support the motion put forward by the member for Kawana. Can I say at the outset that I will back these six women on this side of the House any day of the week, and I cannot wait until October next year when they are joined by Rebecca Young, Natalie Marr and Yolonde Entsch. This place needs a voice, this place needs some representation, and those communities are not getting that at the moment from the members for Thuringowa and Cairns.

The member for Cairns stood in here a few minutes ago and said that we need to scratch below the surface. Well, I scratched below the surface and what did I find? Let me share this with the House. When the member for Cairns came into this place, there were 363 unlawful use of a motor vehicle charges to the year ending February 2019. What is it now? It was 3,428 to the year ending February 2023. That is an increase of more than nine times, and he has the audacity to come in here and try and tell us that he is representing his community and that he has crime under control.

What did he say? Let us have a look at a few of his quotes. In October 2018 when he was talking about crime he said, 'Tackling the issues required not only immediate action but also dedication, innovation and cooperation.' We know there was no action. The fact he has only talked about crime on six occasions in five years says it all. It is not just the member for Cairns; it is the member for Thuringowa as well. He stood in this place—and you could quote him until the cows come home—and who could forget it when he said, 'The Palaszczuk government has a real plan to tackle the issues of youth crime in Townsville.' How did that go? How did the crime in Townsville go?

Let me share this with the House. In his first year there were 268 unlawful use of a motor vehicle charges, and it was 800 to the year ending February 2023. That is how successful he has been. He took to Facebook four months after he said they had a plan and said, 'I'm not putting up with this anymore.' He went on to say, 'I am not asking for help anymore. I am demanding it.' I wonder where he went to demand it. Where did he go to demand the action that was required for that community? When you drive around Thuringowa you are dodging the burnt-out stolen vehicles, and that community is fed up. They have had an absolute gutful of the crime—the unlawful entry and the unlawful use of motor vehicles—and they want action. They are no longer prepared to just sit back and wear this rubbish from the member for Thuringowa.

The member for Cairns should join him in hanging his head in shame. We know that he is heading out. We know at the next election that he is running for the hills. He is cutting it and he is heading for the mayor's job in Cairns. That is where he is heading.

Opposition members: Your Worship!

Mr LAST: Your Worship; that is exactly right. That is why we have selected two outstanding candidates for Cairns and Thuringowa. They have impeccable credentials and they are local community champions. They are candidates who are out there working as we speak. They are at the markets and doorknocking every day of the week. They have got their finger on the pulse because they are ringing us and telling us what is going on. Our leader, the member for Broadwater, will back me up when I talk about the level of crime in those communities and the fact that they need some help.

What those communities need is a tiger, but what have they got? They have got a couple of mice. I want to say this to the chamber. They had better be looking over their shoulder because the roar is coming, the hot breath is on the back of the neck. When they get in here, this chamber will see that we have two tigers, two candidates who are prepared to stand up in here for their communities. They will back their communities. I will guarantee it because I know them. That is exactly what we want. That is what we stand for as members of the LNP. We will back our communities and get in there and fight.



Mrs GILBERT (Mackay—ALP) (5.48 pm): Those opposite have a vision for Queensland and it is to only cut, sack and sell again—the same vision they had last time. They have set a low bar, and then they keep setting it lower and lower again, and that is why I am supporting the amended motion. The Palaszczuk government respects frontline workers. We hire them. We are building new hospitals. We are investing in police. We are supporting Queenslanders with our community safety measures. We back Queenslanders with our \$6.8 billion of concessions that will deliver real hip-pocket relief. On this side of the House, we are delivering frontline services and infrastructure. It is not just by coincidence that Mackay has one of the lowest unemployment rates in the state.

The Palaszczuk government is delivering for families in my region. Under the LNP, it had one of the highest unemployment rates in the state. It was only a couple of weeks ago that I got to welcome 19 new police recruits into my region. There is also a swag of new interns and graduating nurses that have started work in our local hospitals. Our tradies are busy building the state-of-the-art Sarina Hospital and staff accommodation; it is on the way to being completed. I have met some really great young apprentices working on this build. Planning is underway for the \$250 million expansion of the Mackay Hospital to deliver another 128 extra beds. There are also tenders out for the brand new Moranbah Hospital, the helipad and staff accommodation. The Walkerston bypass is near completion. This road will deliver safety for the township of Walkerston. There is another upgraded link of the pit-to-port route and more locals in jobs, building local infrastructure.

The Mercurius company's study into the development of aviation fuel from bagasse is ready to move to the next phase, which is the stage before commercialisation. It is another industry project backed by the Palaszczuk government. This study has been undertaken at the QUT laboratory at Racecourse Mill. This laboratory will soon undergo a \$10 million upgrade with the support of the Palaszczuk government. We are developing new industries for the whole of Queensland, not just my region.

While I am on my feet, I want to make it very clear that on this side of the House we respect women. I want to talk about the Leader of the Opposition's disgraceful comments not only about me but also about the member for Redlands. It is a privilege to stand here representing our communities—

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

Ms Grace: It wasn't personal.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): I will adjudicate on this, thanks, member for McConnel. I will take some advice.

Ms Grace: She did not mention you; she mentioned the Leader of the Opposition. You cannot take personal offence. Do you still think you are the leader?

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Member, the member has taken personal offence. I ask you to withdraw.

Mrs GILBERT: I did not—

Ms GRACE: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. Just for clarification, honestly, I heard the member mention the Leader of the Opposition, not the member for Nanango. Whether the member for Nanango is confused about her position in this House—I do not know how you take personal offence when it was directed at—

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The member for McConnel will resume her seat. I will take some advice. Before I hear the member for Nanango's point of order, firstly, member for McConnel, I had earlier in this debate given advice and guidance to another member about misusing points of order to attempt to debate and incite debate. You are an experienced member of parliament. I will take your point of order, but I would ask you in future to refrain from that behaviour. Neither I, nor the clerks at the table have heard the references that the point of order relates to. We can go and check the audio if we need to, but we will leave it with the member for Mackay. If you have personally referenced a member, I would ask you to withdraw. If you have not, you can continue the debate. If that does not satisfy the member who took the point of order, there are remedies she can seek in relation to that. Member for Nanango, do you have any further points of order?

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: I will accept your ruling and let's hope the member for Mackay does as well.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member, I do not need your commentary on my rulings. I call the member and, of course, you will accept my rulings. I am Deputy Speaker of the House and in charge of the House at this time. I call the member for Mackay.

Mrs GILBERT: Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. I assumed that the member for Broadwater was the Leader of the Opposition. I withdraw if the member for Nanango has taken—

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Member for Mackay, any withdrawal will be unconditional. Do you withdraw?

Mrs GILBERT: I withdraw.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: You can continue.

Mrs GILBERT: I want to talk about the member for Broadwater's disgraceful comments not only about me but also about the member for Redlands. It is a privilege to stand here representing our communities and Queenslanders in this House—

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Broadwater and member for Miller, cease your quarrelling.

Mrs GILBERT: The member for Broadwater—

Mr Mander interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Pause the clock! Member for Everton, I had just asked two other members to cease their quarrelling and you engaged in the same behaviour. You are warned.

Mrs GILBERT: The member for Broadwater in his position gets a chance to broadcast his message across the media every other day. I accept that the opposition and this side of the House are quite often ideologically opposed, but that does not excuse the gender-based name-calling from the member for Broadwater in this House and in the media. He has now twice used his position of power to call women 'nodding donkeys' and refuses to apologise. He also had a crack at my appearance because I am not tall enough to be seen over the seats, and I cannot see him when I am sitting back in my seat. This is the standard that the LNP has set. By saying nothing, they say that this is the sort of language which is acceptable.

The LNP wonder why they have a problem attracting women to their party. Of course, we know that of their 34 members in this House a mere six are women. When they do attract them, some of them think that they need to behave in an aggressive and abusive way. The member for Whitsunday set up councillors on Mackay Regional Council for abuse from the community with a Facebook post, slamming them over a vote in council. When women councillors received death threats, she did very little to withdraw what she was saying—

(Time expired)


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

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Resume your seat, please, member for Mackay. Your contribution has completed, but I will take the point of order.

Ms CAMM: I take personal offence, but I also think the member is misleading the House and I will be writing to you. I also ask the member to withdraw.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member has taken personal offence. Will you withdraw?

Mrs GILBERT: I withdraw.

 **Hon. MT RYAN** (Morayfield—ALP) (Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services) (5.57 pm): I rise to support the amendment. I am very pleased to stand alongside some outstanding colleagues in this House, on this side of the chamber. I was mentioning this morning how we have the best team and the best government. I have known a lot of members not only in my time here in this chamber but also beforehand, and I have to say that we have the best member for Thuringowa, the best member for Cairns and the best member for Redlands that this chamber has ever seen. I could say a few things about the members for Broadwater and Burdekin; they are far from the best—far from the best!

I want to talk about the best team we have here and the contribution that the members for Cairns, Thuringowa and Redlands make to not only this parliament but also their communities and Queensland. I have a lot to do with them because they are very strong advocates. They are constantly advocating

for their community. However, it is not just words when it comes to them; they deliver. I have to say that I have not met members who are as decent, hardworking and committed as these three members. They are tenacious in their advocacy.

I will outline a few highlights in my portfolio area of the things that they have delivered for their communities. The member for Redlands has been a constant advocate for her community and she has ensured that new police facilities and new police resources are delivered for her community. Two new boats for the Redlands Water Police—well done, member for Redlands! In fact, the member for Redlands' advocacy has also led to increased police numbers on Russell Island and Macleay Island. Through her strong advocacy she has also ensured that her community is getting a new fire station at Mount Cotton Road, and progress is being made.


The member for Redlands is a strong advocate for our volunteers on the water—Marine Rescue. Well done to the member for Redlands. As a result of the member for Redlands' advocacy, the government made an election commitment in her electorate to ensure that we transform marine rescue services in our state—a \$27 million per year commitment to marine rescue volunteers, all because of the member for Redlands.

Let's move on to Cairns and the strong advocate that the member for Cairns is. I run out of words and bits of paper when it comes to the facilities that the member for Cairns has helped deliver for his region. Are honourable members ready? Are they holding their breath? There is the Cairns police facility and the Cairns West police facility—not one but two facilities—the Woree police facility, the Cairns communication centre, the Cairns McLeod Street office, Gordonvale police facility—he supported his neighbour—and new mobile police beats as well as new fire station facilities. That is all because the member for Cairns is a hardworking, committed, decent member who sticks up for his community.

The member for Thuringowa is part of that mighty North Queensland team that we have. He has delivered significant resources for his community such as the Kirwan police facility, which will now also host the new Townsville police academy. That is the academy that those opposite wanted to sell off. Not only has the member for Thuringowa saved it, but he has also ensured the government is committed to a significant upgrade. There are new police facilities, new fire facilities and even the little things like the SES sandbagging machine. It is not just the big things; it is also the little things that the member for Thuringowa delivers for his community.

This is a government for all Queenslanders. We back the front line and we back communities. We are a great team because of the great people in our team. They are hardworking, decent, committed members of parliament who stick up for their communities and deliver for their communities. Queensland is a better place because of them.

Those opposite seek to drag down these hardworking MPs who stick up for their communities—calling them names, dragging down their reputation. These are the representatives of those communities. An attack on these representatives is an attack on those communities because these members stick up for their community. We should be very proud of them and their efforts.

 **Mr JANETZKI** (Toowoomba South—LNP) (6.02 pm): We are coming off the long run and we are coming for the Labor government. We are coming for the Labor government. If the speeches from the members for Mackay, Thuringowa and Redlands are any indication, we are right in the mix. We are coming for the Labor government.

I want to contrast our long-run approach with our candidates—getting out nice and early—with that of those opposite. What we have seen is a measured preselection of good, community-based candidates. What have we seen from those opposite in the last two weeks? We have seen unhinged chaos and a deranged development from those opposite—and transport minister, I am looking at you.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Direct your comments through the chair.

Mr JANETZKI: On this side of the House we preselect people like Rebecca Young, champions in the Redlands. She will elevate politics in the Redlands. I contrast that with the member for Capalaba, because we have all seen what he does under parliamentary privilege in this House. In Thuringowa we just need to mention the name Natalie Marr and the member for Thuringowa incoherently babbles and starts shouting random things in the House.

Then we come to the member for Cairns. Mr Deputy Speaker, I always respect your ruling about correct titles, but I believe the new title for the member for Cairns will be 'Your Worship'.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Pause the clock. I ask you to resume your seat and I am going to take some advice. Member, you are an experienced member. For making a statement that you respect my title and respect my ruling and then completely ignoring that, you can be warned. You may continue your speech.

Mr JANETZKI: Women on this side of the House in our party are outstanding women selected on merit. Let me say this: Liberal National women are coming for Labor men's seats. We have women in the Cairns electorate—and I am thinking of Yolonde now, a humanitarian, a community champion—while the member for Cairns is thinking about leaving. His solutions for crime over the years have been absurd. He has talked about putting up drones or writing letters; they were absurd responses from the member for Cairns.

What the people want is someone from Cairns to talk the talk at home but then come to Brisbane and speak it here. I have never heard the member for Cairns say anything about the fact that people are twice as likely to be the victim of a theft that is not related to a car in Cairns than they are in Brisbane. I have never heard the member for Cairns say that people are three times more likely to have their car stolen if they live in Cairns than if they live in Brisbane. I have never heard the member for Cairns say that people are four times more likely to have their home or business broken into in Cairns than they are in Brisbane. The people of the Far North need someone here in Brisbane fighting for them.

Let me turn briefly to the member for Miller and also the Deputy Premier because it is now becoming a deranged personal attack from those opposite. If the member for Miller worked in any other job apart from the one he has, he would have his phone confiscated. He would have—

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

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: The House will come to order while I hear the point of order.

Mr BAILEY: I find those remarks by the member for Toowoomba South to be personally offensive and I ask that they be withdrawn.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member has found them personally offensive. Will you withdraw?

Mr JANETZKI: I withdraw. Whether it be the patently absurd media release from the Deputy Premier in which he used the state's coat of arms in relation to infrastructure blowouts or whether it is the member for Miller, a minister of the Crown—and I know the minister probably does not like the Crown and does not respect the Crown, but he remains a minister of the Crown and what he does causes offence to everybody who respects it.

As the Leader of the Opposition said yesterday, we do not expect a vote; we will earn it. There is no hubris; there is no entitlement on this side of the House. We will fight for every single vote. We often say that the government that sits opposite is a tiring third-term government. They are not a tiring third-term government; they are a dying third-term government. They know it and the people of Queensland know it, too.

(Time expired)

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

AYES, 49:

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

NOES, 30:

LNP, 30—Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Camm, Crisafulli, Frecklington, Gerber, Hart, Head, Janetzki, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Lister, Mander, McDonald, Mickelberg, Millar, Minnikin, Molhoek, Nicholls, Perrett, Powell, Purdie, Robinson, Rowan, Simpson, Stevens, Watts.

Pairs: Butcher, Weir; Furner, Crandon.

Resolved in the affirmative.

Question put—That the motion, as amended, be agreed to.

AYES, 49:

ALP, 49—Bailey, Boyd, Brown, Bush, Crawford, D'Ath, de Brenni, Dick, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Healy, Hinchliffe, Howard, Hunt, Kelly, A. King, S. King, Lauga, Linard, Lui, Madden, 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.

NOES, 30:

LNP, 30—Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Camm, Crisafulli, Frecklington, Gerber, Hart, Head, Janetzki, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Lister, Mander, McDonald, Mickelberg, Millar, Minnikin, Molhoek, Nicholls, Perrett, Powell, Purdie, Robinson, Rowan, Simpson, Stevens, Watts.

Pairs: Butcher, Weir; Furner, Crandon.

Resolved in the affirmative.

Motion, as agreed—

That this House:

1. notes:
 - (a) the crime statistics publicly available on the QPS website and the strong community safety laws and investment by the Palaszczuk government;
 - (b) the record \$2.9 billion Palaszczuk government police budget to support community safety;
 - (c) the record \$23.6 billion Palaszczuk government health budget to support all Queenslanders;
 - (d) the Satellite Hospitals Program, including a satellite hospital in Redlands to provide health care to Queenslanders closer to home;
 - (e) the \$6.79 billion in concessions to support Queenslanders in the recent Palaszczuk government budget;
 - (f) the LNP opposition are the same, tired old team, with the same plan for Queenslanders—to, cut, sack and sell;
 - (g) that the Leader of the Opposition abandoned North Queensland and replaced the youngest female MP to take the seat of Broadwater;
 - (h) the Leader of the Opposition in a press conference with and regarding the LNP Redlands candidate said, 'you're not going to see a candidate who stands behind the leader like a nodding donkey, I want someone who fights for the area and is a strong voice';
 - (i) the Leader of Opposition in 2021 referred to the member for Mackay in the parliament as a 'nodding donkey';
2. calls on the Leader of the Opposition to withdraw his comments regarding 'nodding donkey' and apologise; and
3. acknowledges and endorses the continued dedicated work for their communities of the members for Cairns, Thuringowa and Redlands.


POLICE POWERS AND RESPONSIBILITIES (JACK'S LAW) AMENDMENT BILL

POLICE SERVICE ADMINISTRATION AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL (NO. 2)

Second Reading (Cognate Debate)

Resumed from p.778, on motion of Mr Ryan—

That the bills be now read a second time.

 **Dr ROBINSON** (Oodgeroo—LNP) (6.15 pm): I rise today to make a brief contribution to the Police Powers and Responsibilities (Jack's Law) Amendment Bill and the Police Service Administration and Other Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 2). Before I get to some of the detail of the bills, I express my deepest sympathies to the Beasleys for their loss and commend them for the action they are taking. It was an honour to meet them in person and as part of the committee process to hear firsthand from them. I encourage everyone to read their contribution in the committee hearings, if they have not already. They are courageous and outstanding individuals who are making a difference. I will talk more about them in a minute.

They, like the Fields, the Leadbetters, the Stanleys—Paul Stanley founded the Matthew Stanley Foundation—the Morcombes and others, have suffered greatly, grieved much and made a conscious decision to try to make a difference both in memory of their loved one and for the sake of others. The Beasleys are in my prayers today. I pray that God will comfort them in their low times and give them strength to keep going and make that difference. Again, I honour them today.

The primary objective of Jack's Law is to extend and expand the trial of handheld scanner provisions to detect unlawfully possessed knives in the Surfers Paradise and Broadbeach safe night precincts. The bill achieves this objective by amending the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000 to extend the expiry date of the scanning provisions to 30 April 2035; to increase the scope of prescribed public areas for scanning to include all 15 safe night precincts and all public transport stations, including public transport vehicles; and to strengthen the criteria that a senior police officer must consider before approving the use of a handheld scanner device.

On 30 April 2021 the Youth Justice and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2021 commenced, enacting amendments to numerous statutes including the PPRA. The PPRA amendments, in part, allowed police to use handheld scanners to detect unlawfully possessed knives in the Surfers Paradise and Broadbeach SNPs as part of a 12-month trial. The primary goal of the trial was to detect and deter the unlawful possession of knives in those areas of the Gold Coast. This would then provide public safety benefits by reducing the opportunity for serious violent offending involving knives and other bladed weapons.

A catalyst for the trial was the tragic murders of two young men who were killed with knives in separate incidents within the Surfers Paradise SNP, in 2019 and 2020. In December 2019, 17-year-old Jack Beasley was fatally stabbed outside a Surfers Paradise convenience store while on a night out with friends. The family subsequently established the Jack Beasley Foundation in a bid to drive change and educate young people about the dangers of carrying knives in public spaces. In September 2020, 27-year-old Raymond Harris was fatally stabbed after an alleged altercation on Cavill Avenue, Surfers Paradise. This bill has been named in honour of Jack and remembers the passing of both Jack and Mr Harris. The wandering trial has been a success, and many knives have been taken off the street. It is the view of the LNP opposition that it should be rolled as soon as possible across the state as quickly as possible by making the scanning provisions permanent.

I have spoken many times in this House on community safety, policing matters and justice bills. As we recently debated, changes made to legislation by the Palaszczuk government in 2015 weakened our laws. As a result of these changes, crime has increased, particularly amongst young repeat offenders. The LNP has consistently advocated on behalf of Queenslanders for the state Labor government to be tougher on crime. The current youth justice system is failing in many regards.

In terms of the Redlands coast, our community has suffered several tragedies in the last 20 years. I have risen in this chamber previously to commend the work of the Matthew Stanley Foundation out of which came the One Punch Can Kill campaign and the Walk Away Chill Out programs which aimed to curb youth violence after the tragic death of Matthew Stanley in 2006 at the age of 15 from a coward's punch in the Redlands coast. The attacker was convicted of manslaughter and committed to juvenile detention. Matthew's father, Paul, established the Matthew Stanley Foundation to prevent such incidences of youth crime continuing to occur. I was very proud in a small way to be able to help Paul at a time when the foundation was particularly active and also to work with former MP for Cleveland Phil Weightman and then minister Kate Jones to support Paul in the work that he was doing in our schools with the Walk Away Chill Out program. I am very proud of that and the bipartisan work together with then minister Kate Jones. I also want to honour former member Mr Phil Weightman for the great work that he did previous to me. At the time that Matthew was killed from a coward's punch, we also had a son of a similar age to him and these things really hit home.


The deaths of Matt Field and Kate Leadbetter and baby Miles on Australia Day 2021 was a tragedy that also rocked the Redlands Coast community. A repeat offending youth with an extensive criminal history stole a car and with it killed three innocent people, stealing their lives from them and leaving behind shattered parents, grandparents, other family members and friends. The Field family have been courageous too in the face of their absolute tragedy. They are joining with thousands of other Queenslanders to call for youth justice reforms, and that fight continues. Russell Field is on the record stating that several recent crimes which resulted in the loss of innocent lives could have been potentially avoided if the government had acted sooner. Mr Field said of the current youth crime laws—

If anybody says they're working, they have rocks in their heads. The sentence should be there as a deterrent, and it needs to be a greater deterrent so kids think first before they commit a crime.

Mr Field also commented that the government needs to be more proactive than reactive.

I had the privilege recently of meeting with Brett and Belinda Beasley and I want to commend them on the work that they are involved in. I met them through the committee hearing process. They are working so that no-one else has to ever go through what they have. I want to honour them for the courage to fight the fight and keep pushing for reforms through the work of the Jack Beasley

Foundation. After working with Paul Stanley and seeing how tough that is to continue to do day in and day out—the hardships, the emotional lows—I want to commend the Beasleys for what they are doing with their campaigns Detect Knives, Save Lives and ‘I live my life ... without a knife’. Spending time with victims—those who have suffered a great loss—is an absolutely sobering experience which deeply affects you. It deepens your resolve to join them to ensure that no-one else has to endure the same loss. We all agree in this House that much more needs to be done and as quickly as possible. I support the bill.

 **Ms BUSH** (Cooper—ALP) (6.24 pm): I rise to make a contribution to what is a really important reform in Queensland. As others have articulated, on 13 December 2019, 17-year-old Jack Beasley was out with mates in Surfers Paradise on the Gold Coast when he was assaulted and suffered a knife wound. Despite the heroic efforts of witnesses and paramedics who arrived on the scene, Jack died as a result of those injuries. This was just three months prior to his 18th birthday. I can imagine the shadow milestones that have occurred for Jack's family since—Jack's birthdays, graduation, watching Jack grow into his career, perhaps travel, fall in love. These are moments that Jack's parents, Brett and Belinda Beasley, will never have. As Belinda conveyed in her victim impact statement, which was relayed in court—

Jack was a son, a brother, a grandson and a great-grandson, a nephew, a cousin and a friend to many.

Jack was cheeky, fun-loving and an easygoing kid that loved life, his family and friends so much.

Jack was kind, so very loyal, protective, compassionate, hardworking and so much more.

No family should ever have to endure this type of grief.

Our government has introduced this legislation so that other families do not have to experience that terrible knock on the door from police. The bill proposes to extend and expand the trial which occurred in the Broadbeach and Surfers Paradise safe night precincts, where Queensland police utilised handheld scanners, or wands, to detect the unlawful possession of knives. This bill extends that trial by two years and expands the locations to include all 15 safe night precincts in Queensland as well as public transport stations and public transport vehicles. The laws are named in honour of Jack and they reflect the heartfelt and sincere efforts of his parents, Brett and Belinda, for Jack's legacy to be a safer community. Since his passing, many of Jack's family and friends have come together. They have created the Jack Beasley Foundation and they have advocated for change, particularly around security and knife detection, to help prevent the senseless violence that is taking place in relation particularly to young people and the carrying of knives.

In response to this advocacy and to the broader concerns around knife crime, the Palaszczuk government initiated a 12-month wandering trial in the Surfers Paradise and Broadbeach safe night precincts, commencing in May 2021. The trial was aimed at reducing the opportunity for serious violent offending involving knives and other serious weapons and as a means of preventing senseless and violent attacks in public spaces. Our government sought an independent review of the Gold Coast trial. This review was conducted at the 12-month mark by Griffith University and it made several recommendations which have been incorporated into Jack's Law. The success of the wandering trial was discussed by Griffith University reviewers during the parliamentary committee inquiry as follows—

... 68 bladed articles were recorded as having been seized by police. ... Of those, 8 were household knives, 59 were other types of knives, and 1 was an axe.

...


Other weapons seized included a baton, 2 hand tools, 5 knuckle dusters, 1 screwdriver, 1 handgun replica, and one other type of unidentified tool.

It is really terrifying to think that these weapons could have otherwise been taken out into a safe night precinct and would have gone undetected or, worse, been used to threaten or inflict violence on other people. The expansion of the trial to all 15 safe night precincts and public transport infrastructure recognises that these are the areas of greater risk in relation to carrying and concealment of knives and weapons. These are locations that attract a really high volume of people. There is a lot of movement. There is a lot of interaction between members of the public, so I think most of us would recognise the value in expanding the trial to those locations.

In relation to the amendments circulated by the member for Burdekin, while I recognise the good intentions of the member in wanting to see this trial made permanent now, I will not be supporting the amendment. I recognise Jack's family in the gallery. I have met with Jack's family and I think it is important and fair that people get to know where we stand on these issues.

Ultimately, we need more evidence on what elements of this law are working and which, if any, are not so that we can adjust and amend them. That was the finding from the independent evaluation. At the public parliamentary committee hearing, Professor Janet Ransley from Griffith University attested to the limitations that were associated with the evidence gathered from the trial when she said that it was only a year. A year seems like a long time for many things but, in terms of detecting the trends in crime and offending, it is not enough. There are natural differences that occur year on year and you cannot be sure that any differences that you are seeing relate to an actual intervention as opposed to those blips that we can see in statistical data. Therefore, I do stand with the member for Burdekin in wanting to see permanent changes that will ensure our streets are safe; however, to deliver that we need to make sure that what we are proposing to make permanent will work and will actually save lives. That is why at this moment I cannot support that amendment.

I wish that we did not need this legislation at all. People, particularly our young people, who are so disproportionately impacted by knife crime, have the right to move about the streets without the threat of violence. I truly hope and believe that expanding this trial will deliver on that. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Ms SIMPSON** (Maroochydore—LNP) (6.30 pm): Firstly, I would like to acknowledge Brett and Belinda Beasley, who are in the gallery, and all of their family. I can only imagine how difficult it is to listen to the debate on such a sensitive issue. I thank them and once again pass on to them our respects for their amazing stoicism, strength and courage in championing these laws and for their continued fight for strengthened laws to help to prevent tragedies such as they and their son, Jack Beasley, experienced. Unfortunately, many others have experience of or been threatened by similar incidents. I acknowledge that the legislation notes the tragic death of Raymond Harris, who died in September 2020 after being stabbed on Cavill Avenue, Surfers Paradise. While the death of Balin Stewart last year on the Sunshine Coast did not occur within a safe night precinct, it was as a result of a knife attack. Balin was stabbed and it is a tragedy that he is no longer with us.

It beggars belief that these types of crimes have been increasing in number and, apparently, in severity. As we have already acknowledged, the LNP supports these laws. We support Jack's Law and the measures to ensure the police have the legal tools to address this terrible scourge in our community as a result of people carrying weapons such as knives and, as has been mentioned, it is more extensive than that. Weapons can be screwdrivers and there are other things that people are carrying. It has become necessary to allow police to wand people with handheld scanners to see if they are carrying weapons. Under this legislation, that will happen in defined areas.

The legislation before the House will expand upon the trial that started on the Gold Coast. The trial will be extended to other safe night precincts, transport hubs and public transport because it has been recognised that this problem occurs beyond just a few areas. I strongly support the expansion of the laws to other safe night precincts and, certainly, our public transport nodes and public transport vehicles. There is a disagreement between the LNP and the government on the expansion of the trial. I respect the member who spoke before me, the member for Cooper. I respect that there are different views about whether the legislation should be trialled for another couple of years or made permanent.

I support my colleague the member for Burdekin and shadow minister for police who has put forward amendments to get rid of the sunset clause in the legislation because we believe there is adequate evidence that the trial significantly assisted with the confiscation of about 242 weapons, I believe, although there may have been more. The legislation also contains a deterrent so we will never know how many people chose not to take weapons into those areas because they now know that there is a real risk of being apprehended and having their weapons confiscated. Why do people have to carry such weapons? If people are not carrying them then they have nothing to fear from the law and from wandering. This is about providing a public safety benefit to our whole community as people will know that these measures are in place and that the police have the tools to do the job. That is why, through the amendment of the member for Burdekin, the LNP proposes to get rid of the sunset clause in the legislation and ensure the expansion continues.

The legislation does contain a review mechanism. I emphasise this for the benefit of members opposite who want to allow the sunset provisions to remain in the legislation. We are talking about a requirement for legislative provisions to be reviewed—that is in our amendments—but we do not want a sunset clause in the legislation. That is very important. It is not uncommon to have legislative review mechanisms without having a sunset clause in the legislation. It would be unfortunate to have

uncertainty around whether or not these laws will be removed from the statute books in two years time because the government is determined to maintain a sunset clause, keeping things uncertain at this time.


I want to talk about the safe night precincts. I am a strong advocate of those precincts. When the LNP was in government we established a means of funding, resourcing and having a structure around the entertainment precincts where alcohol is consumed and people are out for a good time. We want people not only to have a good time in those precincts but also to be safe there and to get home safely. I am very disappointed that the state Labor government has removed dedicated funding for additional police in the safe night precincts. As we see Jack's Law being rolled out and the ongoing need for existing laws to be applied in these areas, we need police to enforce those laws. We need the police to ensure that it is not just black-letter law but that there is a real police presence to ensure the laws can be implemented.

It is really disturbing to hear about a lack of police resources and actual police numbers working the beat in our communities. The police are stretched thin so the removal of additional dedicated funding for police resources in our safe night precincts is a backward step. I really believe that it is a backward step. Often the precincts are hotspots where crimes occur when people are under the influence of liquor and other substances. Unfortunately, often victims of crime are not the ones who went out with the intention of committing a crime but they have fallen victim to other people's excesses. We need to ensure people are safe. Therefore, I urge the government to reverse their decision to remove the dedicated additional funding for police in our safe night precincts as these laws are rolled out.

From talking to local hospitality workers around safe night precincts, I know that they are very keen on these measures. Like the police, they are very keen to see what support will be provided to the police through additional training and resources so that they can do their job. Once again, I urge the government to put back the dedicated funds that they took away so that the police are able to do their job and can keep those areas as safe as possible. This work is never finished. It is ongoing. It is a backward step to remove those resources, particularly at a time when new laws need to be backed up with dedicated funding to ensure those areas are as safe as possible.

I want to talk about the Maroochydore bus station, which is the main public transport hub on the Sunshine Coast. A lot of incidents have occurred there. The police and other security teams are trying their best to keep it as safe as possible. The station is right near the safe night precinct. It will be incorporated in the trial to enable police to wand or scan people who may be carrying knives.

We need to see more police resources. Police are doing a tough job, and we need to ensure that their presence and these laws are not undermined by a lack of resources. We need to ensure there is training, sufficient police numbers and an awareness of how these laws are to be applied. There also needs to be public education about these laws. It will be of huge benefit if we resource the police in the job they are doing as well as ensure that all in our community are aware that carrying knives and weapons on our streets, on public transport or anywhere—even if they are not captured by the wandering laws and are outside these precincts—is not okay. There is no reason for people to be carrying weapons because it already goes to some sense of intent in terms of why they are carrying them. It is not for good. It is time that we stood up against this more effectively across our community.

 **Hon. LM LINARD** (Nudgee—ALP) (Minister for Children and Youth Justice and Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (6.40 pm): I rise to contribute to the debate and speak in support of the Police Powers and Responsibilities (Jack's Law) Amendment Bill and the Police Service Administration and Other Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 2). I thank the members of the Community Support and Services Committee for their examination of both bills and all those who appeared as witnesses during the committee's hearings and inquiries. I note that the committee recommended that both bills be passed.


I turn first to the Police Powers and Responsibilities (Jack's Law) Amendment Bill. As the mother of two young boys, I can only imagine the incredible pain and devastation that Brett and Belinda Beasley have experienced since the death of their son, Jack, after whom this legislation is named, in December 2019. Jack was senselessly assaulted in Surfers Paradise and tragically died just three months short of his 18th birthday. To their credit, Brett, Belinda and many of their family and friends lobbied for changes around security and knife detection to help prevent this senseless violence from taking place in the future. The Palaszczuk government listened and acted, initiating a 12-month wandering trial in the Surfers Paradise and Broadbeach safe night precincts in 2021.

The goal of the trial was to reduce the opportunity for serious violent offending involving knives and other serious weapons to prevent senseless and violent attacks in public spaces. As good governments do, we commissioned Griffith University to undertake an independent review of the wandering trial after 12 months. The review provided a number of recommendations which have been incorporated into Jack's Law, including the expansion of the trial to all safe night precincts as well as to public transport infrastructure. Griffith University's review also recommended a number of additional safeguards for the community which have also been incorporated into this legislation.

There is absolutely no reason for members of the public to be armed with knives and other serious weapons in our community. Many say when a weapon is detected on their person that it is for their own personal safety or use; however, it only takes a split second for carrying a knife or other serious weapon to have a devastating outcome. The bill sends a clear message: if you go armed in public, there is now a greater chance that you will be caught and will face serious consequences. With the exception of those involved in law enforcement, there is never a good reason to go armed in public. It is my hope that this message gets through to everyone in our community. I thank the member for Bonney for kindly introducing me in passing to Belinda and Brett recently. I again acknowledge the incredible fortitude they have shown in advocating for these reforms out of such deep personal loss.

I turn now to the Police Service Administration and Other Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 2). This bill will deliver several operational improvements and efficiencies for the Queensland Police Service and Queensland Fire and Emergency Services. There are a number of different aspects to this bill; however, in the interests of brevity, I will focus on just one. I know that the residents of the Nudgee electorate hold their local police officers—indeed, all sworn QPS officers and the civilian staff who support them—in high esteem. They do a fantastic job in keeping our community safe and, on behalf of my constituents, I cannot thank them enough, particularly our local officers at Hendra and Boondall, for the work that they do. However, with that esteem of course comes the expectation that our police officers will meet the highest possible standards of accountability and trust. There is no place for officers who do the wrong thing in the QPS. Their actions risk tarnishing the reputation of the overwhelming majority of officers who each and every day turn up and keep our community safe and do so by the rules.

The amendments in the bill will enable the immediate dismissal of a police officer or police recruit when they are sentenced to imprisonment by an Australian court for an offence including a suspended imprisonment sentence. This is important to maintain the confidence in our hardworking frontline officers. I again acknowledge the tremendous work of the Queensland Police Service in keeping our community safe. I am confident that the changes being made through these two bills will ensure that our police have the tools they need to do their job and that our community will be the safer for it. I commend the bills to the House.

 **Ms BOLTON** (Noosa—Ind) (6.45 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the two bills being debated cognately. The primary objective of Jack's Law is to expand the trial of handheld scanners to detect unlawfully possessed knives beyond the Surfers Paradise and Broadbeach safe night precincts. The Police Service Administration and Other Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 2) proposes amendments to deliver operational improvements and efficiencies for the Queensland Police Service and Queensland Fire and Emergency Services.

First I turn to Jack's Law, which extends the expiry date on the new scanning laws to 2025 and includes all 15 safe night precincts and public transport stations statewide. The driving force for the original trial was the tragic murder of two young Queenslanders attacked with knives in separate incidents in the Surfers Paradise Safe Night Precinct in 2019 and 2020. As Brett and Belinda Beasley testified at the committee hearings, their son Jack and his friends hopped off the Gold Coast Light Rail and, when walking outside an IGA, were set upon and attacked by five youths, all aged under 18, for no reason at all. As they said, sitting in the hospital room that night was just the beginning of their nightmare—not knowing if Jack was going to make it and then the cardiac surgeon walking into the room and saying those two words: 'I'm sorry'. No parent should ever go through this. Then in September 2020, 27-year-old Raymond Harris was fatally stabbed in Surfers Paradise—again, for no reason.

In the committee's review of this legislation several issues were raised, with two views at different ends of the spectrum. First, the Townsville City Council stated that the criteria used for handheld scanners would hamstring the police's ability to keep the public safe. Alternatively, the Queensland Council for Civil Liberties said that increased use of handheld scanners for searches is an invasion of privacy and could cause an individual a deal of embarrassment. However, as the department stated, the use of a handheld scanner is not a search as it is slowly passed over the person in order to detect

any metal objects and they are not touched by police or the scanner. The shortfall of this bill is that it only relates to the 15 safe night precincts when it should be expanded to all of Queensland. As Brett Beasley said, Jack's Law is about child safety and about keeping all of our kids and the wider community safe.

I have spoken in this chamber previously about the issues Noosa has experienced since lockdowns ended—visiting youths rampaging in Hastings Street, jumping on cars and terrorising all. I have spoken about the trashing of our main beach last New Year, and I will speak later tonight on the recent reports of an assault, which included a knife, of a young lass. I have made inquiries via two estimates hearings as to what happened to the alcohol fuelled violence funding to pay for the overtime for our police at peak periods that disappeared and which my community has been left to fund. I do not want a death in my electorate or anywhere in Queensland as a result of bills that do not accommodate the indicators that this could happen outside of safe night precincts.


I turn to the Police Service Administration and Other Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 2). The Crime and Corruption Commission submitted that exceptions to the one-year period for commencing disciplinary proceedings should be expanded to include where the officer is being investigated by the CCC and that their investigation should not be compromised to meet arbitrary time frames. The Queensland Police Service responded that the matter raised by the CCC was not considered as it is beyond the scope of the bill. My question is: why does a bill that addresses the reasons to extend the time frame for disciplinary proceedings not consider other very relevant stakeholders such as the CCC? Wouldn't a proper process have involved them? The Department of Justice and Attorney-General has responsibility across the justice system, including for independent justice bodies such as the CCC or the DPP. They are well placed to ensure an effective policy development process that consulted with all aspects and stakeholders of the justice system.

While the bill should make improvements in a number of areas, so much more needs to be done. In a recent survey of Noosa residents, the major issue they raised was a lack of visible presence or alternatives such as drones to reduce the ongoing dangerous behaviours and noncompliance, whether on the roads, beaches or rivers. In addition to the alcohol fuelled violence I spoke of earlier, there are rollovers every other weekend on the Noosa North Shore, unmanageable visitor numbers and ongoing heavy haulage issues. That is just the tip of what my community is experiencing.

This is not acceptable. There needs to be clarity around how and when the extra 1,400 police will be actioned, where they will be located and when further drones and ICT capabilities are to be deployed. Our police and our other frontliners do an incredible job and often the thanks do not go their way and they should. They do what they can with what they have. However, they need the government to provide the tools, including legislation.

I thank the committee for their work on these bills as well as the secretariat in supporting them, and I thank the submitters who made contributions in both inquiries. Deep gratitude goes to Brett and Belinda Beasley for their ongoing work. Their strength is truly amazing. Again, I express our sorrow for the pain and horror they, the Harris family and all families of murder victims have gone and go through.

Hence why I will continue fighting to make sure that the current review into victims' rights by the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee is appropriated the time needed to do the job properly and not relegated, as it has been, to a standard eight weeks. This is not doing justice in any way for victims or their families and it needs to be granted an extension.

 **Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for Education, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing) (6.51 pm): I rise to speak in support of the two bills before the House being dealt with in this cognate debate. I join others in this House in expressing the deep regret and sorrow we have for all of those people mentioned in this House who have been victims of terrible stabbing crimes involving knives and have lost their lives. In particular I mention Brett and Belinda Beasley and their family. Their son Jack was the victim of a terrible knife attack in 2019. I could not think of a more appropriate title for this bill than Jack's Law.

I mix in a fairly wide circle. In my electorate of McConnel I have some of the biggest safe night precincts and transport stations in Queensland. A lot of people go through these stations and safe night precincts. All I can say is how much I welcome the two-year extension of the trial of scanning for handheld weapons in this bill. These are fundamentally new laws. I think we have moved in the right direction. The trial will be extended to the 15 safe night precincts and transport stations where a lot of incidents occur. It also gives senior police officers the authority to scan for knives if there are other incidents that have happened in six months.

I think we need to have a look at how this works. Yes, we can say that it has been successful. As I said, I move in a large circle of friends and family and I do not know anyone who walks around carrying a weapon. Police officers have found knives, axes and knuckledusters. I do not know anybody who walks around with those. We can only assume when people are in these safe night precincts—the biggest one being Fortitude Valley; the others in my electorate being the city and Petrie Terrace/Caxton Street—and have these weapons that they want to use them at the some point. If people do not carry them they cannot injure somebody, whether they are retaliating, whether they have been provoked or whether they are picking the fight or whatever may happen. If they have them on their body they must think that at some stage they are going to use them, whether it is to protect themselves or whatever. I have no idea.

I have lived in inner-city Brisbane all my life. I live in Fortitude Valley now and I have lived in New Farm. I grew up in Spring Hill when Spring Hill was not the Spring Hill of today. It was a very difficult area to grow up in in the 1960s. I did not think that I needed to walk around with a concealed weapon for my protection. I would never have thought about it.

If these laws remove one weapon from somebody they are laws that this House is justified to pass. As other members in this House have said, hundreds of these weapons have been found and confiscated. To think that someone goes out for a good night out in a safe night precinct—whether on the Gold Coast, Sunshine Coast or wherever—and they are walking around with an axe, something is desperately wrong with their thinking. They should not have the right to walk around like that.

I know the committee recommended that these bills be passed. That is right. The two-year extension to have a look at how they work, see whether the protections we have put in are enough and make sure we are not targeting certain people, because often these things can go that way, is appropriate. Madam Deputy Speaker, I know you are a very proud Torres Strait Islander woman. You would not want First Nations people, migrant groups or other young people from other areas to be the target of a lot of this wandering. The trial will hopefully look at those things and determine whether or not what we intended as legislators in this parliament is actually working. The review of exactly what has happened, the reporting, the authorising that needs to be done and the protections where there is evidence and an area is declared a wandering area is a step in right direction.

In my electorate I have some fantastic service providers. In particular, I pay tribute to ChaplainWatch. I know this will make their job easier. ChaplainWatch is now not just in Brisbane; it has extended to the Sunshine Coast, Rockhampton, Bundaberg and Gladstone. It is funded to the tune of hundreds of thousands of dollars by the Queensland government to carry out this very important work. I pay tribute to Lance Mergard, the founder and senior chaplain at ChaplainWatch; Jesse Webb, the CEO; and Ross Howe, the president and chair. They do an amazing job. I know that these laws will be welcomed by them. They can go and assist young people with the knowledge that if there is any suspicion then wandering can take place. It puts them in a much safer environment.

At the end of the day, it does happen a lot in our safe night precincts. We want to go out for a good time. We do not want to go out and be injured. I am looking forward to meeting Brett and Belinda Beasley tomorrow. I have an appointment with them. I want to talk with them about how we can educate young people better in that space. My heart goes out to them and all the other families whose loved ones have been the victims of terrible weapons crimes. They were out for a good night and they ended up getting stabbed and losing their life. I could not think of anything more horrific.

Anything we can do to give police those powers we should do, but then we need to have a look at them properly. Are they really working the way we want? I want to hear from ChaplainWatch after the two-year trial about whether there are ways we can make the system better. Are there things that they think we can improve? Although I know an amendment will be moved, I will not be supporting it because I think what we have done here, the way we travelling and the committee's recommendation are the right way to go.

At the end of the day, this is all about keeping the public safe all over Queensland. This is all about sending the strong message: do not carry these weapons. They will be found and they will be confiscated. Go out, have a good time and enjoy yourself, but leave your weapons at home because if we find them, we will take action. You will be caught and you will be dealt with. That is what these laws are really all about.

I thank the committee and the minister for their work. I think this is a step in the right direction. I will certainly be welcoming them in my electorate of McConnel, which has one of the biggest safe night precincts in the state. I know that organisations like ChaplainWatch will welcome them as well. I commend the bills to the House.

Debate, on motion of Ms Grace, adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT

Gladfield Driver Reviver; Cunninghams Gap



Mr LISTER (Southern Downs—LNP) (7.00 pm): I rise to take this opportunity to pay tribute to the volunteers of the Gladfield driver reviver.

Mr Minnikin: Hear, hear!

Mr LISTER: I take that interjection from my old friend the member for Chatsworth, our shadow transport minister. I acknowledge the presence of the transport minister in the House. He knows I am disappointed about the outcome and the decision to close down the driver reviver stop on the Gladfield TMR site, but I would like to focus on the volunteers who for long decades have provided a cup of tea and a bit of a yarn to weary travellers during the day and night, particularly during holiday periods. We will never know how many lives have been saved, but I would bet a penny to a pound that it is more than one. That in itself is no small thing. I pay tribute to John Newley and John Griffith particularly as the gentlemen who have done the coordination of the many volunteers from various community groups such as Lions and Rotary and others who have manned the driver reviver at Gladfield. They can be very proud of what they have done over the years, and on behalf of a grateful community I would like to salute them.

The one other thing I would like to raise is the coming closure of Cunninghams Gap, which is a vital road into my electorate. Again I acknowledge the presence of the minister here and I would like to thank him for allowing me to have a briefing from his department in due course about that. I do gratefully acknowledge the federal and state governments for funding the works that will be going on at Cunninghams Gap, particularly the stabilisation of the rock face that overhangs that particular road by about 100 metres. We certainly do not want to see a landslip there that could kill people or block the road for months or years.

These works are necessary, but I do understand and sympathise with the many people in the community who will be disadvantaged during the period of the roadworks, including businesses such as the Fisher Park Road House, Bestbrook Mountain Farmstay, Merivale Pub and Gap Creek Moto, which will be disadvantaged along with some tourism operators and those who use the road such as the transport industry. I understand that the department has been consulting with the Queensland Trucking Association and others regarding the best way to press on with those particular roadworks involving notified opening of the road and perhaps closure at certain times of the day. I applaud that. That is probably the best way for the community to adapt to the issue. I thank the community for their engagement with me on this and I thank the department.

Powell, Mr N, OAM



Hon. YM D'ATH (Redcliffe—ALP) (Minister for Health and Ambulance Services) (7.03 pm): I rise to acknowledge the contribution of Noel Powell OAM and his passing. I want to pass on my sincere condolences to Noel's family. Noel was a man who was loved by his community and, more importantly, by his family. Noel Powell OAM was born in 1946 and passed away at the age of 76. He was the sixth of nine children who grew up in a two-bedroom house in Kedron with a sleep-out—the house that his mother lived in until she passed away at the age of 101 years.

Noel attended Kedron State School, where he admitted that he was not the greatest or most interested scholar. He finished his schooling at the end of grade 6 and went out and got a full-time job. Despite only going to grade 6, until the very end he prided himself on never needing to use a calculator and would be able to quickly add or subtract using a piece of paper and a pen that he was never without.

In 1968 Noel met the love of his life Judy, and they went on to share 54 years of marriage where they did everything together. Noel came from very humble beginnings yet still knew the importance of courtesy, manners, grooming, hard work, being a provider and protector, and to always give back. Above everything else, it was family first. 'Leave the woodpile higher for the next person' was his

mantra. His words were always backed up by his actions. Despite a short stint when he was diagnosed with motor neuron disease, he never spent a day in hospital and was able to say goodbye to all of his friends and family on his terms.

Noel's favourite quote was, 'Community service and helping others is the rent we pay for the space we occupy on earth.' We believe he well and truly paid his rent many times over. There is no doubt that Noel had a huge heart that took in all of the Redcliffe peninsula. He loved his community and was driven to contribute to making it even better. Noel's service to the community through his work as a justice of the peace, member of the Rotary Club of Redcliffe City, chairman of the Redcliffe PCYC, Deputy Chairman of Regional Development Australia Moreton Bay, chairman of the Redcliffe City Council Community Plan Committee, and member of the committee that established the first Neighbourhood Watch group in Queensland shows a man not only dedicated to serving his community but also determined to change it for the better. He was a Paul Harris Fellow for Service holder, life member of the Redcliffe Leagues Club, Redcliffe Citizen of the Year, and was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia in 2015.

I want to thank Noel for his service. I also want to thank the Powell family: his wife Judy, sons Greg and Darren and his grandchildren for sharing Noel with us, for the culmination of many hours, days, weeks, months and years that he was not home because he was out making a difference for our community. I hope the family can take solace from knowing that Noel's dedication and service to his community is not likely to ever be repeated. His legacy will live on and his light will never be dulled. Noel leaves behind the foundations for a brighter future built on his great deeds of the past. Rest in peace, Noel Powell.

Hanlon, Ms S



Dr ROBINSON (Oodgeroo—LNP) (7.06 pm): I rise, like the Speaker this morning, to honour Susan Hanlon, electorate officer of the Oodgeroo electorate office, for reaching the incredible milestone of 50 years of service as an employee of the Queensland parliament, working first in the library, then in other parliamentary roles, then over 30 years in the Redlands and Cleveland-Oodgeroo electorate offices as electorate officer.

In her late teen years Sue McCulloch was appointed to the position of stenographer in the parliamentary library on 26 March 1973. Sir Joh had been premier for five years at the time and Sue has a lot of great memories from those days. Once when coming to parliament Sue saw the gardeners cutting down freshly blooming flowers to make way for a new season of planting. Sir Joh was having breakfast with Lady Flo and their son John at the time. Seeing Sue looking quite upset, he asked what was wrong. In learning that it was about the gardens, Sir Joh is said to have hastily made his way to the gardeners and berated them for cutting down freshly blooming flowers. By lunchtime Sue had a big bouquet of those same flowers on her desk.

In those days electorate officer positions had not yet been established, and it was the duty of the parliamentary library team to help members with their research during sitting weeks. With the old typewriters not being able to keep up with the level of work required, Sue was amongst the first to receive a brand new electric typewriter—much to the envy of some of her other colleagues. Sue has often referred to the long sitting hours that members and staff endured. More often than not parliament would sit into the early hours of the morning. In some cases she would finish work at 3 am and have to come back at 9 am to start the next shift.

Sue and her husband Greg have two boys, Aaron and Nathan. As the family came along she moved out as an electorate officer to the Redlands and did a couple of stints back and forward with the parliament before taking up the role of the electorate officer in the Cleveland, now Oodgeroo, electorate office.

As there was only one staff member provided to members at the time, Sue would often work long hours and usually did not have time for lunch. For over 30 years, she has worked as EO with three MPs—Darryl Briskey, Phil Weightman and me. At each point of change, incoming members have snapped her up and retained her valuable services for the electorate's sake. Anyone who has had the privilege of working with Sue knows she works hard, diligently and with great depth of knowledge and experience. She cares for the constituents so much that I often refer to her as the pastor of the region. I want to congratulate Sue for her 50 years of sacrificial service to the Redlands Coast and Queensland, and especially for the last 14 years and several elections putting up with me.

Rotary Club of Archerfield; World Arts and Multi-Culture Inc.



Hon. LM ENOCH (Algester—ALP) (Minister for Communities and Housing, Minister for Digital Economy and Minister for the Arts) (7.09 pm): Last weekend Rotary celebrated 100 years in the state of Queensland, and I congratulate this hardworking organisation on such an incredible achievement. In my electorate of Algester, we have a dedicated and compassionate group of individuals who form the Rotary Club of Archerfield. The work of this group is second to none. They are dedicated to building relationships, honouring diversity and enhancing our communities.

Earlier this year I attended a beautiful citizenship ceremony hosted by the Rotary Club of Archerfield. As we embraced people taking up citizenship, it was fitting that this organisation—which is so dedicated to the service of others—would extend that spirit to our newest community members. I am sure everyone in this House can agree that multiculturalism is one of our greatest strengths and something every Australian can take pride in, so it was wonderful to see the Rotary Club of Archerfield provide an outlet for cultural expression from the Imanzi cultural group as well as Indonesian dance performers at that citizenship event.

The work of the Rotary Club of Archerfield does not end there. I also recently attended a wonderful morning tea that was hosted in support of cancer patients, survivors and carers. There I met Juliana Sweeney, an amazing young Rotary member. Having come from Brazil on a Rotary exchange program as a young student, Juliana was welcomed by the Rotary Club of Archerfield's very own Terry and Camilla Barker. Juliana now lives with her family here in Queensland, writing children's books through her business BeeLingwee and translating them into various languages. Her passion for inclusivity is palpable and indeed a reflection of the welcoming nature of the Rotary Club as a whole.

Whether it is community events or just a cuppa with friends, the Rotary Club of Archerfield has proven to be a supportive, humanitarian focused organisation that is committed to supporting others. I thank them for all that they are doing in the Algester electorate, and I look forward to the next 100 years of Rotary in Queensland.

Whilst I am on my feet, I want to acknowledge another organisation that does an amazing amount of work and is celebrating 20 years this year—that is, WAMCI, the World Arts and Multi-Culture Inc. For the last 20 years, they have been encouraging multiculturalism and artistic expression through the sharing of art, music and dance. Recently, a number of us, including the member for Toohey, attended their Harmony Day celebrations which was an incredible success, as it is every year. I want to acknowledge Melody Chen, who is the founding president and honorary life president of WAMCI. She is a good friend of many of us in this House and continues to be a huge advocate for WAMCI and for multiculturalism across our community. I also want to acknowledge the current president, Ms Peggy Wu, who oversaw a fantastic event just recently.

Toowoomba, Roads




Mr WATTS (Toowoomba North—LNP) (7.12 pm): I rise to talk about a petition that is running to get a road from Highfields, one of the fastest-growing areas in regional Queensland, into the city of Toowoomba. The current road we have is the New England Highway and it is coming under increasing pressure. As it comes into town, it turns into Ruthven Street. There are many junctions that have been upgraded over the years. Jellicoe Street, where my office is, and North Street have both been upgraded to try to deal with the increasing traffic coming through. Put simply, Ruthven Street is approaching a point where it will not cope well. People are waiting for five or six changes of traffic lights in the morning. I encourage the people of Highfields who are trying to go north-south and get into the CBD to sign the petition. I also encourage people in the other suburbs, such as Mount Lofty, East Toowoomba, Rockville and Harlaxton, to sign the petition so they can travel east-west because that traffic intersects and causes a great problem.

I am not saying that we should necessarily build and open the road next week. What I am saying is that we need to gazette a path. Everybody knows that land release is critical for the growth of Queensland, and in and around Highfields there is more and more land being released. If we do not identify the corridor, gazette this road and put a decent long-term plan in place to make sure we know what the trigger points are on the existing New England Highway and build a north-south corridor that comes from Cabarlah through to Westbrook and eventually goes through Finnie and hooks back up with the New England Highway, then we are creating a real problem with traffic congestion into the future in the north-south direction for the whole city of Toowoomba.

I encourage people to look at the petition. I encourage the minister to reference the petition. I know the department are doing work in this area and I thank them for that. There are lots of people who are concerned about where this corridor might go and what we might have to do. I think we all need to sit down with calm heads and work out where we want to put this road and what the trigger points are for this road and get it gazetted and ready to be built and funded when the business case stacks up.

It is a really sensible, long-term approach. I have been listening to the people of the community and they are telling me that they need this solution going forward. One of the schools on the highway has been told to put a set of traffic lights in so their students can drive out safely across a four-lane highway, just after they have passed their licence. It is \$20 million. One of the ways to help that is to alleviate some of the pressure on this north-south corridor. I encourage everybody in Toowoomba to sign this petition. I encourage the minister to take a good look at this option. Let us get it gazetted, let us get it funded and let us get it built.

Cost of Living; Waterford Electorate, Easter


 **Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, Minister for Women and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence) (7.15 pm): I often speak about how proud I am to represent the people of Waterford, but I am also immensely proud, as you know, Madam Deputy Speaker Lui, to be the ministerial champion for the Torres Strait. As the world has emerged from COVID and endured the economic impacts of Putin's brutal war in Ukraine, we know that cost of living has been front and centre in the minds of Queensland families from my electorate of Waterford right up to Cape York and the Torres Strait. That is why I, along with some of my ministerial colleagues, travelled to the Torres Strait last week for the cost-of-living summit to hear firsthand from locals about the challenges they face.

To put it in context, when I go to my local Coles in Meadowbrook, the cost of a tub of butter is \$6.50. On Thursday Island residents are paying nearly \$10 for the same product. We heard about the skyrocketing fuel, freight and power prices, the need for more housing upgrades and marine infrastructure challenges. Mayor Yen Loban said, 'We only want what other Queenslanders take for granted,' and I agree. That is why we have delivered \$80 million in joint federal and state funding for marine infrastructure, \$10 million for new houses in the region, \$3 million to help families reduce power usage, and millions more in support, but we know there is more to do. I want to thank the member for Cook for her relentless advocacy for her electorate, and I look forward to continuing the work to support her constituents.

In my own electorate, I have been focusing on getting more information out to families about how our government is helping tackle the cost-of-living pressures. The energy and gas rebate which will save eligible families \$372 per year is just one of a number of savings available to families. We also have programs like Kindy for All that can save families up to \$3,500 per year on childcare costs. Whether it is rego concessions, free TAFE or FairPlay sports vouchers, our government is investing in Queenslanders.

Finally, to celebrate the start of the school holidays and the Easter break, I will be hosting the inaugural Waterford community Easter egg hunt this Saturday. We are expecting a large turnout. Registrations have already filled up, with over 100 families coming along. We have even managed to lock in a visit from the Easter bunny. I would like to thank Joanna and the staff at Happy House Kindergarten and Early Learning Centre for offering to help out and the team at my Waterford electorate office, Anthony, Ben and Emma. It will be a wonderful day and I look forward to spending it with the amazing parents and children of my community.

Townsville Enterprise

 **Mr DAMETTO** (Hinchinbrook—KAP) (7.18 pm): I think every minister and shadow minister in the House would know that North Queensland is being represented right here in parliament this week with the Townsville Enterprise delegation meeting with shadow ministers and ministers to talk about the projects they think are necessary to unlock the wealth of the north. I have to congratulate the Townsville Enterprise team and the regional mayors for coming down here to have their voices heard. It makes me very proud to stand in the House tonight to add support to what they are asking for in regional Queensland.

Last week they were in Canberra talking to the federal Labor Party about their needs coming into the federal budget. The things that they are asking for as they come into the next state budget involve a number of projects in North Queensland that we are chasing some funding for to help out the

Hinchinbrook electorate: the RegenAqua project, the Paluma to Wallaman Falls Trails project, the CopperString project, workforce and skills attraction in North Queensland to do these jobs, and also advances in aquaculture.

The RegenAqua project is a joint partnership with James Cook University and involves world-leading technology that organically converts waste and sewerage water to clean, healthy, reusable water. Hinchinbrook is chasing \$9 million to make sure that this project goes through to fruition. It is a drop in the ocean—pun intended—to make sure that the water we are releasing from our sewerage treatment plants is of a high quality as it goes out to the Great Barrier Reef.

The Paluma to Wallaman Trails is an Indigenous project backed and driven by the Warrgamay and GuGu Badhun tribes, the traditional owner groups in our region. It crosses through the Townsville and Charters Towers footprint as well as the Hinchinbrook Shire Council footprint. It has been described as a spiritual journey 60,000 years in the making by the TOs in this area. It will provide a unique opportunity of 127 kilometres of walking trail from Paluma to Wallaman Falls which is incredible when it comes to driving ecotourism.

Also, while the mayors in the Townsville Enterprise delegation have been down here this week, they have been chasing bipartisan support for the CopperString project to ensure that it does not matter who is in government moving forward over the next 10 years. The project will ensure that the North West Minerals Province has an opportunity to access cheap electricity from the grid. They also make sure that the renewable projects have longevity. We are also chasing money for a skills force in North Queensland to deliver on these jobs, and also water security and housing projects. While I am on my feet, I would like to table this document which has been passed around outlining opportunities for Townsville, North Queensland and the regions.

Tabled paper: Document, dated March 2023, titled 'Townsville Enterprise—Opportunity: Townsville North Queensland: Major economic development initiatives and investment opportunities, Edition 06' [\[404\]](#).

Boyd-Boland, Father J, OFM; Out, Mr R



Mr SULLIVAN (Stafford—ALP) (7.21 pm): It is with great sadness that I rise to offer my humble contribution to honour the lives of two extraordinary men in our Kedron community. Father John Boyd-Boland OFM and Mr Robert 'Bob' Out passed away remarkably just four days from each other. They were icons of our community and they will leave a huge hole in our collective life. Of course, our first thoughts are for their immediate and extended families, and my thoughts are with them at this difficult time.

Collectively, they represent more than 25 years of leading Padua College and many more years of service beyond that. Father John led the college from 1990 to 2000. Bob was vice-rector from 1987 to 2000 and became the first lay rector of the school in 2001. Serving until 2016, he became the school's longest serving rector. I had the luck of being taught by both over my years at the school and I had the privilege of working closely with them in my senior year.


Father John continued to serve the community as parish priest and then school chaplain. He inspired generations of north siders across his roles. He brought great intellectual rigour to all of his roles. He led by example, whether keeping us honest at cross-country training or challenging us in the classroom to leading the strategic direction of the school. That, of course, included the redevelopment of the St Francis Hall, the establishment of the modern house system and reform of the pastoral care model, and he was an integral part of the formation and success of the AIC.

Rather than reflect on the bricks and mortar he left behind, what is more telling is the generations of students, staff and community members that FJ inspired over so many years. He had a huge intellect and was a wonderful orator, always probing and challenging, which was always matched with the humility, the decency and the values of social justice that underpinned his hard work. Thank you to those closest to him who made sure in his final months and days that he was surrounded by care and love—people who had been taught by him, taught with him, led with him and who became Father John's other family.

To Bob's family—Julianne, Michael, Justin, Dan and their extended families—I offer my sincere condolences. Bob was a great classroom teacher, accomplished coach, deputy rector as I knew him and then rector. He was affectionately referred to as 'Bob the Builder' because under his leadership the school footprint is almost unrecognisable to that of my day. I also recognise the impact on the Mount Alvernia and St Anthony's communities, obviously co-located, and both men had an impact on all three schools and the combined Franciscan identity in Kedron.

In conclusion, none of us in this place get here alone. As an MP, I want to be one to remember where I come from. We all stand on the shoulders of those who have gone before us. For me, that includes the education, mentoring and friendship I received from these two legends. I stand on the shoulders of giants. Vale, FJ. Vale, Bob. You will be missed.

Noosa Electorate, Youth Crime


 **Ms BOLTON** (Noosa—Ind) (7.24 pm): Noosa is horrified and deeply angered by the reported vicious assault on a young lass by three girls under 14 years old which was broadcast through social media. Our hearts go out to this lass and her family, and I thank those who have provided support to them during this time. However, I ask those who are inciting racial hatred and vilification to stop right now. Two or more wrongs do not make a right, and this is not how our community responds to trauma. Leave this matter to the police and courts. Having just debated the need for greater deterrence, intervention and early identifications in the Strengthening Community Safety Bill last sitting, in frustration I say again that what is happening is a result of our failings as a society and as MPs.

Reports were that those charged had been involved in a number of prior incidents. Why are we waiting until children are before the courts before any intervention is activated? Intervention must include prevention, and that takes identification of behaviours that there is something occurring in a young person's life such as violence or maltreatment or the potential to do harm. Even though an audit is being done by the Auditor-General on the performance of youth offender diversion programs, it may not look into when intervention should take place.

An avenue for this identification and intervention is school, yet the Respectful Relationships Education Program is not mandatory in the curriculum. We dedicate up to an hour each week in state schools for religious instruction with 60 per cent of children not attending. Does it not make sense to repurpose this time to a mandatory, whole-of-schooling life program that covers all aspects of relationships and behaviours, including that of inclusivity to encompass religions and cultures? We learnt through efforts to recycle that by introducing change behaviour at schools, children take that back into their homes. This gives opportunity to influence households that may be contributing to violence in our children and an avenue for early identification and intervention of those being abused or abusing.

We need a predictive culture across government. Earlier this month I wrote to the Public Service Commissioner about who ultimately is responsible for this. The reality is that our frontline workers have been reporting what is happening on the ground for years, whether on housing shortages or children of concern, and yet nothing was done. We need to know why. We know police, government agencies and teachers do what they can. Now we need a full analysis of what they need, where any blockages are and what everyone else can do, including us as neighbours and friends, to create greater safety for our children and our communities.

Redland City

 **Mr BROWN** (Capalaba—ALP) (7.27 pm): I have wonderful news from the *Redland City Bulletin*. Mayor Karen Williams pledges to be the champion of the next generation as she pushes for her re-election in 2024. Can you believe it? This tired LNP councillor of 20 years who is best known for her drink-driving incidents is supposedly going to be the voice of the next generation. In this wonderful article which I will table soon are grandeurs of delusion, to say the least. She goes on to talk about the state of politics in the Redlands. I will read out the quote: 'I am not quite there yet. I worked hard to manage the toxicity of politics in our city.' I do note the word 'manage' does not refer to up or down. What I will relay soon is how she is contributing to the toxicity in Redlands politics. I table the article:

Tabled paper: Article from the *Redland City Bulletin*, dated 27 March 2023, titled 'Mayor Karen Williams pledges to champion next generation as she pushes for re-election in 2024' [\[406\]](#).

Since the incident, the mayor has not been able to have her own Facebook page—it has been shut down ever since—but what has started up is a fake Facebook page called 'Redland City Council Election 2024: Have your say'. This page started out as impartial and tried to be for both sides, but it has recently gone on the attack, attacking fellow councillors who do not often agree with Mayor Williams, council candidates who are running against them, but also the member for Redlands and me. It has gone to the extent of even attacking one of my staff members just because he is a former councillor. This page was started by Julie West.

Mr Mander interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Lui): Member for Everton, you are on a warning. I will ask you to leave the chamber.

Whereupon the honourable member for Everton withdrew from the chamber at 7.29 pm.

Mr BROWN: This group was started by Julie West. Guess who was the first member added to the group? It was Karen Williams's personal profile. It is one thing to be added to it, but guess what Karen did then. She invited her whole network to join this page. Person after person joined, and guess who else invited their crowd to it. It was the new candidate for Redlands, Rebecca Young, hiding behind fake pages to do the dirty work.

Honourable members will see in this article she has a campaign slogan 'pledgenot2sledge'. Karen Williams tries to hide behind this fake pledge not to sledge, but she gets someone else to do her dirty work. I will table the screenshots that show that Karen Williams is behind this group.

Tabled paper: Document, undated, titled 'Redland City Council Election 2024 Have Your Say' [\[405\]](#).

Ms Simpson interjected.

Mr BROWN: The opposition do not like it because I call it out all the time. It is their typical tactics down there. Laming did it as well, running fake pages which he admitted to. It is the same old—

Mr POWELL: Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The member for Kurwongbah continued to interject from another seat. He may have moved now, but he was interjecting from another seat.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Members, I remind you to please be in your seat if you want to interject.

Mr BROWN: I say to the mayor: pick up the phone to Julie West and get this fake page deleted; stop attacking your opposition through fake pages.

The House adjourned at 7.31 pm.

ATTENDANCE

Andrew, Bailey, Bates, Bennett, Berkman, Bleijie, Bolton, Boothman, Boyd, Brown, Bush, Camm, Crandon, Crawford, Crisafulli, D'Ath, Dametto, de Brenni, Dick, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Frecklington, Furner, Gerber, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Hart, Head, Healy, Hinchliffe, Howard, Hunt, Janetzki, Katter, Kelly, King A, King S, Knuth, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Lauga, Leahy, Linard, Lister, Lui, MacMahon, Madden, Mander, Martin, McCallum, McDonald, McMahon, McMillan, Mellish, Mickelberg, Miles, Millar, Minnikin, Molhoek, Mullen, Nicholls, O'Connor, O'Rourke, Palaszcuk, Pease, Perrett, Pitt, Powell, Power, Pugh, Purdie, Richards, Robinson, Rowan, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Scanlon, Simpson, Skelton, Smith, Stevens, Stewart, Sullivan, Tantari, Walker, Watts, Whiting