



# RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

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## FIRST SESSION OF THE FIFTY-SEVENTH PARLIAMENT

### Wednesday, 19 April 2023

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## WEDNESDAY, 19 APRIL 2023

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The Legislative Assembly met at 9.30 am.

Mr Acting Speaker (Hon. Joe Kelly, Greenslopes) read prayers and took the chair.



**Mr ACTING 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.

### ACTING SPEAKER'S STATEMENTS

#### Parliamentary Friends of the Olympic and Paralympic Movements in Queensland



**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Honourable members, this evening the Parliamentary Friends of the Olympic and Paralympic Movements in Queensland will host a reception at Parliament House to promote the Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games amongst our neighbours in the Pacific and the Queensland Consular Corps, spreading the Olympic and Paralympic spirit and excitement globally. The event will be co-hosted by the member for Everton and me as co-chairs of the parliamentary friends group. We will be joined by the Premier, Leader of the Opposition and member for Cook as well as Olympic and Paralympic officials and special guests. I would strongly encourage all members who are available to attend and learn more not only about the preparation for the games but also the decade of diplomacy that Queensland will undertake across our wider region to ensure the games are both inclusive and a great success for our state. The event commences at 6.45 pm in the Premier's and Speaker's halls.

#### School Group Tours



**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I wish to advise that we will be visited in the gallery this morning by students and teachers from Livingstone Christian College in the electorate of Coomera and Pine Rivers State High School in the electorate of Pine Rivers.

### PETITION

The Clerk presented the following paper petition, lodged by the honourable member indicated—

#### Woodgate, Boat Ramp

**Mr Bennett**, from 580 petitioners, requesting the House to commence construction of the already-identified Queensland State Government Priority 1 Project for Walkers Point, Woodgate boat ramp [\[507\]](#).

Petition received.

### TABLED PAPER

#### REPORT BY THE CLERK

The following report was tabled by the Clerk—

[506](#) 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—

#### Local Government Electoral and Other Legislation (Expenditure Caps) Amendment Bill 2022

Amendments made to Bill

##### Short title and consequential references to short title—

*Omit—*


'Local Government Electoral and Other Legislation (Expenditure Caps) Amendment Bill 2022'

*Insert—*

'Local Government Electoral and Other Legislation (Expenditure Caps) Amendment Bill 2023'

## MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS


### United States, Ambassador and Aviation

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Olympic and Paralympic Games) (9.33 am): It was my honour on Monday to officially welcome to Queensland the Ambassador of the United States of America, Her Excellency Ms Caroline Kennedy. The United States is Queensland's fifth largest merchandise trading partner and second largest source of merchandise exports. Prior to COVID it was our third largest market for international tourists. This is something we intend to improve upon in the lead-up to the 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games. I was able to tell Ambassador Kennedy of the close ties between our state and her country. These ties were formed during World War II when more than 150,000 US servicemen were based in Brisbane and other cities, including Rockhampton and Townsville. President Kennedy fought in the Pacific war on our doorstep. Their courage and sacrifice will never be forgotten.

In other good news linked to the United States, I can announce that Brisbane airport's international flight capacity will receive yet another major boost. United Airlines will commence brand new nonstop services from Los Angeles later this year and also ramp up its popular three-per-week service from San Francisco to a daily schedule. The deal struck between Brisbane Airport Corporation, United Airlines and our government means the world's second largest carrier will more than triple the number of United flights between the US and Brisbane just six months after the airline commenced its first ever services to the state. United Airlines will now operate 10 services a week between the US and Brisbane by 1 December 2023, including three each week from LA.

This deal is a result of our \$200 million Attracting Aviation Investment Fund, which was set up to secure more international flights into Queensland. This fund is supporting more than 9,000 good jobs across Queensland and generating almost \$1 billion in overnight visitor expenditure. Increased flights are bringing more international visitors to Queensland from locations such as Kuala Lumpur, Tokyo, Seoul and Vancouver. Year-round daily services from Tokyo to Cairns will deliver \$69.5 million for Tropical North Queensland's visitor economy, supporting 680 good Queensland jobs. We will also see 33,500 additional visitors in the south-east boosting the visitor economy by \$70 million thanks to a direct Brisbane to Vancouver service. More international flights mean more visitors, and more visitors mean more tourism jobs for Queensland. It is also a boost for our exporters, with more opportunities to send products like beef, wine and other items to the US. Our government's investment in more airline seats supports businesses across Queensland.

### Education

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Olympic and Paralympic Games) (9.36 am): Our government is committed to ensuring that every Queensland student receives a quality education—one that sets them up for a bright future and helps them realise their full potential—and that no child is left behind. In the last budget we invested a record \$16.5 billion in school and early childhood education, helping deliver innovation and new programs right across our state, including: our \$100 million wellbeing program, which sees GPs and wellbeing professionals like psychologists, social workers and youth workers placed in our schools; and our Respectful Relationships in Schools program, which educates students and families on concepts like consent education, reporting of sexual assault and ethical decision-making, and provides \$15.5 million in funding to appoint a specialist adviser in every region to help teachers deliver the program.

We are also making it easier for students with a disability with a game-changing new resourcing model that will see an extra 40,000 students get extra help. We are investing \$1 billion to deliver free or cheaper kindy to over 40,000 Queensland children because all families should be able to give their kids access to early education. In partnership with Telstra we are investing \$190 million to make internet speeds up to 200 times faster in every single one of our 1,262 state schools and their communities. This will mean that teachers and students have access to the latest digital technologies and tools for their classroom—everything they need for a world-class education. In partnership with Share the Dignity we are making period products available for free in any school that wants to take part. Our Turn to Teaching Internship Program lets people with an undergraduate degree enrol in a two-year paid internship and graduate with a Master of Teaching and a guaranteed job, and was recently acknowledged by the OECD. Well done, Minister! We are delivering a progressive, high-performing education system that makes sure every Queensland student can shine bright.

## Dogs, Management



**Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Olympic and Paralympic Games) (9.38 am): Like the rest of Queensland, last week I was horrified to hear of a spate of vicious dog attacks in the south-east. Three young children suffered horrendous injuries within days of each other and there were a number of other attacks elsewhere in the state. Enough is enough. The onus is on dog owners. They have a duty of care. They must accept responsibility for their pets and their pets' behaviour. I have also been sickened by reports of smaller dogs being attacked and often killed by larger animals whilst out walking with their owners. We should all feel safe in our own yards or out on the streets. It is time to get tougher.

Last week I asked Minister Furner to urgently reconvene and chair a meeting of the task force he established last year to review dangerous dog laws. The task force, including the Local Government Association, representatives from councils and the department, will meet later today here at Parliament House to look at giving councils stronger powers and tougher penalties to come down hard on those owners who do not do the right thing. The people of Queensland are concerned. I hear, understand and share their concerns. They want these attacks to stop, and so do I. I look forward to hearing about the outcome of today's meetings from the minister.

## QAGoMA, Exhibition



**Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Olympic and Paralympic Games) (9.39 am): It is full steam ahead for the arts here in Queensland. Today I am proud to announce that the Queensland Art Gallery, the Gallery of Modern Art and the Victoria and Albert Museum in London will partner for a significant exhibition in 2026. It will showcase highlights from the Queensland grown Asia Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art series, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists. This world renowned series was established in 1993 and has put Queensland on the international art map, drawing visitors from around the globe every three years, and now it is London's turn.

This is the first time an APT exhibit of this scale will be shown in London and only the second time any of the APT pieces will be seen internationally. Our government is proud to support this series as part of our \$50 million investment in arts, culture and creativity—because these stories deserve the spotlight. More than four million visitors have experienced the APT series so far and I am sure many more from London and Europe will enjoy it as well.

## 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) (9.40 am): At the Housing Summit the Palaszczuk government called for organisations to propose under-utilised land and buildings that could be repurposed to house vulnerable Queenslanders. We are carefully assessing all land and buildings offered to ensure it is safe, is fit for purpose and represents good value for money.

Griffith University contacted us and offered the temporary use of disused student accommodation owned by the university. EDQ has been assessing that accommodation and planning what work would be required to make it suitable for housing. As a result of that work, I can announce today that we have instead signed contracts to purchase 64 homes with the funds previously earmarked for the possible repurposing of the student accommodation—

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Order, members!

**Dr MILES:** Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker. As a result of that work, I can announce today that we have instead signed contracts to purchase 64 homes with the funding previously earmarked for the possible—

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Order, members!

**Dr MILES:** Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker. As a result of that work, I can announce today that we have instead signed contracts to purchase 64 homes with the funds previously earmarked for the possible repurpose of student accommodation.

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Order, members!

**Dr MILES:** Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker. As a result of that work, I can announce today that we have instead signed contracts to purchase—

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Order! Members, I ask the House to come to order. The Deputy Premier is not being provocative. He is delivering a ministerial statement. I will start to warn people. Deputy Premier, I ask you to move beyond this part of your speech. I have heard it now.

**Dr MILES:** I will just finish that sentence, if I can, Mr Acting Speaker. As a result of that work, I can announce today that we have instead signed contracts to purchase 64 homes with the funds previously earmarked—

**Mr Janetzki** interjected.

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Member for Toowoomba South, you are warned. I gave clear instructions of my expectations.

**Dr MILES:** I can announce today that we have instead signed contracts to purchase 64 homes with the funds that were earmarked for the possible repurposing of student accommodation at Griffith University. The 64 homes comprise 165 rooms, more than the 100 rooms anticipated at Griffith. This will see vulnerable Queenslanders housed quicker and is a better value, long-term outcome. The properties will be suitable for a wider range of household types. The Palaszczuk government has identified houses and units across the state on the open market that we have contracts to purchase with funds that had been allocated. Around \$25 million will be invested to purchase 64 dwellings, including houses and units, to get vulnerable people housed quicker.

Detailed cost estimates found substantial works would be required to bring the Griffith Mount Gravatt campus student accommodation up to current fire safety standards, especially given its proximity to bushland. After consulting with Queensland's leading housing advocacy group, Q Shelter, we have made the decision to purchase homes directly on the private market to get more people into accommodation quicker—accommodation that will remain in the state's social housing stock permanently. The Griffith site was only a temporary option while the state and Griffith determined the long-term future of the campus. This decision will deliver better value for money. It will be more beds, suitable for longer term accommodation, available sooner and permanent.

The properties are at varying stages of the purchase process and are located in the following suburbs: Acacia Ridge, Annerley, Atherton, Bucasia, Cloncurry, Cooran, Eagleby, Emerald, Gladstone Central, Gleneagle, Gordonvale, Griffin, Kawungan, Mount Low, Ormeau, Pimpama, Rural View, Smithfield, Tully and Urangan. I am advised that most will settle over the next two months.

I would like to thank Griffith University for offering us the use of the student accommodation. Their offer was in good faith and appreciated. I am advised—

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Members, there is far too much interjection. Given the number of times you raise housing as an issue, I would think you would want to hear the ministerial statement relating to housing. I will start to warn people.

**Dr MILES:** I would like to thank Griffith University for offering us the use of the student accommodation. Their offer was in good faith and appreciated. I am advised they were unaware of the fire safety work required to make it useable again. I would still urge organisations with under-utilised land and buildings to put them forward so they can be assessed as accommodation options. Q Shelter executive director, Fiona Caniglia, said—

The allocation of funding to purchase housing directly makes more sense given the challenges presented by the Mt Gravatt site. She said—

We support any action which achieves homes for Queenslanders faster. In the longer term, this funding will go further and achieve sustainable housing outcomes for as long as people need them. Q Shelter will be working with Government to ensure that not-for-profit community housing providers assist in any way possible to implement this plan.

This government is committed to tackling the current housing challenges. That is why we have convened two round tables and a summit to pull together all of the people from industry, local government and our community housing sector to get the best advice on how to get more Queenslanders into homes. It is why we are investing \$3.9 billion in social and affordable housing—the largest concentrated investment in Queensland's history. It is why my department is working with councils to help them to bring more housing to market quicker. And it is why we are supporting the federal government in their efforts to build another 30,000 homes with their housing fund.

## Coal Industry



**Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment) (9.48 am): Queensland's mining industry has been riding an unprecedented surge in global commodity prices over the past 18 months. In the latest *Resources and energy quarterly* report, the federal government notes coal prices rose to record highs in 2022. That price surge is good for the resources companies that operate in Queensland, it is good for the Queensland workers and small businesses that operate in the resources sector, and it is good for the people of Queensland who receive royalties for the extraction of the non-renewable resources they own.

In 2022, the value of Queensland's overseas merchandise exports surged 71.5 per cent to a record \$138 billion. This includes an extra \$44 billion in coal export earnings. This was driven by a shift in the energy mix of many Northern Hemisphere nations and as an unavoidable consequence of Russia's illegal and appalling war in Ukraine. While commodity prices have hit their peak and are forecast to gradually normalise, the Queensland resources industry continues to grow. Queensland metallurgical coal production is forecast to increase with new output coming online. The world needs steel and the best metallurgical steel-making coal in the world comes from Queensland.

The future of the industry is so bright, mining companies continue to invest in new projects and continue to find new deposits of Queensland coal. The report states—

On the upside, metallurgical coal exports will likely benefit over time from a solid pipeline of investments, with new output expected from a range of projects including Ironbark, Goonyella, Vickery, Olive Downs and Hillalong.

Other than Vickery, all of those coalmines are Queensland coalmines. The report continued—

Australia's coal exploration expenditure increased to \$70 million in the December quarter: 30% higher through the year.

The report is a reflection of Queensland's proud resources industry, an industry steeped in history, one that has shaped families, towns, communities and the way of life for so many Queenslanders. The Palaszczuk Labor government has never taken these communities for granted and we never will. That is why we are ensuring they receive their fair share of Queensland's mining wealth through our progressive coal royalty scheme. Those royalties will make these communities stronger, better, healthier, safer and fairer for the future.

Queensland's coal industry and coal communities have a strong future for decades to come and they will continue to be supported by the Palaszczuk Labor government.

## State Schools, Disability Resourcing



**Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for Education, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing) (9.51 am): Our mission as a proud Labor government is to deliver a world-class education, as the Premier mentioned earlier, that allows every student to reach their full potential no matter where they live in this state, no matter their life's circumstances or background. A prime example of this is the support we provide to students with disability, to ensure that they can access and participate in education on the same basis as their peers. We currently invest around \$1.4 billion to support these students, and that is about to grow.


I am proud to say that 2023 has marked the start of our two-year transition to a game-changing new resourcing model to support students with disability. Already, 563 schools are receiving 25 per cent of their new funding and there is more to come next year. Already, 52 schools have transitioned to the new model and received 100 per cent of the increased funding—over \$22 million in extra funding, including 35 special schools in Beenleigh, Coomera, Gympie and Toowoomba West Special School in the electorate of Toowoomba North.

The number of students with disability receiving dedicated support will double from \$40,000 to \$80,000 a year. It is a fundamental shift in how support is provided with a focus moving from the current system based on six prescribed types of disability only to a model that is based on the level of support and adjustment that each individual student needs to participate in education.

A number of disabilities, including neurobehavioural disorders, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, foetal alcohol spectrum disorder, dyslexia and mental health conditions will be formally recognised for the first time. While schools already support these students, there will be more dedicated resources available. The new model will also provide an even higher level of resourcing in the prep year and ensure schools have the resources they need to provide supports early. We want to get in early. It is a big change for schools and that is why the Palaszczuk government's \$81 million investment will support schools to transition and plan for full implementation of the new model in 2025.

We have also released our new equity and excellence strategy and a new model will play a significant role in ensuring students with disability are supported to realise their potential in a high-performing education system. Students with disability have the right to participate fully in education—they deserve nothing less—and that is exactly what this new resourcing model will deliver, another great Palaszczuk government reform.

### **Princess Alexandra Hospital, Spinal Injuries Unit**

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Minister for Health and Ambulance Services) (9.54 am): I want to acknowledge the work of the Palaszczuk government and Minister Grace with her department around what we are doing with respect to health and early intervention and disabilities in our schools. It is so important for the long-term health and wellbeing of our communities.

I know that our Queensland Health staff work incredibly hard every day to provide world-class care to their patients. That is why some of the allegations made regarding patient care at the spinal injuries unit at the PA Hospital were so confronting. Other issues pertaining to the spinal injuries unit like the resources required to deliver services and the scale and quality of infrastructure at the unit are matters that Metro South Hospital and Health Service and Queensland Health have been reviewing on an ongoing basis.

I am advised that practical steps have already been taken this year by Metro South HHS to improve the care environment at the SIU, including the recruitment of clinical and administration staff as well as the purchasing of additional patient equipment. I am also advised that a new quick-start intake model has been stood up. This service seeks to ensure patients can receive early intervention care before getting formally admitted into the ward. However, in order to ensure that Queenslanders living with a spinal injury are receiving the best quality of care possible, Dr David Rosengren, Chief Operating Officer for Queensland Health, will lead an evaluation with both Metro North and Metro South hospital and health services on the clinical models along with the potential relocation of the spinal injuries unit to Surgical Treatment and Rehabilitation Service, STARS, at Herston.


This process will allow Metro South Hospital and Health Service and Queensland Health the time frame necessary to develop the business case and deliver on the redevelopment of the spinal injuries unit at the Princess Alexandra Hospital. Based on and depending on the recommendations of Dr Rosengren, Brisbane would have two tertiary spinal rehabilitation units in South-East Queensland, as well as the one located in Townsville.

In order to guide this work, I have asked that a stakeholder working group be convened to ensure that we are appropriately informed of the lived experiences of patients and staff. I understand that Metro South Hospital and Health Service has already undertaken considerable engagement with stakeholder groups like Spinal Life Australia, and I believe that continuing this collaborative approach is vital as we proceed on this incredibly important body of work.

I also want to address the reports regarding Dr Dinesh Palipana's correspondence to me. As I acknowledged when responding to the media inquiry, my office did receive an email from Dr Palipana. The email addressed issues relating to the infrastructure and resourcing of the unit as well as a specific patient matter. It did not raise the specific allegations relating to patient care that later formed the basis of media reports. As is appropriate, when individual patient matters are raised in correspondence like Dr Palipana's, the email was referred through to the department and onto Metro South Hospital and Health Service for advice. I am advised that a draft response was to be progressed to me last week and will be provided to me shortly from the HHS.

I want to acknowledge the advocacy of Dr Palipana whom I have met on a number of occasions. I want to acknowledge his great work in the hospital and health service, and I also want to acknowledge the commitment shown by stakeholders across the health system who are working with our hospital and health services to address these complex issues.

### **Dogs, Management**

 **Hon. ML FURNER** (Ferry Grove—ALP) (Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries and Minister for Rural Communities) (9.58 am): We have seen the impacts of dog bites on families across Queensland. I know I speak for all Queenslanders when I say that all of us were shocked and distressed by the recent attacks, and our thoughts and prayers are with their families. After engagement with local government representatives, I commenced a review of the Animal Management (Cats and Dogs) Act with the first task force meeting on 4 August 2022. This included council representatives from Scenic Rim, Moreton Bay, Townsville, Logan, Brisbane and Fraser Coast. It also included representatives from the RSPCA and the LGAQ.




On the table today we will look at changes to increase penalties and options to assist local governments in cracking down on irresponsible people, as well as community education to inform and protect Queenslanders. While the state government makes the laws, it is local governments that play a vital role in not only administering the local laws in relation to dogs but also have insight into what is occurring in their local communities.

My department has met with the task force's technical working group every month since September 2022 to discuss the proposals from different local governments and how these proposals can best serve Queensland. I cannot thank them enough for their commitment and diligence to the review of these laws. The task force aim to examine the effectiveness of current laws and practices and how we can improve them. The task force were scheduled to meet within the month and finalise their recommendations. I thank them for meeting with us today.

The terrible attacks in the last two weeks again highlight the need for change. That is why we have acted to set up the task force. While most dog owners do the right thing, there are people who do not. It is hoped that the proposed changes that come from the task force will assist council in dealing with dogs. Again, I would like to thank all the members of the task force and my department for the commitment to this body of work. Today's outcomes will inform the government on how we move forward. I look forward to updating the House in the future.

### Developers, Sunset Clauses

 **Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, Minister for Women and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence) (10.00 am): The Palaszczuk government is committed to ensuring that Queenslanders are protected when they buy their family home off the plan. In recent years homebuyers and property developers across the state have faced difficulties with supply chain issues, labour shortages and increased costs for building suppliers. This, combined with increasing interest rates and soaring property prices, has made for challenging market conditions.

There has been a number of concerning reports of developers using sunset clauses to terminate an off-the-plan contract, allegedly to relist and sell the proposed lot for a much higher price. This has left many heartbroken potential buyers unable to afford another home. I speak of people like Jodie and Steven, whose family experienced extreme stress and emotional turmoil after a developer terminated their contract using a sunset clause and left them unable to afford another home. There was also John and Lisa from Morayfield, who said that it would be a catastrophic outcome for their family, who had invested time, money and emotional energy into a sale that was about to be terminated. Then there was Neville from the Gold Coast, who worried that he would never be able to afford another home in the city that he loved if the sunset clause was invoked.

Hundreds of stories like these poured into my office and the department following the announcement of a review into sunset clauses, all asking that consumers be protected when committing to the biggest financial investment of their lives. That is why we are starting work on amendments to make sure property developers can only use sunset clauses in very specific circumstances. This will include situations where the buyer has agreed in writing or there is an order from the Supreme Court similar to other jurisdictions. These reforms will initially be targeted towards land sales with a review to be undertaken one to two years after the reforms have commenced. That review will consider whether further reforms are required to protect people buying apartments off the plan.

We know that property developers, like many other sectors, are facing a range of economic pressures outside their control. However, we also know the vast majority of property developers do the right thing by their customers. That is why we will work closely with industry on these reforms to ensure there are no unintended consequences. We want to make sure Queenslanders have the confidence that their investment will be protected and we want developers to have confidence that they can continue to invest here in Queensland.

Of course, the best protection for anyone purchasing a property, whether off the plan or not, is to seek independent legal advice before signing a contract. I am proud that we are moving to protect Queenslanders when they make the biggest financial investment of their life.

### Tourism, Aviation

 **Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE** (Sandgate—ALP) (Minister for Tourism, Innovation and Sport and Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympics and Paralympics Sport and Engagement) (10.03 am): Up to 17,000 commercial airliners were grounded in desert boneyards worldwide at the peak of the pandemic.

With more aircraft returning to the sky, global competition amongst destinations for strategic air connections is intensifying. As celebrated by the Premier, the announcements by United Airlines overnight are a huge vote of confidence in destination Queensland.

From late September the frequency of United Airlines services direct to Brisbane from San Francisco will ramp up from three a week to daily. This was the first service to be secured by the Palaszczuk government's \$200 million aviation war chest. United's new Los Angeles to Brisbane service from December is a direct result of our strong transpacific partnership with the airline and the popularity of its San Francisco service.

It is no coincidence that North America is already a significant focus of Tourism and Events Queensland's international marketing blitz. Together with Tourism Australia, we are encouraging US travellers to say g'day the Queensland way. We are also showing young North Americans the amazing experiences and jobs the state has to offer working holiday-makers.

Next month on the Gold Coast the Australian Tourism Exchange will bring to Queensland more than 500 international wholesale holiday buyers plus around 500 overseas travel journalists eager to discover and write about Queensland's incredible diversity of world-class visitor experiences. I also note that US ambassador Caroline Kennedy and the American media following the ambassador's visit around the state have been a major asset for destination Queensland.

United Airlines' daily flights from San Francisco will more than double the number of good Queensland jobs supported to 610, with an estimated \$62 million boost for our international visitor economy. The Los Angeles service from December gives US travellers a fast track out of a bitter Northern Hemisphere winter to a bucket list of world-class visitor experiences under Queensland's warm tropical sun.

With more international carriers on the runway and being close to finalising deals with the \$200 million war chest, the sky is the limit.

### **Transport Infrastructure, Sunshine Coast Mass Transit**



**Hon. MC BAILEY** (Miller—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads) (10.05 am): Across the state we are building a public transport legacy on a scale that we have never seen before. This government is investing nearly double the amount of money than was being spent on transport infrastructure when we came to power after the savage cuts before we came to government. It is headlined by the transformational Cross River Rail project; the Queensland Train Manufacturing Program, which is building trains here in Queensland—and we know those opposite are opposed to that—a \$3.5 billion pipeline over the next four years in terms of rail; and record levels of investment in bus networks across Queensland. On top of this, our new network officer strategy will increase our frontline transport force, creating 100 new full-time jobs, something I know other states are now looking at.


Today I can update the House that the first wave of extra network officers hired off the back of our new funding commitment in January this year is nearing completion of their training and will be starting in service next month, making our network safer for both bus drivers and commuters. In the months to come we will be bolstering Townsville's bus network with more services more often in suburbs like Bohle Plains, Mount Louisa, Shaw and Burdell. That is not the only way we will be making public transport better.

Major work is ramping up on the Gold Coast Light Rail stage 3 from Broadbeach to Burleigh as we see record levels of patronage on the existing light rail network on the Gold Coast. We are seeing more bus services than ever before on the northern Gold Coast, a location where we are also building three new train stations at Pimpama, Hope Island and Merrimac as part of our Cross River Rail project.

On the Sunshine Coast we have signed a preconstruction and design agreement on the Sunshine Coast rail duplication upgrade, paving the way for the next phase of major construction to ramp up next year. We also have two major planning studies underway looking at improved public transport on the Sunshine Coast, the third largest city in this state: the first, a planning study, co-funded by the Albanese federal Labor government—and aren't they doing well—on the direct Sunshine Coast line linking Brisbane to the beach in the north; and the second, a detailed business case for a mass transit network assessing five possible modes for the Sunshine Coast. Today I can announce that we have reached a memorandum of understanding with the Albanese federal Labor government and the Sunshine Coast Council on the business case, another important milestone for that project.

Across Queensland the Palaszczuk Labor government will be improving public transport every single day with record levels of investment and not cuts, which those on the other side of the chamber love.

### Training and Skills

 **Hon. DE FARMER** (Bulimba—ALP) (Minister for Employment and Small Business and Minister for Training and Skills Development) (10.08 am): The Palaszczuk government invests over \$1.2 billion in skills and training every year. We are skilling Queenslanders for the workforce of today and we are skilling them for the jobs of the future. We are especially excited about the opportunities that the renewable energy sector is going to provide for Queenslanders, including through our \$62 billion Queensland Energy and Jobs Plan, which sets a target of 70 per cent renewable energy by 2032 and which will generate jobs for 100,000 workers.


Some of the renewable energy sectors, like hydrogen, are still so new that we are literally mapping future workforce needs as projects are being developed. However, I am proud to say that Queensland is leading the way in providing the infrastructure, the partnerships with industry and the training to ensure our state's workforce takes centre stage. We are investing more than \$50 million in training facilities that will provide workers with the skills they need to enter the growing renewable energy industry: \$20 million on the Hydrogen Centre of Excellence at the PICAC in Beenleigh; \$17 million for the Electro Group's renewable energy training facility; a new hydrogen and renewable energy training facility at Bohle TAFE; and \$2 million to upgrade training facilities at Gladstone State High School.

We have added the hydrogen sector to the 10 priority sectors already covered by the Palaszczuk government's successful Gateway to Industry Schools Program. The program has helped to direct more than 31,000 Queensland students last year alone towards the industries that are of greatest priority to our workforce. With the addition of hydrogen, 2,000 students are now more likely to choose a career path in this industry. When the minister was talking to students who are choosing this career path, one student said to him, 'Where else do I get to work in an industry where I get to change the world?' What a great plus.

We are delivering fee-free TAFE for 37,000 Queenslanders this year alone, including for courses critical to our renewable energy industries, like the Diploma of Applied Blockchain and the Battery Electric Vehicle Inspection and Servicing Skill Set. A range of hugely exciting initiatives are underway. In fact, if I had an hour I would not have enough time to tell members about all of them. An example is that TAFE Queensland has an MOU with Ark Energy to deliver training to workers on the safe production, handling and use of hydrogen. They are developing and piloting four non-accredited safety related courses for heavy vehicles, hydrogen refuelling and storage, and are working with Energy Skills Queensland to pilot non-accredited courses on how to respond to and recognise danger around hydrogen fuel cell vehicles.

We have allocated \$15 million for initiatives in VET emerging industries, including a partnership with Toowoomba and Surat Basin Enterprise, CS Energy and CSQ to map hydrogen skills and training needs at the Kogan Creek demonstration plant and to work with local businesses on how they can be an important part of the supply chain for hydrogen projects. A micro-credentials program with the Motor Trades Association will enable the upskilling or post-trade training of an automotive workforce to service and repair hybrid and electric vehicles—and there is so much more. The Palaszczuk government is committed to good jobs, better services and a great lifestyle. Our commitment to a renewable energy workforce is a critical part of achieving those goals.


### Voice to Parliament

 **Hon. CD CRAWFORD** (Barron River—ALP) (Minister for Seniors and Disability Services and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships) (10.12 am): The Palaszczuk government stands united with the Prime Minister and with all state and territory leaders in declaring our support for a constitutionally enshrined Indigenous Voice to Parliament. We stand with all of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who call to be recognised in our nation's Constitution. The Voice will give Indigenous Australians the ability to inform policy and decisions that will directly impact their lives. The Voice will help improve the outcomes for Indigenous education, health, housing, safety and economic development. When Indigenous Australians have a say through the Voice, it will deliver an opportunity for real and practical changes in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. That is why, on this side of the House, we are voting 'yes'.

Last night at a 'yes' campaign event here in parliament Noel Pearson, one of the architects of the Uluru Statement from the Heart, urged the state Liberal National Party to make a sensible decision and support an Indigenous voice. In his words, 'This is the state of Eddie Mabo. This is the state that really has to be at the forefront of the referendum.' He said, 'Let's not make the country and Indigenous people victims of a confected political fight between left and right, progressives and conservatives. That is not what this is about.' I acknowledge the members from all sides of this House who attended last night's event, and I thank the co-chairs for organising it.

I have travelled the length and breadth of Queensland. I have visited almost every discrete Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community in this state. The common message that I receive from elders, families and leaders is that they are frustrated that no-one consults with them about key matters. They have expressed with me in many ways that they want a dialogue with government. They want a say; they want a voice. When Peter Dutton says, 'How does Voice help close the gap?' it is exactly this dialogue with people on the ground in community and in suburbs that will achieve this. This is not a voice just to Canberra; this is a voice to government at all levels including ours. How can the conservatives turn their back on a respected leader like Ken Wyatt, who has worked on this process for years along with others like Noel Pearson? LNP MPs should say, 'If this is good enough for Ken Wyatt then it should be good enough for me.' We have listened to the people in this state and we are acting. Our vote in the referendum will be 'yes'.

### Next Step Home Program

 **Hon. LM ENOCH** (Alger—ALP) (Minister for Communities and Housing, Minister for Digital Economy and Minister for the Arts) (10.15 am): Ensuring all Queenslanders have a roof over their head and a stable place to call home is a priority for the Palaszczuk government. Housing insecurity can lead to significant impacts on a person's physical, mental and social wellbeing, particularly for vulnerable Queenslanders. For women leaving custody, a lack of stable accommodation can have a profound impact on their successful integration back into the community. I am pleased to announce today that the Palaszczuk government is investing \$1.6 million to extend a program that will help these vulnerable women rebuild their lives and avoid recidivism.


Contract arrangements have now been finalised with two organisations, Sisters Inside and MARA Project, to provide support for women through the Next Step Home—Women on Parole initiative in South-East Queensland and in Townsville. Next Step Home provides critical housing support for women who are on parole or at risk of being remanded in custody. Through this initiative, women who are leaving custody are supported with a one-year headleased home combined with appropriate supports. Next Step Home has already supported more than 200 women, including 170 in South-East Queensland and 35 in Townsville.

We know that having access to stable housing can affect the timing of a woman's release from custody, her risk of homelessness and her ability to find work and be reunified with children. Next Step Home will work with women exiting custody by providing timely access to safe, secure and appropriate housing combined with coordinated support. This initiative will provide stability and access to positive support networks, ensuring women leaving custody have the best possible chance to successfully rebuild their lives.

The \$1.6 million extension of this program is further evidence of the Palaszczuk government's commitment to addressing housing and homelessness challenges on all fronts. Access to a safe place to call home is important for every Queenslanders, and we will continue to invest in that outcome.

## NOTICE OF MOTION

### Youth Crime

 **Mr KATTER** (Traeger—KAP) (10.17 am): I give notice that I will move—

That this House endorses new solutions to the youth crime crisis engulfing Queensland, namely:

1. the introduction of mandatory 12-month minimum sentencing for youth offenders convicted of three or more offences of unlawful use of a motor vehicle, burglary, or entering or being in premises and committing an indictable offence; and
2. introducing relocation sentencing as an alternative to traditional juvenile detention, which would see recidivist youth offenders ordered by courts to serve long-term sentences in highly rehabilitative environments in remote locations.

## QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Question time will conclude today at 11.18 am.

### Maternity Services, Bypass



**Mr CRISAFULLI** (10.18 am): My question is to the Minister for Health. How many Queensland Health maternity services have been on bypass at any time since July last year?

**Mrs D'ATH:** I thank the Leader of the Opposition for his question. I am happy to get the accurate figure on bypass. As the member knows through a question on notice, I am only notified of certain ones because of the length of time they are actually on bypass. Some are on bypass for a matter of hours—some for maybe 24 hours—based on an illness or a particular circumstance where an obstetrician may be unavailable at that time and the services are resumed within a very short period of time.

**Mr Crisafulli** interjected.

**Mrs D'ATH:** I am happy to take the interjections of the Leader of the Opposition, who would rather play cheap politics and get headlines on these things. The Leader of the Opposition has enough people on his side to know that in fact some of these are very short bypasses and so to get the actual figure I will go back and get that from the HHSs.

**Mr Crisafulli:** The minister gets notified every time.

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. Resume your seat, Minister. Leader of the Opposition, the health minister is being directly responsive to the question that you asked. I would ask that you hear the response in silence.

**Mrs D'ATH:** I am more than happy to take that interjection because I know that the interjection that I am notified every time comes as a consequence of a question from the opposition last sitting week which selectively quoted from the guidelines around whether or not I approve bypasses. I am happy to go back and double-check, but I think the statement made by the opposition at the time was that I am required to approve all bypasses. In fact, if the opposition had read the full guidelines into *Hansard* it would have seen that it says, 'except in exceptional circumstances', where in fact there are staff shortages and things such as that. Of course the minister of the day, no matter who is in government, is not going to be notified if there is a bypass for a matter of hours or 24 hours based on an illness given the administrative burden on HHSs if they had to tell me each and every occasion when that would occur.

When the Leader of the Opposition interjects to make that statement, he does it deliberately trying to mislead the public, as he did last week on Mackay, on Rockhampton, on Gladstone, on Gympie, trying to put fear in the community about what services are happening and making claims that in fact a service was close to shutting—not even on bypass, shutting—without any evidence whatsoever. The Leader of the Opposition laughs because he thinks it is funny to tell women in Mackay and Gympie that their service is imminently shutting.

### Maternity Services, Bypass

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** My question is to the Minister for Health. In response to a question on notice, the health minister said it requires too much work to tell Queenslanders how many maternity services have been placed on bypass. Emails released under right to information show the minister's office receives notification every time a bypass occurs. Given the minister receives the information, why did the minister claim she does not have it and why will she not let Queenslanders see it?

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr Crisafulli** interjected.

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Order! Leader of the Opposition, you have asked your question. If you would like me to waste your question time waiting for the House and you to come to order, I will do that; otherwise, I will call the minister for her response.

**Mrs D'ATH:** The particular clause that the opposition did not take anyone to last time when this question was asked by, I think it was, the member for Whitsunday is this—

The change in service cannot occur until the outcome from the Minister is received unless exceptional circumstances e.g. immediate unavailability of essential workforce on-site.

This is dealing with those circumstances—

**Mr Crisafulli** interjected.

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Order, Leader of the Opposition! The minister is being responsive directly to your question.

**Mrs D'ATH:** I take personal offence at the claim that the Leader of the Opposition just made. I ask that he withdraw.

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** The minister has taken—

**Mr POWELL:** Mr Acting Speaker, I rise to a point of order. Can the Leader of the House—

**Mrs D'Ath** interjected.

**Mr POWELL:**—enlighten the House as to what claim she finds offensive?

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Order! Leader of the House, I will hear the point of order and then I will deal with your point of order. What is your point of order?

**Mr POWELL:** I am seeking clarification as to which claim the health minister is referring to.

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** I will take some advice in relation to that and the House will remain orderly while I do it. Before I deal with the point of order: Leader of the Opposition, the minister is being directly responsive to your question. There was some language used during your interjection which was unparliamentary. The minister has asked that you withdraw because she has taken personal offence. I would ask you to withdraw.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** I withdraw.

**Mrs D'ATH:** The document and the protocols that the Leader of the Opposition refers to is the *Process for ministerial approval for maternity service changes* and the scope specifically says—

All Queensland Health facilities that provide CSCF level 2 to 6 maternity services ... where it is anticipated that for a period of three months or more one or more of the following applies:

- the CSCF service level is reduced
- the provision of one or more key maternity services ...
- the service is ceased

The member for Whitsunday was happy to come into this chamber last time and claim that I need to give approval every single time, and this is what they do—that is, selectively choose information out of protocols about the bypasses. It was claimed by the opposition that every time the minister's approval is required. This is a protocol that did not exist under the opposition. The opposition does not go out there and say that it was a decision under it that the—

**Mr Crisafulli** interjected.

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. Leader of the Opposition, you are warned.

**Ms Simpson** interjected.

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Member for Maroochydore, you are also warned.

**Mrs D'ATH:** The point I am making is that the opposition loves to selectively choose information out of these protocols and information that it gets—

**Mr POWELL:** Mr Acting Speaker, I rise to a point of order on relevance under 118(b). The health minister keeps referring to a procedural matter which was not in the question; it referred to an RTI email, which I table for the benefit of the health minister.

*Tabled paper:* Email, dated 8 July 2022, to the Minister for Regional Development and Manufacturing and Minister for Water, Hon. Glenn Butcher, regarding maternity unit on bypass [\[508\]](#).

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** I listened to the question very carefully. I think the minister is being directly responsive to that. Based on the interjections that I have been hearing from the Leader of the Opposition before I warned him, it seems you were seeking some other specific information. If that is what you were seeking, you should have worded your question more carefully.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mrs D'ATH:** The fact is—

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Order!

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Members, the level of interjections is extreme given that the minister is being directly responsive, as I have noted on a number of occasions, to the question asked. I will ask the minister to continue, but I will start to warn people and I will start to remove people from the chamber.

**Mrs D'ATH:** The information provided in the answer to the question on notice is accurate in relation to the information that is obtained and provided to my office. I make the point that I did because the member for Whitsunday specifically said that the protocol says that the minister must approve any closure or bypass even though the protocol they were reading from, as they know, does not say that.

*(Time expired)*

### **Disability Support**

**Mr SKELTON:** My question is of the Premier and Minister for the Olympic and Paralympic Games. Will the Premier please update the House on the work the Palaszczuk government is doing to support Queenslanders living with disability?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I thank the member for Nicklin for the question because in Queensland we want to make sure that people with a disability get access to the services that they need. We know that the state government already provides support for over 127,000 people with a disability.

We also know that the federal government brought about the National Disability Insurance Scheme. The reason I am raising this today is because there have been reports that have been made public that the federal government expects the states to step up further when it comes to funding the National Disability Insurance Scheme. Let me make it very clear that the word is 'National' Disability Insurance Scheme. It is a national scheme and not a state scheme.

Today I join with Premier Daniel Andrews and say very clearly that we have concerns about the manner in which this proposal has been put to the states. There has been no consultation. We have not been informed. I will always stand up for Queensland. The Minister for Disability Services has a funding budget of \$2 billion. Already we are looking after long-stay patients with disability in our hospitals. We want the federal government to focus on moving them out. Furthermore, we already look after some of the most complex people with disability and the state has undertaken to continue to provide funding looking after people with dual diagnoses, who have very complex needs. The federal government needs to go back to the drawing board and look at how they are funding the National Disability Insurance Scheme. I say to Bill Shorten that we have concerns.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Those opposite did nothing when the Morrison government was in office.

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Order, members. Member for Capalaba, I have previously noted your interjections. I warn you under the standing orders. I know there is passion in relation to this question, understandably, but I would ask that the Premier be heard in silence.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** As I said, we are making a very serious contribution. We fund the transport scheme for students with a disability, but we are not going to stand silent—

*(Time expired)*

### **Maternity Services, Bypass**

**Ms BATES:** My question is to the Minister for Health. Emails released to the opposition under RTI reveal the minister's office admit maternity ward bypasses occur frequently. How frequently are maternity wards on bypass, which ones and for how long?

**Mrs D'ATH:** I thank the member for her question. The response to that has already been provided in an answer to a question on notice.

### **GPs in Schools**

**Mr BROWN:** My question is of the Premier and Minister for the Olympic and Paralympic Games. Will the Premier update the House on how the Palaszczuk government's GPs in schools initiative is supporting Queensland state school students and is the Premier aware of any alternative approaches?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I thank the member for Capalaba for the question. We on this side of the House know how important our initiative is. We value our school children getting the best education but also making sure that their health needs are checked as well. That is why our government commenced the GPs in Schools program, one that I am absolutely proud that the education minister is rolling out, in conjunction with the health minister. This is changing the lives of young people.

The member knows that students in Alexandra Hills are also very much enjoying the outcomes of those results. We have 50 state secondary schools across Queensland, from Alexandra Hills State High School in the member for Capalaba's electorate to Gladstone State High School in Central Queensland and Gordonvale State High School in our state's Far North. There are 44 general practitioners already working in our schools with six more to come, bringing free, confidential health care and advice to state secondary school students across Queensland.

In the 2022 school year, students at these schools attended nearly 5,000 GP appointments. This is proving to be so successful that we need to give serious consideration to rolling this out across other secondary schools in Queensland. Once again this is collaboration across government departments, putting our students first and foremost, and making sure the departments work together. We are also bringing 464 wellbeing professionals to state schools, including psychologists, guidance officers, social workers and youth workers. In March 2023, 330 of those workers started their placements in schools. Well done, Minister, for once again making sure our students come first. Our priority is our students.

There are still no policies from those opposite when it comes to education. There is an RTI but there is no policy. There is just a void, a black hole. It is an absolute policy-free zone. We know they had a policy in the past and that was to close schools. The member for Surfers Paradise remembers those days very well. He took an axe to all those schools listed. That was the education policy of the most chaotic government in history, the Newman government, and its former ministers still sit opposite. They have no policies and they have no ideas.

### **Maternity Services, Bypass**

**Mr HEAD:** My question is to the Minister for Health. Chinchilla has been on bypass for years. Cooktown and Biloela have been on bypass for over a year. Gladstone has been on bypass for nearly a year. How long does a maternity ward have to be on bypass before the government admits it is closed?

**Mrs D'ATH:** I thank the member for his question. The only one that was closed, I believe, is Kingaroy when Sunshine Coast University Hospital was being opened, because the LNP said that those maternity services should be relocated to the Sunshine Coast.

**Mrs Frecklington:** Rubbish!

**Mrs D'ATH:** Sorry, it must be Kilcoy. My apologies, it must be Kilcoy.

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. Member for Nanango, you are warned.

**Mrs D'ATH:** My apologies, it was Nambour.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mrs D'ATH:** I got wrong the service you shut down. They all laugh, but it is those opposite who shut down that service. My apologies, it was Nambour you closed, not the others, but that is the only one that has closed in recent years, a permanent close, because it was chosen to be relocated into a major new hospital. Those are the decisions made to keep communities safe and to ensure that expectant mums can birth their babies with the appropriate level of care and support that is needed.

**Government members** interjected.

**Mrs D'ATH:** I take that interjection. They are decisions made by clinicians. It is the Leader of the Opposition who likes to run around Queensland saying, 'We put doctors and nurses in charge', but when doctors and nurses make decisions the opposition criticises them. The question is whether the member for Callide supports decisions made by clinicians, where clinicians decide whether it is safe to birth at those facilities or whether it should be bypassed.

**Mrs Gerber:** So it is the doctors' and nurses' fault, is it?

**Mr Head** interjected.



**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. Member for Callide, the minister is being directly responsive to your question. You continue to interject. You are warned under the standing orders.

**Mrs D'ATH:** From the interjections of the member for Currumbin it seems that she thinks I should be the one who makes the decision as to whether they should be on bypass, but it should be the clinicians giving that advice and making those decisions. That is what they did in Gladstone when they came forward to the executive leadership and said, 'We can take another step forward.' It was the clinicians at Gladstone who took the initiative, came together and said, 'We believe we can take another step forward towards full level 3 services and allow emergency gynaecology services as well as services for women deemed to have no identified risk.' Those are the ways that the decisions should be made. It should be the clinicians, nurses and midwives making those recommendations and doing so in a way that is safe. It is only the LNP in Queensland who seems to think—

*(Time expired)*

### Housing Supply

**Mr MARTIN:** My question is of the Deputy Premier. Could the Deputy Premier advise the House of how the Palaszczuk government is working to deliver more housing and is the Deputy Premier aware of any alternative approaches?

**Dr MILES:** I thank the member for Stretton for his question. The housing supply challenges faced by the country are complex and there are no easy solutions. Every state is experiencing those challenges but the other states are not experiencing the same level of net interstate migration that Queensland is, which is further exacerbating the challenges. Like any complex challenge, this requires multi-pronged solutions.

During the last sitting the Treasurer outlined plans to purchase 335 NRAS properties to make sure that they remain within the state's affordable housing stock. Yesterday we implemented laws to limit rent increases to once a year, a move that was questioned by those opposite and by the Greens political party. We have moved to unlock 5,600 lots at Ripley Valley. We are building roads that will deliver homes for 131,000 Queenslanders. We are examining the effect of short-term accommodation providers such as Airbnb on housing supply, a matter that I addressed yesterday in response to a question from the member for Noosa. We are auditing under-utilised state owned and local government owned land as well as private and not-for-profit owned land that has been proposed to us by review. We are reviewing the South-East Queensland regional plan. We are working with the Albanese government on their plan to build 30,000 new social houses, a plan that is being opposed by the LNP and by the Greens in Canberra.

Let us not forget what LNP members said about that plan. One of them said, 'Now is not the time to invest in new housing.' I repeat: 'Now is not the time to invest in new housing.' That is what LNP members have been saying. Another one said, 'Actually, building more houses would make supply worse.' The LNP think that building more houses would somehow make supply worse. More supply somehow equals less supply in the minds of the LNP.

Let us never forget that the member for Everton cut back the social housing construction program by 90 per cent. The stock of social houses fell by 428 homes. Today we have announced that the Palaszczuk Labor government will increase the social housing stock. While all those opposite ever did was cut it back, we will continue to build it back up.

### Maternity Services, Bypass

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** My question is to the Minister for Health. There are less than 40 maternity services fully operational in Queensland. Can the minister guarantee that no more services will be reduced or placed on bypass this year?

**Mrs D'ATH:** I thank the member for Nanango for her question. I can only interpret that question as the LNP saying that I should ignore clinical advice, if it comes to me, that it would be unsafe to maintain a maternity service in their area. That question is saying if the clinicians say it is unsafe because there is no obstetrician available and they need to be on bypass then I am to say, 'No, you must continue and it doesn't matter whether that woman and that baby can be treated safely.' That is a ridiculous proposition by the member for Nanango. That is an insight into what the LNP would do in government.

**A government member:** Putting women at risk.

**Mrs D'ATH:** I take that interjection. I can only assume that is the LNP policy. They will ensure—they will demand—that those services stay open. They will absolutely guarantee it. The Leader of the Opposition should stand up today. He is nodding. He is saying, 'Yes.' The Leader of the Opposition will ensure that no service will ever go on bypass. The Leader of the Opposition is going to guarantee it. I look to the opposition spokesperson. I would love to hear what all of them think. Member for Moggill, if you are willing to stand up and back him in, guarantee that I should ignore all the advice—

**Dr Rowan** interjected.

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. Minister, resume your seat. Member for Moggill, you are warned under the standing orders.

**Mr Langbroek** interjected.

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Was that a reflection on my ruling?

**Mr Langbroek:** It was a reflection on him, of course.

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** I suggest you be more careful with your reflections generally.

**Mrs D'ATH:** I make two points in addition to commenting on the astonishing admission that the LNP said they would keep these services open no matter what.

**Mr Mander:** We would resource them.

**Mrs D'ATH:** I take the interjection that they will make sure that they are resourced. Let us put that into perspective: 4,400 health workers sacked. That is their record. Their second record: there would be 5,035 fewer health workers in this term of government if they had been elected in 2020. How would they keep maternity services operating with 750 fewer doctors and 3,270 fewer nurses and midwives? I want to hear from the LNP how you run more maternity services or even the same services with 3,270 fewer nurses and midwives and 750 fewer doctors. How do you do that? The member for Everton says, 'We'll have more resources.' How, when you have 5,035 fewer health workers? The LNP is an absolute joke.

### North Queensland, Coal Royalties

**Mr HARPER:** My question is of the Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment. Will the Treasurer update the House on what Queensland progressive coal royalties are delivering for North Queensland and is the Treasurer aware of any alternative approaches?

**Mr DICK:** I thank the member for Thuringowa for his question. He knows how important the resources sector is to North Queensland and Townsville, particularly because of the secure high-skilled jobs it delivers for his community. It also helps deliver nation-building infrastructure such as CopperString 2032. As the member for Thuringowa and, indeed, all members from Townsville and North Queensland know, at least \$500 million of the \$5 billion CopperString project will come from our new progressive coal royalty tiers. Those are the coal royalty tiers that the Leader of the Opposition and leader of the LNP calls a shoddy plan.

Perhaps the leader of the LNP would rather live in New South Wales. A story published by news.com.au this week says that New South Wales has missed out on \$6.2 billion in revenue by not adopting progressive coal royalty tiers as Queensland has. We know the leader of the LNP has a propensity for moving south but maybe New South Wales is not south enough. In the same article where the leader of the LNP spoke about the need for 'short-term budgetary pain', saying that the public service 'must get agile and lean', the leader of the LNP sang the praises of—wait for it—Jeff Kennett. The leader of the LNP said, 'Jeff Kennett was prepared to make things happen.'

Jeff Kennett sure made things happen. Jeff Kennett sold off Victoria's power assets; Jeff Kennett closed 300 Victorian schools; and Jeff Kennett sacked 45,000 Victorian workers. We would not have thought the Leader of the LNP could find a more mendacious mentor than Campbell Newman, but he found a way. There is one perched on each shoulder, but they are not angels. The Leader of the LNP has already promised cuts, just not savage ones—and who will be judging whether or not the cuts are savage: Campbell Newman or Jeff Kennett?

The member for Chatsworth has already admitted that they have found billions in savings. The Leader of the LNP has released his infrastructure hit list—projects that will be cut across the length and breadth of Queensland, including in regional Queensland. We know that the secret debt reduction strategy is coming. When the Leader of the Opposition is asked the hard questions his answer is, 'That's not my style.' We know what his style is: Campbell Newman and Jeff Kennett. That is why he does not support coal royalties, because he wants to cut in Queensland.

### Health System

**Mr BLEIJIE:** My question is to the Minister for Health. The government did not listen to Queenslanders' concerns about Caboolture Hospital surgeries, Mackay obstetrics and the DNA laboratory, attacking questions as 'politicking', 'scaremongering' and 'making up stories'. If even a Queenslander of the Year and doctor cannot get a response to his concerns about the PA spinal unit from the health minister, how can Queenslanders trust the minister to fix the health crisis?

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** Mr Acting Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The member for Kawana's question contains a number of imputations. He could easily ask the same question by rewording it, but the imputations should be addressed.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** I will hear the point of order in silence. I will take some advice. Deputy Leader of the Opposition, it is important that ministers are held to account and answer questions put, but you can ask questions that do not contain imputations. I ask you to reword the question without the imputations.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker. My question is to the Minister for Health. When the opposition raised concerns about the Queensland health crisis, Caboolture Hospital surgeries, Mackay obstetric issues and the DNA laboratory, we were attacked by government members saying we were 'politicking', 'scaremongering' and 'making up stories'. If even a Queenslander of the Year and doctor cannot get a response to his concerns about the PA spinal unit from this health minister, how can Queenslanders trust the minister to fix the Queensland health crisis?

**Government members** interjected.

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Order! The House will remain in order. I will take some advice. I will give the minister some latitude in how she answers this question.

**Mrs D'ATH:** I thank the member for his question. I did address this in my ministerial statement this morning. It was forwarded on to the hospital and health service to get a response, because it was not just about the actual unit itself but also related to an individual patient. It named the patient and sought a response in relation to that. It was appropriate that my office forwarded that on to the hospital and health service to get a proper response in relation to this individual. The hospital and health service advised—

**Mr Bleijie** interjected.

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Member for Kawana, you have asked the question. The minister is being responsive.

**Mrs D'ATH:**—that a draft letter was being progressed to me last week.

**Mr Bleijie** interjected.

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Member for Kawana, you are warned.

**Mrs D'ATH:** As I said, I respect the doctor significantly. I have met Dinesh numerous times, and I respect his advocacy and the work he does across the hospital system in lifting awareness around disabilities and spinal injuries. I think he does a great job in doing that. Aside from the letter, though, which I have responded to, I want to briefly touch on the issues the member for Kawana raises about issues raised by the opposition. They wonder why—

**Mr Nicholls** interjected.

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Order! Member for Clayfield, you are warned.

**Mrs D'ATH:** Members of the opposition wonder why, when they ask questions, I seek to get information from Queensland Health or hospital and health services, for clarification purposes, before I take what they say as fact. The most recent example is from just last week, when the Leader of the Opposition claimed that Rockhampton maternity services were not on full service. Members opposite were fishing it around to media—I have seen the email from the senior media officer from the Leader of the Opposition's office—trying to get up a story that Rockhampton is not running full services. They put out a press release saying that Mackay and Gympie maternity services are close to being closed. It is shameful that they would do that. The Leader of the Opposition has still not apologised to the women who are expecting children and who are going to be birthing at those hospitals or to the staff, who feel demoralised. Mackay maternity services have never been on bypass. The Leader of the Opposition should apologise to those staff and those women for what he put out last week.

### First Nations School Students

**Ms LUI:** My question is of the Minister for Education, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing. Can the minister advise how the Palaszczuk government is supporting the advancement of First Nations students in our schools and through other initiatives, and is the minister aware of any alternative approaches?

**Ms GRACE:** I thank the member, a very proud Torres Strait Islander woman who knows how her strong advocacy is preparing the leaders in our schools right across this state, not only in the electorate of Cook. We recently held a community cabinet on Thursday Island. It was fantastic to visit, with the local member, campuses on Poruma, Erub and Moa islands and at Bamaga. We met some fantastic First Nations leaders who are emerging out of those schools.

We want to work with our First Nations students in ensuring reconciliation. Obviously, the Palaszczuk government's Path to Treaty is an integral part of this. As education minister, I want to work with the member for Cook to see education play a key role in supporting and advancing First Nations students in those leadership positions. We have a number of First Nations students embedded in our Equity and Excellence strategy. We have a focus on educational achievement and cultural inclusion. We have implemented an Indigenous language program in 40 schools and will soon have it in another 150. We are making sure we have infrastructure and First Nations teachers in classrooms via the Pearl Duncan Teaching Scholarship. I can go on with so many programs we have in schools, such as Clontarf and ARTIE, that I know a lot of members fully support, ensuring that our First Nations leaders in our schools have a voice.

It was a pleasure yesterday to meet Ebony, a First Nations school captain at Brisbane Bayside State College. Thanks to the member for Lytton, I visited them when they were having lunch. Ebony wants to change her school symbol to the native sea eagle, as the current symbol—an owl—is a death symbol in the Quandamooka nation. As a leader, Ebony is organising and getting people onside. She got a petition going and secured the support of the school leadership team. She is out there taking a stand, which is more than I can say about the Voice in this country from those opposite, particularly the Leader of the Opposition.

Great leaders take a stand. Even if you do not like what Peter Dutton is doing and the chaos in federal parliament—shadow ministers resigning and members of parliament standing up saying they are not going to support him—at least he is taking a stand. I urge the Leader of the Opposition to show some leadership. Students are doing it in our schools. How hard is it? Eagles do not flock; they take a stand like our Premier supporting the Voice. I saw *Hamilton* and I am not going to throw away my shot; I am voting yes. I say to the Leader of the Opposition: don't throw away your shot—you will regret it!

*(Time expired)*

### Minister for Health and Ambulance Services

**Mr LANGBROEK:** My question is to the Premier. I note the health minister's previous answers this morning and that Dr Palipana has had no response regarding the PA spinal unit and ask: given this and other ongoing failures in the health system, will the Premier act to remove the minister from her position?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** The answer is N-O.

### Redlands, Traffic Congestion

**Ms RICHARDS:** My question is of the Minister for Transport and Main Roads. Could the minister update the House on what the government is doing to improve congestion in the Redlands, and is the minister aware of any alternative approaches?

**Mr BAILEY:** I thank the member for Redlands for her question. She has been a relentless advocate for better roads in her electorate. We will see major works starting after the savage cuts by the Newman government. We have \$110 million for the Cleveland—

**Mr Lister** interjected.

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. Member for Southern Downs, you are warned under the standing orders. At least it was not about Emu Swamp Dam, but you are still warned.

**Mr BAILEY:** We have a \$110 million commitment from the Palaszczuk government—100 per cent funded by this state government—for the upgrade of Cleveland-Redland Bay Road because of the hard work of the member for Redlands. We are dealing with congestion in a growth area.

There has been another kind of congestion out there recently. That was the AGM out in the member for Oodgeroo's electorate. We saw an insurgency by Andrew Laming, the former member for Bowman. He lost by one vote—51 to 49. He nearly rolled the member for Oodgeroo. The fact that there was such a tight vote was not the issue. The issue was that the Leader of the Opposition was there. There was a massive internal LNP brawl out at Oodgeroo and where was the Leader of the Opposition? He was right in the middle of it.

There can only be three possibilities. One possibility is that he is supporting the member for Oodgeroo and if he is he should have the courage to say so. Another possibility is that he is supporting Andrew Laming. The other possibility is that he did not know there was an internal brawl happening, which is probably the worst outcome altogether.

What we are seeing is inept leadership from the Leader of the Opposition. We saw the laptop gaffe. We saw the donkey gaffe where at his own press conference promoting some women candidates he could not resist personally abusing the female MP for Redlands. He could not get through the press conference without doing that. We saw his gaffe in the pandemic about the doona. We see his lack of leadership with the Voice.

**Mr Minnikin** interjected.

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. Member for Chatsworth, your interjections today have been constant and ongoing. I now warn you under the standing orders.

**Mr BAILEY:** There are more tests for him about what he said he stands for. I understand it may be the last term for the member for Burleigh. Will the Leader of the Opposition support a woman going into Burleigh as the LNP candidate in a seat held by the LNP? Will he follow through on what he says he believes in? Will he preselect a female candidate in Hervey Bay, which I believe is coming up? Will he do what he says he is going to do? This is the time for him to clarify it. Does he support the member for Oodgeroo or does he support Andrew Laming because we know that brawl is going to continue out in the bay?

### **Tully Millstream**

**Mr KNUTH:** My question without notice is to the Minister for Energy, Renewables and Hydrogen. Community concerns have been raised about the potential land sale of the Tully Millstream site by CleanCo. Will the minister confirm whether CleanCo has been given permission to sell the land on the Tully Millstream site and how this would adversely affect proposed water projects in the regions?

**Mr de BRENNI:** I can confirm for the member for Hill that CleanCo has not sold any of its Millstream properties. It is not proposing to sell any of those Millstream properties.

### **Palaszczuk Labor Government, First Nations**

**Mr McCALLUM:** 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 First Nations voices at the heart of decision-making, and is the Attorney-General aware of any alternative approaches?

**Ms FENTIMAN:** I thank the member for Bundamba for the question. As a proud First Nations man he knows when First Nations people are represented in our decision-making processes we are a better society for it. That is why the Palaszczuk government appointed the state's first ever First Nations justice officer who will develop strategies to drive reform and address the over-representation of First Nations people in our criminal justice system. I think I speak for everyone on this side of the House when I say that the Labor Party is proud to support a constitutionally enshrined First Nations Voice to Parliament.

It is a contrast to those opposite. We saw the Leader of the Opposition stand up time and time again last week, dodging questions about where he stood on this important issue. We are all used to and Queenslanders are all used to watching the Leader of the Opposition squirm his way out of giving a straight answer on pretty much everything, but I have to say that this was something else. At least we have seen Liberal leaders across the country have the courage to stand up against Peter Dutton dividing the nation—like those in Tasmania and Western Australia. We have even seen people like Julian Leeser take a stand and resign from the front bench. Even the Leader of the Opposition's shadow minister the member for Bonney has said that this referendum offers a powerful concept which can deliver better outcomes.

They are willing to take a stand based on the extensive information that has been provided to the Australian community so far. The Uluru Statement from the Heart was in 2017. He has had six years to make a decision on this important issue. Even every one of Australia's top tier law firms, the Australian Lawyers Alliance, the Law Council of Australia, former justices and chief justices of the High Court have all lined up to support the Voice.

So what is the Leader of the Opposition waiting for? For him it is simple. It is not about being on the right side of history; it is cynical political fence sitting. It is what he always does. He did not tell Queenslanders where he would stand on voluntary assisted dying. He did not tell Queenslanders where he would stand on abortion. He still will not say where he stands on quotas to finally get women into parliament. Now he refuses to say where he will stand on the Voice. How does he hope to lead Queensland if he will not be honest with Queenslanders? True leaders take a stand and it is about time the Leader of the Opposition did.

### **Olympic and Paralympic Games, Infrastructure**

**Mr ANDREW:** My question without notice is to the Treasurer. Concerning supply chain constraints and skyrocketing building costs and cost blowouts on nearly all Queensland key infrastructure projects, will the Treasurer advise what extra cost increases this will have on the 2032 games and has Treasury obtained updated business cases on the financial viability of the games' projects?

**Mr DICK:** I thank the member for Mirani for his question—the One Nation member in this parliament. He would be better off paying attention to getting rid of Mark Latham from his party as we got rid of him rather than worrying about building costs. He is the most disgraceful politician in this country who you found a home for in the New South Wales parliament—the most shameful politician in this country.

I will say this to the member for Mirani: we have a long path to building the Olympics. I know the member for Mirani does not support the Olympics. That is completely inside that question. This is a person who will not support the most transformative event, along with our Energy and Jobs Plan, in the history of this state. The Olympics will transform this state like no other event in the history of this state. The truth of the matter is that everyone in the world will know the word 'Queensland' by the time those games are finished.

It is no surprise that the cost of construction has increased in this country. One only has to look at the most basic Australian Bureau of Statistics data to tell us that. Construction steel has gone up 70 per cent in the year. Timber products have gone up 40 per cent. The cost of fuel for construction companies has gone up by multiples—I think more than 60 per cent in the last year. That is going to have an impact.

I will give the member for Mirani a guarantee: our government will back in and build every single infrastructure project we have promised to the people of Queensland, unlike the Leader of the Opposition, who we know has an infrastructure hit list. We are not going to cut projects. Maybe that is One Nation's policy. I do not know what One Nation's policy is. Perhaps the member for Mirani can address the parliament on whether he will cut or whether he will build.

**Mr Lister** interjected.

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Member for Southern Downs, you can leave the chamber for one hour. You were already warned. It is not a laughing matter, members. From the member for Southern Downs' experience, he should know that when you are warned you should maintain decorum.

*Whereupon the honourable member for Southern Downs withdrew from the chamber at 11.10 am.*

**Mr DICK:** Maybe the member for Mirani could make a statement to the House on whether he supports infrastructure or whether he would cut infrastructure. There are all of those projects we are building in the north of our state. There is CopperString, which will benefit his constituents who will be working on the single biggest transformative project for the north of our state since the arrival of the steam locomotive—a 1,100-kilometre powerline that will transform the north of Queensland. Maybe he could tell the House whether he supports it or not. We know the LNP will cut. They do not support royalties, so all those projects will go.

**Mr ANDREW:** Mr Acting Speaker—

**Mr DICK:** We know the member for Chatsworth wants to cut payments to workers. He wants to cut proper pay to workers in this state—construction workers. That is what he wants to do.

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

**Mr DICK:** That is the LNP plan but—

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. Apologies. I was taking advice from the Clerk. What is your point of order?

**Mr ANDREW:** I just wanted to know whether we did a business case on the expenditure going forward.

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** No. That is not a point of order. That is an additional question.

**Mr ANDREW:** Sorry, on relevance under standing order 118, did we do an actual business case? Can we go back to the question that was asked?

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Order! Taking points of order is not an opportunity to debate or add to the debate. I am listening to the Treasurer's response. He is being relevant to the question asked. I call the Treasurer to complete his answer.

**Mr DICK:** We will build roads and rail and energy and the Olympics and we will be proud to do so. We will not back one step away from doing that for Queensland.

### Voice to Parliament

**Ms PEASE:** My question is of the Minister for Seniors and Disability Services and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships. Can the minister please inform the House about the government's position on the Voice referendum?

**Mr CRAWFORD:** I thank the member for Lytton for her question. I acknowledge the work that she is doing in her electorate and most importantly recently with a Voice, treaty and truth session in her electorate.

It has been heard many times today but our position as a government on the upcoming referendum on the Indigenous Voice to Parliament is very clear: we are voting yes. All of us are voting yes. We will be voting yes for an official representative body that gives Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples a say in laws and policies that affect them. We will be voting yes in support of the reasonable request of the Uluru statement for the Voice to Parliament to be enshrined in the Australian Constitution.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are currently not recognised in the Constitution, the founding document of our nation. Is it possible that the Australian people would deny the fact that the world's two oldest continuous cultures did not walk this land for 60,000 years? I think not. We believe most fair-minded and reasonable citizens accept and acknowledge Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples are the original custodians of this country. We believe that it is only fair and right that the traditional owners of our land be written into the nation's Constitution. That is why we are voting yes for the Voice, because it is the voice of reason. We support the calls in the Uluru Statement from the Heart for voice, treaty and truth. We believe this referendum can be an inspiring and unifying moment for all Australians.

The Leader of the Opposition has given no indication on his position, nor the position of his party. Instead he has asked for members of the Queensland LNP to have an 'open mind'. That is a small step and that is okay. That is a start. All MPs should be able to have an open mind, but his MPs should also be allowed to speak it. Now is the time for the Leader of the Opposition to unshackle his MPs. Stop hiding in the shadows. Let them speak. If they do not stand for something, people think they stand for nothing.

People want to know—people need to know—where the leadership and the LNP stand on this. Let them speak. Allow individual MPs to state their own position, not the position of Peter Dutton or David Littleproud or Clive Palmer and not the position of the LNP state executive. Yes or no—let them speak. Allow them to speak their conscious. The Leader of the Opposition should stand up today and announce that LNP MPs are free to declare, vote and campaign as they wish. To quote Dean Parkin from last night who is one of the campaigners for the yes campaign, he said quite clearly, 'This is happening.'

*(Time expired)*

### Bundaberg Base Hospital, Patient Safety

**Mr BENNETT:** My question is to the Minister for Health. In an industrial relations court matter, doctors from the Bundaberg Hospital revealed a shortage of beds and the emergency department has become an unsafe place for staff and patients under the Palaszczuk government. What action has the minister taken to support staff and guarantee patient safety at the Bundaberg Base Hospital?

**Mrs D'ATH:** I thank the member for his question. Once again, I have copies if you want to have a look at the Health and Hospitals Plan in which it outlines the 2,509 new beds which includes the new hospital at Bundaberg. The member for Bundaberg knows that very well, unlike the member for Burnett, who still has not caught up to that fact or is just deliberately misleading people. I will let the public decide on that. We are very proud of our almost \$10 billion capital investment: three new hospitals, 11 expansions, which of course includes a new Bundaberg hospital with an additional 121 beds—a \$1.2 billion investment by the Palaszczuk government.

What are we doing to support staff? What are we doing to support beds? We have an almost \$10 billion plan to expand beds. We are employing 9,475 extra frontline health workers in this term of government. That is compared to the fact that, under an LNP government, if they had been elected in 2020 they would have seen 5,035 fewer health workers—5,035 fewer frontline health workers.

**Mr POWELL:** Mr Acting Speaker, I rise to a point of order on relevance under standing order 118(b). The question was not about a hospital that will be built in half a decade to a lower standard than promised. It was about an industrial relations court matter—

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

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Order! Resume your seat, Manager of Opposition Business. I have previously said I do not want points of order being used to further debate. The minister is being broadly relevant. Do you have an additional point of order, member for Capalaba?

**Mr BROWN:** Yes, I do. That is a frivolous point of order. This is the third time—

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Order! The House will come to order. I am more than capable of dealing with this point of order. Continue please, member for Capalaba.

**Mr BROWN:** This is the third frivolous point of order during question time to disrupt the health minister from giving an accurate answer to the question, which she was doing and which you have ruled on multiple times during this session.

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** The point of order was not frivolous.


**Mrs D'ATH:** They never like it when I talk about the fact they sacked 4,400 frontline health workers. If they had been elected just over two years ago, there would have been—

*(Time expired)*

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


### MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

#### Further Answer to Question, Maternity Services, Bypass

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Minister for Health and Ambulance Services) (11.19 am): I rise to make a brief ministerial statement. Further to questions from the opposition this morning with regard to bypass, I can advise that, in providing a response to the Leader of the Opposition's question regarding the units that have been on bypass since June last year, due to the size and scale of the scope of the question, and noting that a unit can be on bypass in some instances for periods less than 24 hours due to illness or unforeseen events, I can currently advise hospitals that have been on bypass for more than 10 days include: Biloela, Chinchilla, Cooktown and Gladstone. I note that this situation would be far worse if 5,035 fewer frontline workers, including 3,270 nurses and midwives and 750 doctors, were not employed this term if the LNP had been elected.

### ACTING SPEAKER'S RULING

#### Same Question Rule; Amendment to Notice of Motion

 **Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Honourable members, paragraph 1 of the notice of motion given by the member for Traeger this morning offends the same question rule. It has come to my attention that on 16 March 2023 the member for Hinchinbrook moved an amendment to the Strengthening Community




Safety Bill of substantially the same effect as the matters contained in paragraph 1. That amendment is negated. Paragraph 2 appears to be in order because, while this matter was the subject of a circulated amendment, it was never moved or resolved. The notice of motion is therefore amended by my order in accordance with standing order 70 by omitting paragraph 1 and changing 'namely' to 'including'.

## HEALTH AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

### Second Reading

Resumed from 18 April (see p. 998), on motion of Mrs D'Ath—

That the bill be now read a second time.


 **Ms KING** (Pumicestone—ALP) (11.21 am), continuing: I return to my contribution in relation to the Health and Other Legislation Amendment Bill, particularly the extremely sensitive changes surrounding the operations of the Mental Health Review Tribunal and other relevant tribunals.

The new framework established by the bill allows for more flexibility for the recording of evidence and reporting of outcomes for tribunals, enhancing safeguards for privacy and confidentiality, and clarifying processes. In particular, it removes barriers to the electronic recording of proceedings of the MHRC and makes electronic recording the default recording method except where significant distress may be caused to participants. The bill amends the Mental Health Act to allow a person who has capacity to waive their right to representation in ways other than in writing—for example, verbally where a proceeding is electronically recorded—which is respectful of the wishes of the person and removes barriers to make sure proceedings are as smooth as possible. The Public Advocate particularly supported these changes. Dr Chesterman clearly noted the current requirement for a written waiver of the right to representation creates delays and barriers. For example, if evidence is being given by phone or video and no specific written waiver can be provided, proceedings may not be able to go ahead.

The president of the Queensland Law Society noted that the Law Society is supportive of the bill's intention to implement an electronic recording and transcription service for MHRT proceedings, and in relation to the exemption option for the recording of proceedings further said that the Mental Health Review Tribunal did a short trial a couple of years back where they had tribunal members record proceedings. One of the issues flagged at that time was concerns expressed by patients about the recording of those proceedings, so the provision of the exemption in situations where distress is experienced by the participant is an important one.

The Queensland Human Rights Commissioner commended amendments to change requirements around MHRT recordings as protecting rights to fair and public hearings and equality before the law but did note some concerns regarding the provision of discretion to record rather than requirement to record, while recognising that changes to the Recording of Evidence Act to impose a lack of discretion may have implications for other tribunal proceedings. Importantly, the Human Rights Commissioner submitted that the MHRT is a therapeutic jurisdiction, so if a requirement to record is in fact countertherapeutic then it may appropriately activate the exceptional circumstances situation. In some cases, severe distress at recording might mean that the person's right to health and to not be traumatised further by the proceedings outweighs the value of the contribution to their right to a fair trial that the recording would provide based on clinical advice. The commissioner expected that exceptions to recording would be rare, especially once recording becomes the default approach and standard for all proceedings. Notably, the commissioner stated that equality before the law requires that every time you have an imposition on your rights—like being detained against your will—the commission believes that the underlying value is that people must have an understanding of their matter and be able to access information with regard to decisions made with respect to that matter.

This was a complex bill, and I want to thank the department in particular for their dedicated work with the committee as we worked through it as well as all of the submitters who took such time and care to explain the context. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr O'CONNOR** (Bonney—LNP) (11.25 am): I rise along with my colleagues to not oppose this bill. Like other members, I will start by thanking all of the health workers that I represent. In my electorate I am very proud to have the Gold Coast University Hospital, Gold Coast Health and the Gold Coast Private Hospital in the great electorate of Bonney. One of the health workers in particular I want to highlight is my good friend Dr Dinesh Palipana. The minister has previously announced a stakeholder advisory body for the spinal injury unit, and while the minister is here I want to say that I think

Dr Palipana would be a fine member for that advisory body to try to bring some better outcomes to that part of Queensland Health. Of course, I also thank my fellow committee members and our excellent committee staff.

The changes to the Hospital and Health Boards Act 2011 are well intentioned, but there are still concerns they will not address the underlying cause of widespread burnout, stress, fatigue and all of the other things our frontline health workers are going through every hour of every day. These amendments will introduce a proactive requirement on hospital and health boards and hospital and health services to consider the health, safety and wellbeing of their workers.

I want to share the comments of the AMAQ at our public hearing on 31 January. They talked about surveys they have done of their doctors in all HHSs which disclosed some really shocking claims of rampant bullying and even suicide attempts. At that hearing their CEO, Dr Brett Dale, talked about the resident hospital health check surveys they have been running for the last seven years. He said—

Year in and year out you get a response of up to about a thousand doctors eligible for that survey. Every year we get near 40 per cent of all doctors participating in that claiming that they have been bullied or harassed in the workplace and feel stressed to some degree. We have had suicides across Queensland. Each year we have provided that feedback to the hospital health services in a collegiate way. It was not about naming and shaming, but it was to give them the information to address that.

In every year out of that 40 per cent something like 60 per cent feel like there has been no resolution or action to address their bullying or harassment complaint. That is seven years running with no change.

He talked about boards needing to be held accountable to bring the badly needed change they have been calling for. I guess the concept behind that is that accountability will hopefully change behaviour. I do still think there are questions about whether this does that.

At the committee hearings the department confirmed they will just review how this is rolled out with their normal processes. They said that this bill was 'never intended to be a compliance measure'. When asked about how this would be rolled out and what the tangible benefits would be, they instead pointed to other state and Commonwealth acts such as the Workplace Health and Safety Act and other health and wellbeing programs for staff.

At our hearing the Queensland Nurses and Midwives' Union also talked about their staff surveys, which found demanding and dangerous workloads, unacceptable workplace violence, moral distress, fatigue and burnout. This is all feedback that I—and I am sure many of us—have received from nurses in our communities. The wellbeing considerations this bill seeks to implement can be everything from check-ins to flexible work arrangements, dealing with health risks like fatigue and trauma and even running events, I guess. At GCH we have the excellent ArtBeat festival every year during Mental Health Week, which is an incredible celebration by consumers and clinicians.

The other technical changes in the bill—like the amendments to the Public Health Act and the Transplantation and Anatomy Act 1979—are fairly administrative and are fair and reasonable. The bill will allow disclosure of information about individuals working with medicines or poisons if it is in the public interest. It will allow the ability to disclose confidential medicines and poisons information for regulation, safety and compliance.

There are also changes regarding fumigants and pesticides for primary producers in our agricultural sector. I note that our beekeepers, who we all love, will still have their current exemptions if they are a profit-producing operation. There are changes regarding student information disclosure for the vision-screening health service. There is an offence for failing to ensure a person does not receive greater than a specified dose of ionising radiation, and we did get some clarity around that. There were concerns raised and the department clarified that well in the public hearing so some of the misunderstandings could be overcome.

There are disposal requirements for low-risk radioactive material. The bill also removes the redundant requirement for the publication of water fluoridation decisions and implementation notices. I acknowledge the member for Surfers Paradise. He loves to talk about how fluoridation is his reform. He championed it from opposition. He apparently used to be a dentist so it is something he is very passionate about.

**Ms Bates:** He can't show his face.

**Mr O'CONNOR:** He can't show his face; I will take that interjection. Apparently, he was a dentist. He still is. I do not know if you would want him working on your teeth because he has been in this place for many years. He talks about that two or three times an hour.

The bill also deals with implementation notices and consent processes for human tissue and organ donations across public and private hospitals. If any member has not signed up to that, I would highly encourage them to go to the DonateLife website or myGov. It is a very quick and easy change to sign up to that.


The clear evidence is that changes to the Queensland Cancer Register will increase our understanding of cancer. The feedback from stakeholders was to make it as smooth and easy as possible to get that data in. We have heard from a number of other speakers about why that is so important—with Queensland having the highest number of skin cancer incidents in the world and this is about having better cancer data. It would be remiss of me if I did not mention the Institute for Glycomics at Griffith University that I voluntarily serve on the Board of Advice for. They are doing some amazing work in the sugar biology of cancers and also trying to get better screening processes. This will make a huge difference for researchers like that.

I welcome the clarity from the minister that the committee highlighted about how the chief executive will determine public interest when disclosing information. In terms of recordings or transcripts of interviews and the changes to the Evidence Act, the department made it clear they did not want a specific provision to require those transcripts because it is not present in any other Evidence Act situation. The committee had a good recommendation on the resourcing to produce those transcripts. The importance of these changes was highlighted by the Public Advocate at our hearing on this bill. They outlined the issues which are coming up with the current situation. They said—

Everyone is taking their own notes. I have certainly heard from individual advocates about inconsistencies between people's recollections as to what occurred. Without an electronic recording, there has been some dispute as to what witnesses have said, what has been said by their clients and what has been said by the tribunal.

The Law Society and the Human Rights Commission gave some good insight into the difficulties their members have with the current system. These changes are good, and that is my contribution.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms Bush): Before I call the next member, I will read through the list of members on a warning. They are the members for Toowoomba South, Broadwater, Maroochydore, Capalaba, Nanango, Callide, Moggill, Kawana, Clayfield and Chatsworth.

 **Ms HOWARD** (Ipswich—ALP) (11.33 am): I am pleased to support the Health and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. The Palaszczuk government is strongly focused on delivering quality healthcare reforms that improve health outcomes for future generations of Queenslanders. There have been many bills since we were elected in 2015 that reflect that. Doctors, nurses, midwives, allied health professionals, and operational and administrative staff in Queensland's hospital and health services all do an amazing job looking after the health and wellbeing of their fellow Queenslanders. They often work in very complex, high-pressure environments that pose safety risks to their physical and mental health.

Queensland Health is the biggest employer in Ipswich. We have to ensure that our hospitals and our health boards support our public health workforce so they can effectively provide a good level of care to Queenslanders. That is why this bill will amend the Hospital and Health Boards Act 2011 to enshrine in legislation that the physical and psychological health, safety and wellbeing of our public health workforce is appropriately prioritised. Hospital boards and hospital and health services will do this by promoting a supportive workplace culture and proactively putting into place measures that support the health, safety and wellbeing of their staff.

We all value the work that our public health workers do every day, but their work environments can sometimes be incredibly challenging—take, for example, nursing. Australian nurses are highly skilled practitioners who are university qualified and have training to carry out complex clinical procedures on patients utilising advanced medical technology. In a 2022 report by McKinsey & Company on Australia's nursing retention dilemma, a survey of nursing staff found that working conditions contribute substantially to nurses' decisions to stay or leave. The biggest factor influencing nurses' decisions to stay in their current role was a positive work environment, like having caring teammates, having a safe space, feeling valued by management and having a real sense of purpose.

Given that the demand for nursing professionals is predicted to grow, it is crucially important that their health, safety and wellbeing are well supported by Queensland's public hospital and health services and boards. It is crucial that all public health workers—doctors, allied health professionals, nurses and midwives, and admin and support staff—are well supported in their workplace so they can continue to keep looking after the health and wellbeing of Queenslanders.

The other health worker staff worth mentioning are our health security officers in hospitals who sometimes have the very challenging job of dealing with the public and protecting the safety of patients and health staff. We know that hospitals, especially emergency departments, can be extremely stressful

places, and unfortunately there are thousands of instances each year of patients abusing and assaulting hospital staff who are helping them. There is no excuse for patients to treat hospital staff like this, but there are instances where some of those patients do need emergency treatment to save their life or prevent serious impairment.

This bill will clarify when healthcare security officers can direct persons to leave public healthcare premises if they are causing a public nuisance or being disorderly or creating a disturbance. It will reinforce that health security officers cannot provide a direction for a person to leave the hospital grounds if the person requires emergency medical treatment. This amendment reflects current practice where security officers communicate with clinical staff before providing a direction to leave. I know this works because I often hear anecdotes in my role as a local MP and also as the mother of a doctor who has been in those situations.

During the pandemic, our government put the lives of Queenslanders first by putting in place public health measures and following the advice of experts to keep our population safe from COVID-19. We understand that a healthy population is more productive and able to fulfil their potential in life. In this bill, we are continuing our government's strong public health agenda by adding an amendment to this bill to maximise resources to our school vision-screening program. Each year the Queensland Health Primary School Nurse Health Readiness Program screens Queensland prep students for lazy eye, or amblyopia, which is the leading cause of preventable vision loss in children under eight years. Early detection can markedly improve children's engagement at school and long-term education outcomes. As there is currently no authorisation for school staff to share information with Queensland Health's vision-screening service, a significant amount of time and resources is spent on administrative work and this can sometimes limit the program's ability to screen enough students to achieve universal coverage. This bill will amend the Public Health Act to authorise the disclosure of student information from schools to Queensland Health's vision-screening service to reduce that administrative burden and allow more kids to be screened for this condition.

There are a significant number of amendments to this bill and I will touch briefly on a few of those. This bill will amend the Medicines and Poisons Act to allow disclosure of information about individuals working with medicines or poisons and enable Queensland Health to disclose confidential medicines and poisons information for regulation, safety and compliance purposes.

The bill also amends the Mental Health Act to remove the requirement for an adult with capacity to waive the right to be represented at a Mental Health Tribunal hearing in writing. Requiring a waiver in writing is something that can create a barrier for individuals trying to access their rights in a timely way.

This also will amend our Public Health Act to modernise the Queensland Cancer Register to provide a more accurate picture of cancer in Queensland. This will enable us to properly plan, monitor and evaluate cancer treatments and cancer care outcomes in the state and provide accurate data for research purposes. The bill will also amend the Radiation Safety Act to create a new offence for failure to ensure a person does not receive greater than a specified dose of ionising radiation. These amendments will facilitate public health services and initiatives to improve Queenslanders' health outcomes.

I want to note that the health of all Queenslanders has clearly been a priority for the Palaszczuk Labor government right from the get-go. Since 2015, we have invested billions of dollars into Queensland's health system to ensure everyone is able to access quality treatment when needed. Our health budget last year was the largest in Queensland's history, allocating \$23.6 billion to deliver new hospitals, expand existing hospitals, recruit more doctors, nurses and frontline workers, and fund better health services for rural and regional centres. In Ipswich, we are due to complete the satellite hospital in South Ripley in the last quarter of this year. Adjacent to the satellite hospital, we are building a new subacute care facility which delivers an additional 90 subacute beds to boost our local capacity and provide physical therapy rehabilitation, geriatric, palliative and interim care services. That subacute facility is set to be delivered by the end of the next year.

The Ipswich Hospital has been undergoing stage 1 expansion work since 2017. Last year \$710 million was announced to deliver stage 2 of the hospital expansion which will deliver an additional 200 beds by 2027. The much anticipated Mental Health Unit in Ipswich is set to be finished before too much longer. It is fantastic to see the progress of that much awaited building. Ipswich has received record health funding over the last eight years, and we are seeing the result of that in our community. I commend this bill to the House.



**Dr ROWAN** (Moggill—LNP) (11.41 am): I rise to make a contribution to the debate on the Health and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022. During the final sitting week of last year, on 29 November 2022, the Minister for Health and Ambulance Services introduced this legislation to the Queensland parliament where it was subsequently referred to the Health and Environment Committee for its consideration. On 24 February 2023, the Health and Environment Committee tabled its report with five recommendations, including that the legislation be passed. As previously indicated, this legislation is largely uncontroversial and principally technical in nature. Accordingly, the Liberal National Party will be supporting the passage of this legislation.

This legislation will amend eight separate acts including the Hospital and Health Boards Act 2011 which is primarily in relation to improving staff wellbeing. Those amendments pertaining to the following seven other acts are considered mostly technical. These acts include: the Medicines and Poisons Act 2019, the Recording of Evidence Act 1962, the Mental Health Act 2016, the Public Health Act 2005, the Radiation Safety Act 1999, the Transplantation and Anatomy Act 1979 and Water Fluoridation Act 2008.

Before turning specifically to the amendments that pertain to the Hospital and Health Boards Act, I wish to again acknowledge and place on record my sincere appreciation to all frontline health and hospital staff here in Queensland. Queensland's health and hospital staff are the unsung heroes of our society. These dedicated Queenslanders work tirelessly every day to ensure our communities stay healthy and safe, and they certainly help people in their times of need. Primarily, the amendments to the Hospital and Health Boards Act 2011 seek to strengthen protections for the physical and psychological wellbeing of the public health workforce by requiring Queensland's Hospital and Health Services to proactively consider and implement measures supporting the health, safety and wellbeing of staff of public sector health service facilities.

I wish to particularly acknowledge the submission of the Australian Medical Association of Queensland which, whilst welcoming these wellbeing amendments, also advocated for an independent evaluation of all measures implemented by each Hospital and Health Service in support of the amendments, and that these evaluations be made public on an annual basis. It is very important that transparency is provided there to see not only what is currently occurring across the public sector health workforce but also those changes that are being implemented and benefits that are being achieved.

I would also say in relation to some of the testimony and submission from health professional associations, including the Australian Medical Association, the professional leadership across the professions is very important when it comes to eliminating bullying in hospital and health services. Certainly some of the surveys that the Australian Medical Association of Queensland has highlighted, particularly in relation to junior doctors, is very troubling. We must eliminate the bullying that occurs in relation to junior doctors because eventually they become the senior leaders of the profession, and culturally you cannot have a situation where they have been modelled in a particular way or seen particular behaviours undertaken that then they implement themselves. It has health and wellbeing implications for all of those services, it has health and wellbeing consequences for staff, but importantly we need professional leadership there to assist with that as well.

It also has implications for health workforce recruitment and retention. Sometimes when we see particular hospitals struggling in certain parts of Queensland, again the culture that exists there is very problematic and that is leading to not only a loss of staff but also problems recruiting staff. All of these things are extremely important. Accordingly, I note the comments and recommendation No. 2 of the Health and Environment Committee that—

Hospital and Health Services and Hospital and Health Boards regularly report on their progress on supporting staff health, safety and wellbeing, at a minimum in their annual reports.

That is a very important transparency and accountability measure and one that deserves to be adopted and implemented.

Whilst efforts to improve the safety and wellbeing of frontline health and hospital staff are welcomed, the measures contained within this legislation do not even begin to address the systemic underlying issues that are at the core of staff burnout, fatigue and underappreciation, and that goes to resourcing particularly within many of our hospital and health services; that they are given the equipment, the staffing members and all the other resources to provide patient services.

Queensland's frontline health and hospital staff continue to work in a health system which currently is broken and in crisis. Really, it has to be said again, as it has been said many times, that this is because of the current state Labor government's failure to heal the health crisis here in Queensland. Poor management and a lack of resources have left many health workers across Queensland feeling unsupported and overwhelmed. Just this week, as we have heard in this place, last year under the

Palaszczuk state Labor government, Queensland paramedics lost 147,000 hours whilst waiting on hospital ramps, and that is 400 lost hours per day. Despite the many challenges they face every day, under Labor's broken health system our frontline health workers continue to persevere, such is their commitment to their patients. These amendments are welcomed, but they are only just the start. Our frontline health and hospital workers and the Queensland patients they treat deserve a lot better.

As the Liberal National Party shadow minister for education, I wish to also acknowledge that this legislation seeks to amend the Public Health Act to authorise the disclosure of student information from schools to Queensland Health's vision-screening health service to maximise resources to screen children for preventable health issues. Under the measures proposed in this legislation, schools will be allowed to disclose student information to the vision-screening program, following similar processes already in place for dental and immunisation programs engaged by a hospital and health service. These amendments will also enable the vision-screening program to request information from schools regarding families who have failed to return a consent form for their child so that vision screening nurses have the opportunity to directly follow up with families of children who have not returned a consent form, address any questions or concerns the family may have about the program, and/or identify any support that may be required to complete the forms.

As outlined by the Health and Environment Committee in its report, in the year 2021 around 26 per cent of Queensland prep students missed out on being screened because they did not have a consent form returned. Based on average screening rates, this meant that up to 1,400 prep students could potentially have been undiagnosed with a visual abnormality that year. The intent of enabling access to this student information is to maximise the number of children who are screened and allow vision-screening nurses to oversee the consent process for the screening without burdening school administrative staff. I note that whilst this does pertain to the sharing of information regarding young students, Queensland Health will update the consent material and information resources for the program to advise parents and guardians how their children's information may be used.

I also note that this legislation will maintain existing privacy protections for information sharing, with information shared also subject to relevant safeguards under the Information Privacy Act 2009. Furthermore, there will remain provisions for parents who do not consent to the sharing of their child's information with the vision-screening program as well as for school principals to refuse to provide information where they consider such disclosures are not in the student's best interests, for example, if there are safety issues or parenting disputes. These are certainly fair and reasonable amendments and this is why they are supported by the Liberal National Party. Importantly, screening for vision abnormality certainly has an implication for students' learning. Being able to identify those vision abnormalities early and correct them if possible will certainly enhance educational outcomes.

The amendments to the Transplantation and Anatomy Act 1979 to ensure consistent consent processes are implemented for human tissue and organ donations across public and private hospitals are sensible and supported. In a former role I was executive director of medical services at St Andrews War Memorial Hospital and I can attest that this amendment and other amendments to the Transplantation and Anatomy Act 1979 have widespread health professional support.

I would also like to address recommendation 4 in the report, which states—

... that resources for technical and/or administrative support be provided to the Mental Health Review Tribunal to make recordings and/or transcriptions of proceedings.

Those are important for accuracy and transparency. Recommendation 5 in the report states—

The committee recommends that Queensland Health consider, as a priority, the inclusion of all basal cell carcinomas ... and squamous cell carcinomas ... as notifiable cancers in future amendments of the Public Health Regulation 2018.

That is very important not only for data collection purposes but also for population screening and for clinical services planning in the allocation of resources. I certainly am very supportive of those. I would also take this opportunity to encourage all Queenslanders to have regular skin checks. That is the only way we can have early identification of things like basal cell carcinomas and squamous cell carcinomas as well as melanomas and other skin cancers. It can certainly save lives. Finally, I also congratulate the Queensland Cancer Council on all of their work. They do terrific work right across Queensland.

In closing, I thank all stakeholders who contributed to the Health and Environment Committee's consideration of this legislation. I also thank all of the committee members including the deputy chair, the member for Southport, and also the member for Bonney for all of the work they did in scrutinising this legislation.



**Mr MARTIN** (Stretton—ALP) (11.51 am): I would like to start by acknowledging the commitment of the Minister for Health as well as the Health and Environment Committee for their efforts in developing the Health and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. The Palaszczuk government is committed to ensuring that all Queenslanders have the highest quality public health care. This bill will have a positive impact on the health and wellbeing of the people of Queensland by ensuring our health legislation is contemporary and effective. It is a comprehensive document that implements key policy initiatives to support the provision of better health services and to improve the operation of the health portfolio.

The bill will amend the Hospital and Health Boards Act 2011, the Medicines and Poisons Act 2019, the Mental Health Act 2016, the Public Health Act 2005, the Radiation Safety Act 1999, the Recording of Evidence Act 1962, the Transplantation and Anatomy Act 1979 and the Water Fluoridation Act 2008. These amendments reflect the ever-evolving healthcare landscape in Queensland. They will innovate the delivery of care and allow all healthcare workers to fulfil their potential by utilising their full range of skills.

Over the course of the pandemic it became very evident just how vital our healthcare workers are to our state. Healthcare staff work in high pressure environments every day, and they go above and beyond to treat and assist Queenslanders. We talk a lot about mental health, so it is important that the mental health of our healthcare workforce is also supported. That is why this bill amends the Hospital and Health Boards Act. It will require hospital boards and health service providers to proactively consider methods of supporting the health and safety and wellbeing of their staff. It will ensure that both the physical and psychological wellbeing of one of our most important workforces is being prioritised appropriately.

Various health and safety obligations to protect staff wellbeing in Queensland are already in place. However, these provisions are specific to the public health workforce due to the complex nature of their work and unique risks posed to their wellbeing. The requirements of the healthcare service providers to actively consider supporting the wellbeing of staff will be extended to those who perform community or home-based work. This means that all hospital boards and healthcare providers will have a clear obligation to support all of our fantastic doctors, nurses, midwives, allied healthcare professionals, and operational and admin staff who keep our system running.

Further amendments to the Hospital and Health Boards Act will reinforce the right to access healthcare services under the Human Rights Act 2019 by clarifying when security officers can direct persons to leave public healthcare premises. Health security officers play a key role in the safety and security of everyone—staff and patients—in the hospital environment. Current practices involve security officers communicating with clinical staff before providing direction to a person to leave the premises. Amendments in this bill reflect that by clarifying that a person must not be directed to leave a public health premises if they require emergency medical treatment, hence the communication with clinical staff.

To achieve the objective of keeping our health legislation contemporary and effective, amendments will be made to the Recording of Evidence Act. These amendments will establish a new statutory framework for the recording of proceedings at prescribed tribunals and provide access to copies of those records and transcripts of proceedings. In recognition of the different requirements of smaller tribunals that often do not sit in a regular controlled premises such as a courtroom, the new framework is more appropriately suited to the operational requirements. Recordings and transcripts will be available to any person unless prohibited by legislation or a tribunal order. These safeguards will be put in place to protect the privacy, safety and wellbeing of persons referred to in the recording and transcripts. As has been stated previously, mental health and wellbeing is a very important topic of discussion. One of the smaller tribunals that will now have greater flexibility thanks to this new recording framework is the Mental Health Review Tribunal. This tribunal will be provided with even more support through amendments to the Mental Health Act 2016.

On top of contemporising its recording and proceedings with the use of better technology through the Recording of Evidence Act, the amendments to the Mental Health Act will remove the requirement for an adult with capacity to waive the right to be represented at a Mental Health Review Tribunal hearing in writing. This requirement for a waiver to be in writing is an administrative burden for patients and creates an extra barrier for individuals who wish to exercise their rights in a timely manner. In the past situations have arisen where the tribunal has been unable to dismiss a legal representative even though a person with capacity has chosen to waive their right to representation. In those circumstances, the tribunal has had to adjourn proceedings until written waivers could be completed, thus causing delays to what is important treatment.

A person's right to legal representation needs to be protected and, as such, the Mental Health Review Tribunal will still be responsible for assessing a person's capacity to waive the right to legal representation. The amendment only allows a verbal waiver in place of a written waiver if the tribunal is satisfied that this would not cause injustice to the person who wants to waive the right.

Each year Queensland's Health's vision-screening program screens about 45,000 prep students for the presence of lazy eye and its associated risk factors. The screening process takes less than five minutes but helps to provide them the best possible start to their education. The early detection of vision problems reduces any impact on their learning and development by ensuring that young students can receive effective treatment early on.

Queensland's Public Health Act already allows student information to be shared between schools and public dental and immunisation programs. As part of this bill, amendments to the Public Health Act will insert the vision-screening program into that group of programs in which student information can be disclosed. This will remove the burden on school staff by enabling vision-screening nurses to oversee the consent process.

Further amendments to the Public Health Act will modernise the Queensland Cancer Register. These amendments certainly hit close to home as, unfortunately, we all know someone who has been affected by cancer. Sadly, around 31,000 Queenslanders are diagnosed with cancer annually and around 9,400 lose their life. The Queensland Cancer Register is a vital source of data that provides an accurate outlook of cancer in Queensland. It is one of the largest population-based registers in the country and it provides vital assistance in planning the care of cancer patients in Queensland by monitoring and evaluating the quality of cancer treatments and outcomes of care. This data is then used for further research.

Amendments in this bill will modernise the Queensland Cancer Register by using technology developed by the CSIRO to reduce the impost of requirements for diagnostic imaging practices. They will allow the Queensland Cancer Register to collect more accurate data, inform understanding of cancer, analyse the use of treatments and develop strategies and education programs. It will also align with the Palaszczuk government's record funding commitment to develop a standalone cancer hospital with treatment, research, education and training facilities.

Protecting the health and safety of members of the community is a top priority, and amendments to the Medicines and Poisons Act will allow us to do just that. The amendments will enable wholesalers and the general public to verify whether a person they are dealing with has the appropriate approvals to deal with medicines or poisons. The chief executive officer of Queensland Health will be able to disclose information from the substance authority register by providing information either directly to a person or via the department's website where it is in the public interest. The bill will make other technical and clarifying changes to improve the operation of the Medicines and Poisons Act.

Other amendments in this bill amend the Transplantation and Anatomy Act and the Water Fluoridation Act. The amendments to the Transplantation and Anatomy Act ensure the consent process for the donation of organs is consistent between public and private hospitals and will enable families in private hospitals to provide verbal consent for organ donation followed by written consent. Duplicate approval processes, such as the requirement for doctors to be granted a ministerial permit before obtaining organs that are already approved under the TGA Special Access Scheme, will also be removed. The TGA already has a thorough oversight process in place and organs are often needed by those who are facing death, meaning their treatment is very time sensitive. The amendments to the Water Fluoridation Act will remove the requirement for fluoridation decisions to be notified specifically in a print newspaper. Instead, other media streams will be able to be used.

Finally, two amendments will be made to the Radiation Safety Act so that operation and interaction with the legislation is improved. The Palaszczuk government is fully committed to ensuring our health legislation is contemporary and effective. The initiatives in the bill will promote the health and safety of Queenslanders and support the operation of our health system. I commend the bill to the House.



**Mr ANDREW** (Mirani—PHON) (12.01 pm): I rise to speak on the Health and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022. The bill amends the Hospital and Health Boards Act 2011, the Medicines and Poisons Act 2019, the Mental Health Act 2016, the Public Health Act 2005, the Radiation Safety Act 1999, the Recording of Evidence Act 1962, the Transplantation and Anatomy Act 1979 and the Water Fluoridation Act 2008. According to the bill's explanatory notes, the main objectives of these amendments are: to facilitate initiatives that promote the health of Queenslanders; to support the provision of health services in Queensland; and to improve the operation of health portfolio and related legislation.



The bill's amendments to the Hospital and Health Boards Act are aimed at strengthening protections for the wellbeing of workers in Queensland public health services including clinical, administrative and operational staff. Currently, there are a number of work health and safety obligations imposed by both Queensland and Commonwealth legislation on the protection of workers' wellbeing generally; however, there are no protections in place that specifically relate to health workers. The bill, therefore, seeks to fill this gap in the legislation. In doing so, it recognises the vital importance that protecting the mental health of our healthcare workers plays in the delivery of optimal health care to the public. It also places a value on the wellbeing of healthcare workers, who are uniquely exposed to multiple stress factors that most workers are not called on to face. These stresses can have a major influence on a health worker's physical, mental and emotional wellbeing and on staff morale overall. Today, many other factors are contributing to the evaluated stress levels of our health workers including heavy workloads, long shifts, postponed leave entitlements, loss of work-life balance, moral conflicts, job insecurity, workplace related bullying and a lack of support. Psychological distress and exhaustion can quickly lead to burnout, depression, anxiety, sleeping disorders and poor health generally. This can ultimately impact on their personal life and relationships as well as their work life in terms of job satisfaction and their sense of wellbeing and motivation.

If too many healthcare workers are affected, it can have the effect of lowering the standard of quality of care across the whole sector. That is why it is critical that something is done to mitigate these work related stresses and that effective strategies and protocols are put in place to better protect our healthcare workers. To this end, the bill introduces provisions that will require hospital and health services and hospital and health boards to proactively consider ways of supporting the wellbeing of healthcare workers including staff who perform community or home-based work. Queenslanders need a healthy hospital workforce to support them, and the bill's amendments in this regard are to be commended. As the minister said when introducing the bill—

The amendments will enshrine in legislation that the physical and psychological health, safety and wellbeing of the public health workforce is appropriately prioritised.

More importantly, the bill's changes will greatly help to rebuild the morale, confidence and resilience of workers following the traumatic experience of the last few years and will better protect workers in the future.

Clause 35 of the bill proposes to make changes to the Recording of Evidence Act 1962 in order to facilitate electronic recording of evidence before the Mental Health Review Tribunal. This is a development I strongly support. Complete, accurate and accessible records are fundamental in any legal proceedings, especially among those who may be affected by an impaired decision-making capacity that could affect their recollection and perception of those proceedings. It is also vitally important for the relatives of those with impaired decision-making capacity to be able to access such records of proceedings in order to fully understand the circumstances of their loved ones in voluntary treatment. My one complaint, however, relates to the statement made in the explanatory notes that electronic recording will be a default practice but exceptions may be made where there are 'compelling reasons' not to do so such as patient distress. I do not agree that there should be any exceptions made to the recording of proceedings. Transparency is vital for the protection of an individual's rights and for increasing levels of trust. Moreover, if exceptions are to be made then this should be expressly stated in the legislation instead of simply allowing for broad decision-making powers that are discretionary without any real parameters.

Section 30 of the Human Rights Act 2019 protects a person's right to a fair and public hearing and for judgements to be publicly available. The publicity of hearings and decisions ensures transparency of proceedings, which in turn safeguards the interests of the individual and society at large. The recording and/or transcription of proceedings enhances accuracy, transparency, open governance, trust and democratic principles particularly in jurisdictions such as mental health, where authorities may have conflicting reasons for not making its proceedings and decisions public.

The bill proposes changes to the Mental Health Act 2016. Clause 15 allows a patient to waive their right to legal representation in other ways, rather than exclusively in writing. Basically, this would allow a patient to give verbal consent alone. The requirement for a waiver to not be put in writing was positioned as an efficiency measure, due to a written waiver being seen as little more than an administrative burden for the tribunal and one that can 'create a barrier to individuals exercising their rights in a timely manner'.


While I support the change, I do so with some reservation. The right to legal representation is a core principle of the Australian democratic legal system. The reason for having a person waive this right in writing is to help safeguard the rights of individuals appearing before a court or tribunal. Therefore,

arguments for the removal of this protection should never be made on the utilitarian grounds of 'speed and efficiency'. To do so sets a dangerous precedent where rights may be viewed as little more than an impediment to good governance. The protection of human rights was not put in place for the efficiency of governments, the judiciary or officialdom. If that were true, no protections at all would be allowed. The reason I support the change is purely for the benefit of those making the waiver and because the bill includes important safeguards to ensure the individual's rights are preserved. Specifically, the bill requires that, where a waiver is requested, the tribunal must be satisfied that it would not cause injustice to the person. If a waiver is done verbally, it must only be done in circumstances where there is a recording and transcription of such a waiver. These are important safeguards, and I was pleased to see that they had been included.

Finally, I note that the bill also ends the Transplantation and Anatomy Act 1979 to: facilitate the supply of human tissue products by removing the requirement for Queensland doctors to apply for ministerial permits as well as an approval under the Therapeutic Goods Administration Special Access Scheme; and support consistency in the practice of donating human tissue in Queensland by ensuring consent processes are consistent between public and private hospitals.

Currently the Transplantation and Anatomy Act permits buying and selling and trading in tissue where trading is for therapeutic, medical or scientific purposes. These categories do not include goods approved by the TGA's Special Access Scheme which means that, after a request is approved under the Special Access Scheme, Queensland doctors also need to obtain a ministerial permit before they can purchase certain goods. A ministerial permit is granted on the basis that the TGA approval has already been given. According to Queensland Health, this duplication can delay the provision of important lifesaving health care for patients. The bill therefore exempts the requirement for doctors to apply to Queensland Health for a ministerial permit to be able to purchase products for patients after they have received Special Access Scheme approval from the TGA.

The bill also streamlines the process for family members to consent to tissue being removed from a deceased person in a private hospital by aligning it with consent processes applicable in public hospitals. In a private hospital situation, the requirement for written consent to be obtained can be an unwelcome imposition on families at what is an extremely distressing time for them. Accordingly, the bill's amendments will enable families in private hospitals to provide verbal consent to organ donation, as is currently the case in public hospitals. This streamlining of consent processes is aimed at facilitating tissue donation in Queensland, helping to save many lives. In conclusion, I commend the government on changes made in the proposed legislation. I support the bill.

 **Ms PUGH** (Mount Ommaney—ALP) (12.10 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Health and Other Legislation Amendment Bill and want to speak mainly to the provisions that are very close to my heart and the hearts of many other Queenslanders, and that is organ donation. I have spoken before in the parliament about organ donation in 2019 when my father's best friend 'Perfect Pete', as we called him, passed away shortly before receiving a transplant that may have saved his life. In that same speech I spoke about a beautiful local teacher at Centenary State High who passed away at a young age but made it very clear that she wanted to donate her corneas. She is a wonderful example for us all.

Many Queenslanders are likely not aware that, when it comes to organ donation, where they pass away can have a significant impact on whether or not they can donate their organs and that currently the hospital in which they pass away in can similarly have a significant impact, and that is exactly what this legislation seeks to address. Under the Transplantation and Anatomy Act 1979, a next of kin is required to consent to the removal of tissue from a deceased person, even if that person had registered for organ donation in their lifetime, as many Queenslanders and Australians rightly have. This bill makes the change so that private hospitals have the same consent processes around tissue removal and organ donation as public hospitals. Currently, a different process has to be followed depending on whether a person dies in a public or a private hospital and the private hospital process is more onerous. This has resulted in potential missed opportunities and it is obviously something that we need to fix and is within our remit to do so, and I am sure that that is exactly what Queenslanders would want.

The most important element of this amendment is that family members whose loved one passes away in a private hospital will, just like public hospital patients and family members, be able to provide that verbal consent for the donation, confirmed later by written consent. Currently only written consent can be accepted in private hospitals for those donations to proceed. This will obviously have two main major benefits: firstly, reducing the stress and distress for the families involved; and, secondly, making the consent process more efficient and, I would argue, more trauma informed, therefore increasing the


chances of the family agreeing to the successful tissue and organ donation. I am sure that most members of the House would be aware that, for organ donation or tissue donation to be successful, speed and efficiency are absolutely vital. Only a very small number of organs are even suitable to be donated in the first place, and I will expand a little on that later and why these changes are so important.

Most people do not pass away in circumstances or in the kind of bodily condition that allow them to donate their organs, so most of us in this House will never even have the opportunity to donate our organs. According to QUT's end-of-life information fact sheet, the DonateLife network has identified that only two per cent to three per cent of people who die in hospitals are medically suitable to be deceased donors. This is because of the particular circumstances that need to exist in order to donate. For example, generally the death must occur in an intensive care unit or a hospital emergency department. In rare cases where people are able to donate—when they do sit within that two per cent to three per cent grouping—those who pass away in a private hospital then face that additional barrier for their loved ones immediately after they have passed away who have to consent in writing while also dealing with what can be a really sudden death. This may not be something that they were anticipating having to deal with and now in addition to dealing with the grief that they are experiencing as a family they have to make really huge decisions about what that person would have wanted. If they have not had that discussion with that family member, it can be incredibly tricky to decide when it is now not possible to ask them.

As I said—and I think it is clear—I am really passionate about organ donation. When I spoke on the topic in 2019, the statistic at the time was that 41 per cent of people do not tell their family or discuss with their family whether or not they would want to donate their organs. That means that, when it comes time for the family to make that decision, they often have no idea what to do. I understand from the DonateLife website that in the whole of Australia last year just 454 deceased people were able to donate organs. However, because multiple organs can come from a single donor, that has helped more than 1,000 Australians waiting for an organ. I am also excited to share with the House that the donation rate according to the DonateLife website is increasing year on year Australia-wide. National consent rates have increased from 52 per cent the previous year to 54 per cent in 2022. It is interesting to look at those two numbers—the 41 per cent who are not having that discussion and the 54 per cent. Without saying that those two figures line up, it is interesting to note that obviously those 54 per cent were having those discussions and it was something that was being discussed within those families, just as it certainly has been discussed within mine.

In 2022 around 1,400 people of the 80,000 people who died in Australian hospitals died in a way where organ donation could be considered. The families were requested to donate those organs in 1,300 cases and, of these cases, 701 Australian families said yes to a donation in a hospital, representing that national consent rate of 54 per cent, with 454 becoming organ donors. As members can see, we have a very small number Australia-wide of potential organ donors, so increasing our consent rate and the ability for families to easily consent is absolutely critical to increasing our donation rate. That is why this legislation is so important, because it is trauma informed and it is supporting those families at what is just a truly awful time and at what can also be a really shocking time. As I said, they may not have been anticipating this person passing away and it might have been quite sudden.

We have around 1,800 Australians waitlisted for a transplant and around 14,000 additional people on dialysis, some of whom may also need a kidney transplant. As I have said repeatedly, studies show that the best way to lift our organ donation rate in Queensland and in Australia is to have a discussion with your family as they have the final say in donating your organs and they are very likely to respect your wishes as long as they know what they are. This is where having that discussion is absolutely vital. Like the member for Bonney, I implore all Queenslanders to make sure they make their wishes known so that this legislation change can have the maximum benefit and those families being asked to make that decision in the hospitals can make the decision that is in line with their loved one's wishes. I will finish with a final plea: please sign up as an organ donor. Go to the DonateLife website and sign up—it will take five minutes—and then send that screenshot to your family so that they know what your wishes are. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr POWELL** (Glass House—LNP) (12.20 pm): I rise to address the Health and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022. I echo the words of the previous speaker in encouraging all members of this state to consider signing up to be an organ donor and to share that with their families, as I have. I note that is one of the many amendments that this bill is looking to make to a number of pieces of legislation. I also note, as the shadow minister for health has alluded to, that the LNP will not be opposing this legislation.

I want to put on the record my appreciation for all of the frontline health service workers across this state, in particular those in the electorate of Glass House who work in the Maleny Hospital, the Sunshine Coast University Hospital, Nambour Hospital and Caboolture Hospital—the doctors, the nurses, the physiotherapists, the allied health workers, the administrative cleaning staff, the catering staff: all of the people who work in those facilities across the Sunshine Coast and Moreton Bay region. I also acknowledge the role that our community frontline health service providers play. Our doctors, pharmacists, nurses within the community, our ambulance officers and paramedics all do an amazing job in what is an increasingly stressful environment. We have spoken previously of the chaos and the crisis that is currently gripping our health system in Queensland. That is not of the making of any of those frontline service workers, it is in spite of their fantastic efforts. It is our hope that these amendments produce a better workplace for our frontline health service workers.

I want to focus my attention on the amendments to the Hospital and Health Boards Act 2011 that will require hospital and health boards and hospital and health services to proactively consider ways to support staff health, safety and wellbeing. Where has this come from? The member for Bonney and the member for Moggill said that the Queensland Nurses and Midwives' Unions and the Australian Medical Association Queensland have expressed concerns to the government around what is going on in our frontline public health services. I note the submission from the Queensland Nurses and Midwives' Union to the inquiry talked about the results of their own membership surveys that have identified workplace violence, demanding and dangerous workloads, moral distress and fatigue/burnout as key wellbeing issues for their members. Similarly, the Australian Medical Association Queensland observed that a survey it sends to its members working in hospital and health services, what it calls the resident hospital health check, has consistently received feedback from a significant number of doctors saying that they have experienced workplace bullying or harassment and feelings of stress, with incidents of suicide amongst doctors also being reported. The AMA Queensland passes the survey feedback on to the hospital and health services to keep them informed about staff wellbeing concerns.

We have clearly seen, as has been brought to this chamber previously, practices going on in my part of the world in the Caboolture Hospital. I will refer to a number of *Courier-Mail* articles. The first is written by Jill Poulsen on 3 November 2021 and reports on an independent review undertaken by the Metro North Hospital and Health Service into surgical and intensive care units. It states—

The independent review, ordered in early September and handed down on Wednesday, was sparked after a *Courier-Mail* investigation revealed horror allegations at the hospital; including patients had been killed and maimed as a result of botched surgeries, surgeons were potentially performing operations they were not been trained in and a toxic workplace culture with widespread bullying and harassment.

The article goes on to state—

The report made 19 recommendations, which included empathy training to address claims of a toxic culture, as well as providing training around clinical incident management, report writing, open disclosure, better auditing processes and responding better to patient complaints.

What the report found was rather alarming. To quote directly from the report—

Comments heard during the review indicated that poor leadership, lack of trust and transparency lead to poor morale and ineffective representation of concerns from clinicians in all areas of the multidisciplinary team.

The report also states—

The safety and quality reports provided by Metro North and Caboolture Hospitals do not adequately inform the reviewer about the safety and quality of services of care delivered by the Surgical and Intensive Care department at Caboolture Hospital.

Those findings in that review of the Caboolture Hospital were an indictment. They again showed what has been allowed to transpire under this government. The review backed up whistleblowers' claims that this poor workplace culture had led to widespread bullying and harassment. To further quote from the report—

As a result of poor leadership, and fear of retribution because of past bullying and harassment, responses to staff surveys and suitable representation at meetings saw ineffective participation and inadequate information and feedback about safety and quality in particular.

It also found, alarmingly, examples and evidence of racial and gender discrimination. Whilst it mentioned that these were potentially isolated incidents, they were completely and utterly unacceptable and the administration needed to take further steps to ensure that this did not occur into the future.

That article was followed up by another not long after, written by Jack McKay from the *Courier-Mail* on 17 July 2022, titled 'Letter alleges more failures at Caboolture Hospital'. It states—

A letter purportedly written by a group of doctors from a troubled Queensland hospital have raised allegations of operations being done without assistants and 'negative outcomes' in the 'labour ward'.

It further states—

This letter, dated December 13 last year, warned of ‘worsening staffing issues’, and claimed the ‘labour ward and midwifery department’ has been under a lot of pressure and stress in the recent months.

The letter also raises concerns about reduced staffing, and claims there had been an increase in sick days among junior staff—which they alleged meant operations had to be done without an assistant. As our leader, the member for Broadwater, pointed out, we were thankful those who wrote that letter reached out to this government. The article goes on—

He said the state government needed to admit the resourcing at Caboolture Hospital was ‘broken’, insisting that it deserved to be taken seriously.

It is my hope that the amendments we make in this bill around staff wellbeing will go a long way to addressing what we saw unfolding at Caboolture Hospital. We have had reports for many years of the toxic culture there. Again let me be clear: our frontline workers are doing a fantastic job in the environment that they have been given, with the resources they have been granted by this government, but they need to be looked after. They need to be taken care of.

In particular, this bill makes amendments that make staff wellbeing a visible consideration for planning and service delivery for Queensland public health services, but I note that it does so in a way that accommodates the diverse communities and operating context of our various hospital and health services and our boards across Queensland. In doing so it allows a varied number of wellbeing activities that could be considered, things like wellbeing check-ins, wellbeing monitoring programs, peer support programs, nutritional food options, flexible work arrangements, interventions for prominent health risks like fatigue, vicarious trauma and occupational violence, designing healthy work spaces, promoting staff consultation measures and providing details of how staff wellbeing issues have been taken into account.

I will conclude my contribution to this bill on that last point. It is interesting that the committee members themselves picked up that whilst this is adding a legislative requirement to promote healthy cultures in hospital and health services and their boards, there needs to be ongoing monitoring. We need to determine whether what is being put in place here today is working. We need to check the utility of the measures are implemented. The committee therefore recommended that our hospital and health services and their boards regularly report on their progress on supporting staff health, safety and wellbeing at a minimum in their annual reports. I know that does not lead to an amendment of this bill, but it is certainly something that I hope the Minister for Health is taking on board. It is well and good to put these changes in place, but if we are not measuring whether they are successful or asking our hospital and health services and their boards to report on their efficacy, then it is really a wasted effort.

Debate, on motion of Mr Powell, adjourned.

## PLANNING (INCLUSIONARY ZONING STRATEGY) AMENDMENT BILL

### Introduction



**Dr MacMAHON** (South Brisbane—Grn) (12.29 pm): I present a bill for an act to amend the Planning Act 2016 for particular purposes. I table the bill and the explanatory notes and a statement of compatibility with human rights. I nominate the State Development and Regional Industries Committee to examine the bill.

*Tabled paper:* Planning (Inclusionary Zoning Strategy) Amendment Bill 2023 [509].

*Tabled paper:* Planning (Inclusionary Zoning Strategy) Amendment Bill 2023, explanatory notes [510].

*Tabled paper:* Planning (Inclusionary Zoning Strategy) Amendment Bill 2023, statement of compatibility with human rights [511].

Today I am pleased to introduce the Planning (Inclusionary Zoning Strategy) Amendment Bill 2023. Our inclusionary zoning bill is one more part of a broader Greens plan to get Queensland out of the housing crisis that Labor and the LNP have created. Combined with a real fall in wages, the housing crisis means that everyday working families can no longer keep a secure roof over their heads. On this government’s watch, since 2018 the social housing register has nearly doubled and 46,000 of our most vulnerable people are living in insecure housing or are homeless while they wait for public housing. It is estimated that another 300,000 low-income Queenslanders are in critical housing stress due to record low rental availability and skyrocketing rent increases. Decades of Labor and the LNP protecting the profits of investors and developers has not led to increased supply and greater affordability like they said it would. It is time to stop treating housing like a commodity and start treating it like the essential public good that it is.

Queenslanders are in housing crisis. Decades of treating housing as a commodity rather than an essential public need, compounded with the pressures of the pandemic, have massively impacted Queensland's housing sector and have impacted everyday Queenslanders. According to a report published by Professor Paulsen from the University of New South Wales, 300,000 Queenslanders are in critical housing stress due to record low rental availability and unaffordable rents. Combined with a cost-of-living crisis and falling real wages, everyday working families are left to wonder if they will be able to keep a roof over their heads.

The government does not seem to have a plan to deal with this. Since 2015 the Palaszczuk Labor government has built just 1,395 new public housing dwellings. It has sold off so many social housing homes that there were nine less in 2022 than in 2015. For a government whose continual ineffective housing strategy has such a strong emphasis on public housing, that is damning. Meanwhile, over the past decade Labor and the LNP have pandered to wealthy property developers, approving expensive luxury apartment blocks that have done nothing to address affordability while developers have made millions off our communities. At the same time, the development of new social housing has colossally failed to keep up with the growing need in Queensland. It is time that we made property developers pay their fair share and actually deliver affordable housing by requiring developers to allocate 25 per cent of all new builds to public housing.

This bill sets out a plan for an inclusionary zoning strategy. Under this strategy, for all residential development projects and residential subdivision projects completed on or after 1 July 2024 at least 25 per cent of those dwellings are to be transferred to the government for public housing. A residential development project refers to development carried out by an entity other than the state and related to the construction of 10 or more dwellings. A 'residential subdivision project' is defined as any private development that subdivides one lot into 10 or more lots on which dwellings can be lawfully constructed. The strategy requires that public housing dwellings will be finished to the same standard and have the same features as other dwellings in the development, including size and floor area.

Unlike the government's complete lack of consultation, by its own admission, on housing amendments this week, we have consulted on this bill. I have spoken with people struggling to find a secure place to live. I have spoken to people on the social housing register, some of whom have been waiting for years. I have spoken to people worried about the future their kids are heading into. I have spoken with local community groups, peak bodies and NGOs, many of which are also calling for inclusionary zoning. In fact, inclusionary zoning is Queensland Labor policy. The Premier and the former housing minister committed to enacting inclusionary zoning in the housing strategy that they announced in 2017, six years ago. From what we have heard from many stakeholders who were in attendance, since October 2022 the government has consistently talked about inclusionary zoning at its quarterly round tables so where is the government's plan?

We know it is not just Queensland's most vulnerable who are struggling to find a secure place to live. Our essential workers are increasingly unable to find secure affordable homes close to their workplaces. Figures from the Everybody's Home campaign show that, for a hospitality worker to afford an average inner-city rent of \$572 a week, they would have to spend a shocking 81 per cent of their pay on housing. For an aged-care worker, it would be 77 per cent. Teachers and firefighters are spending an average of 58 per cent of their weekly income keeping a roof over their heads. Treating housing like a commodity, rampant rent increases and underinvestment in public housing is an attack on essential workers and everyone who relies on them.

In places such as Sweden not only those people who are most vulnerable but also teachers, nurses, construction workers and essential service workers are able to live securely in public housing. We could achieve the same here in Queensland with a simple inclusionary zoning strategy that would rapidly increase our stock of public housing. Public housing should be comfortable, accessible, well located and available to anyone who needs it. Inclusionary zoning would help ensure that we have affordable public homes in the inner city, meaning that workers, families and people with disability are not pushed further and further away from their families, communities, workplaces and support networks by requiring property developers to include a minimum amount of 25 per cent of public housing in all new developments. By requiring property developers to set aside one in four new apartments as public housing, we could provide good quality homes for thousands of Queenslanders, provide homes for the 46,000 people who are on the social housing register and build thriving, diverse and livable neighbourhoods.

In fact, there was once a time in this country when one in every seven new homes built was public housing. Today, after decades of government neglect, a mere 2.8 per cent of Queensland homes are public housing. The share of public and social housing in the housing market has been declining

since the nineties when Labor and LNP governments began gutting public sector capacity. Since 2014, the Labor government has sold more than 2,000 public housing properties. The government says that selling off this stock is ostensibly about reinvesting that money into new public housing but, according to the Parliamentary Library, since 2015 there has been an increase in public housing of just 1,395 homes, which is well short of rising demand. At the same time, both Labor and the LNP have continued to support tax concessions, kickbacks and incentives for rich property investors and property developers. Property developers have benefited from low infrastructure charges and a planning system that puts the profits of developers ahead of local communities, building quality and livable neighbourhoods.

The real estate and property development lobby has long said that if we cut red tape, give them handout after handout and deregulate planning and zoning then we would see house prices and rents come down; that if we just let the private sector do its things then we would see housing become more affordable. In fact, we have seen the opposite. The private sector has zero interest in delivering affordable housing to desperate communities. Their only interest is profit. After decades of a planning system that puts the profits of property developers first, we are now in one of the worst housing crises since the Great Depression. Gutting public sector housing capacity and protecting the profits of investors and developers has failed. It is time to make developers pay their fair share and actually address the housing crisis with an inclusionary zoning strategy that would see 25 per cent of all new builds opened up as public housing.

Our inclusionary zoning strategy is just one of a suite of straightforward measures that the government could implement right now to address the housing crisis. Our empty homes levy would bring tens of thousands of empty homes and Airbnb short stays back into Queensland's long-term rental market, addressing issues of supply. Our plan for a two-year freeze on rent increases, followed by capping rent increases at two per cent every two years, would bring immediate relief to struggling mum-and-dad renters. That needs to be underpinned by meaningful tenancy reform, ensuring people have security in their homes. We have been pushing the government directly to build more public housing. Our federal Greens colleagues are pushing to amend Labor's housing bill and their useless strategy of gambling on the stock market to instead include \$25 billion in direct spending on public housing. Our inclusionary zoning strategy is just one more part of the solution. It would mean thousands more public homes for not only our most vulnerable but also ordinary working people, putting downward pressure on rental prices for the benefit of all renters.

Some 2.8 per cent of Queensland homes are public housing. When we include community and social housing, this brings us still to just 4.3 per cent. This is well below our international peers and the OECD average. In Denmark, social housing makes up 21 per cent of all housing stock. In Austria it is 24 per cent; 17 per cent in Sweden; 24 per cent in Scotland; and in the Netherlands it is 29 per cent. That is as much as seven times the amount of social and public housing than here in Queensland. These places do not have a crisis in housing to the scale that Queensland has, yet in Queensland we have thousands of people sleeping rough under bridges and overpasses in major cities. We have retail workers sleeping in their cars. We have a generation of children going to school hungry because their parents are struggling to afford rent.

Unlike these other countries, we do not have rent caps. We do not have a vacancy levy. We do not have the high levels of investment in public housing that we need or inclusionary zoning. These are really straightforward measures that could address the housing crisis—all the things the Greens have been asking for and proposing in bills. It is not rocket science. We know that these initiatives work because we see them working elsewhere.

Inclusionary zoning is not a radical idea. It is a common practice around the world including in places such as Canada, Ireland, the United Kingdom, metropolitan areas of the US, Spain and Italy—just to name a few. It has also been introduced by Labor governments here in Australia. The Housing Plan for South Australia, introduced by the Rann Labor government in 2005, requires 15 per cent of new dwellings in significant development projects to be affordable, with at least five per cent allocated to high-needs groups. In 2007, the ACT Stanhope Labor government introduced a policy requiring 20 per cent of all new estates to include affordable housing. Once again, inclusionary zoning is this government's own policy. We just need the government to get on it, with a robust inclusionary zoning strategy that acknowledges the extent of the crisis Queenslanders are facing.

The seriousness of this housing crisis cannot be understated. Shelter is a fundamental need to support all aspects of people's lives. Without a safe, comfortable and stable home, how can we expect Queenslanders to continue to be able to carry out basic, everyday activities, let alone support their

families, work, study or contribute to their communities? Yet it seems that this is what this government expects and takes for granted. Every day Queenslanders wake up to rent increases, no-grounds evictions and ever-deteriorating living conditions. When the dreaded time comes to begin yet another search for a livable home, renters face the lowest vacancy rates ever and increasingly expensive rents.

One pensioner recently told me that she has been waiting for public housing for 18 years. This constituent lives with a number of health issues, putting even more pressure on her weekly budget as she balances paying for medication and medical support. Another constituent shared that, after 25 years of tenancy, their rent will be increased to an unaffordable amount, pushing them out of the community they know and love. There are countless stories like this. I am sure that every MP is hearing these stories and has people coming through their doors or emailing their inboxes. To see the problem, we only have to look around. I am seeing tents pop up in Musgrave Park and more people sleeping rough by the river. These people put a face to the statistics that tell us that the waiting list for public housing in Queensland has rapidly increased. In fact, the register increased by 78 per cent in the four years to 2022.

Inclusionary zoning is just one part of a comprehensive suite of housing policies the Greens have been pushing for to address this dire, desperate and urgent situation which is impacting people in my electorate and right across the state but which clearly has been forgotten by members of the government and the LNP in this chamber. This bill is born out of the experiences of renters—their stress, their heartache. It is the culmination of thousands of conversations at people's doors, in parks and in community halls. Will the government listen to Queenslanders or push on with weak policies that barely scratch the surface of the situation? Will it continue to bury its head in the sand and roll out the red carpet for property developers, or will it support housing policy that will actually effect change?

It seems that members of this government do not want solutions, because the reality is that they would rather protect the profits of their mates in the real estate and property development industry. This government does not represent renters, people sleeping rough or people struggling to pay their mortgages. This government represents property investors and developers, including the many property investors who are sitting in this room right now, all of whom are benefiting from a housing crisis and soaring rents, siphoning off working Queenslanders' wages to fund their own retirements.

Right now, countless former MPs from both sides of the chamber sit on the boards of banks and real estate corporations—the same ones that are then paying to have fancy lunches with politicians in this room. I remind people that Anna Bligh, former leader of the Queensland Labor Party and a former premier, is now the chief executive of the Australian Banking Association. In recent years the banking industry has managed to take huge government bailouts and then make extraordinary profits. This is not an industry that is here to look after everyday people.

The worse the housing market is for ordinary people, the better it is for the banks, developers and corporations that control our major parties. The longer this crisis continues, the more the landlords sitting in this very building can profit from their own investments and the more of them will end up with cushy jobs in lobby groups, like Anna Bligh. This government does not want Queenslanders to consider that the cause of the housing crisis lies with the LNP, the Labor Party, their wealthy donors and the property portfolios of their MPs and their mates in corporate boardrooms.

The solutions are simple. Those countries and cities that have implemented the policies that we have been suggesting—inclusionary zoning, a vacancy tax, putting a real cap on rent increases—are not seeing the kind of dire housing crisis we are seeing here. It does not seem that this government has a genuine interest in fixing a broken system that it has created, because it is acting in the interests of itself and its corporate mates.

Of course, this policy needs to be combined with direct investment in public housing construction and public sector construction capacity. While developers continue to make millions and the number of development approvals continues at a steady pace, the construction industry—the people doing the actual building—is under increasing pressure. We are seeing spiking costs for materials, supply chain issues, rising capital costs and rising costs of borrowing money. A housing sector that is driven solely by profit is vulnerable to these kinds of risks and, as a result, we are seeing an increasing number of construction firms fold. The government is in a much better position to manage and absorb these kinds of risks than the private sector.

In addition to ideas such as inclusionary zoning, the government needs to have a much stronger hand in controlling the construction and development industry for the sake of Queenslanders. Our bill gives the government a mandate to do that. It needs to be combined with direct investment in public



housing construction and public sector construction capacity. At the federal level, the Greens are calling on the Labor government to directly invest \$2.5 billion in public housing construction to fill the gaps left by a failing private sector and to stabilise the construction industry. The federal Greens have been very clear that we are not going to support Labor's plan for a stock market gambling fund. Federal Labor's current Housing Australia Future Fund Bill will only see the housing crisis get worse. The existing future fund lost 1.2 per cent last year. This would have translated to a \$120 million loss if the housing future fund—

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Member, I have been following your contribution quite carefully and have given you some degree of latitude, but you seem to be straying in many various directions that do not necessarily relate directly to the objectives of the bill or the long title of the bill you have introduced. I ask you to continue your contribution by focusing your remarks on the bill itself, which is the general convention when introducing a bill in a first reading speech.

**Dr MacMAHON:** Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker. The point I am making is that an inclusionary zoning bill needs to go hand in hand with other measures to address the housing crisis—direct investment in public housing at the scale that we need to address the rising number of people who are in housing stress. That is what our federal colleagues are doing right now.

Queensland is a wealthy state. We have the means to build beautiful, quality housing for everyone. The problem is not a lack of resources but an excess of profit and greed. Housing equality necessarily means addressing the unequal power that banks, developers and the very rich have over ordinary people. Ordinary people make up this state: First Nations people whose land this is and always will be; the workers who stack our shelves, who run our hospitals, who literally build homes; the people living alone or caring for loved ones. Everyone deserves a home and everyone could have one. It was not so long ago that both major parties built public housing for teachers, nurses, plumbers and painters—not just our most vulnerable but for ordinary workers and their families—but in a matter of decades we have reached the point where we cannot even house 46,000 of our most vulnerable.

It is not a mystery what needs to be done: build public housing, freeze rents, bolster funding for housing services, tax vacant properties and land, and introduce inclusionary zoning. This bill is a great start to ensure we get the public housing that people need.

### First Reading

**Dr MacMAHON** (South Brisbane—Grn) (12.49 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a first time.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

### Referral to State Development and Regional Industries Committee


**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** In accordance with standing order 131, the bill is now referred to the State Development and Regional Industries Committee.

## HEALTH AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

### Second Reading

Resumed from p. 1039, on motion of Mrs D'Ath—

That the bill be now read a second time.

 **Ms LAUGA** (Keppel—ALP) (12.50 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Health and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. I start by thanking the Health and Environment Committee, under the leadership of the chair, the member for Thuringowa, for their work in examining this bill. I thank the committee secretariat for their ongoing work to support the committee's examination of the bill.

The Palaszczuk government is focused on making Queensland home to good jobs, better services and a great lifestyle. Our government is committed to significant reform in Queensland Health which will drive innovation in the delivery of health care for all Queenslanders. This innovation extends to supporting all health workers to work to their full potential and skills.

The Health and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022 will implement key policy initiatives to support better public health outcomes for Queenslanders and ensure health legislation is contemporary and effective. The amendments to the Hospital and Health Boards Act 2011 will enshrine in legislation that the physical and psychological health, safety and wellbeing of the public health workforce is appropriately prioritised.

It is important to recognise that our public healthcare workers work in high-pressure, complex environments day in and day out. This work can often pose safety risks which impact healthcare workers' physical and psychological health. Queenslanders can only stay healthy if we have a healthy workforce to support them. I know friends and local people who work in Queensland Health so often put their duty of care ahead of their own health and wellbeing.

My friend Alicia, who is a nurse at the Rockhampton Hospital, spends much of her time outside of work recovering from the emotional and physical energy exerted in the line of duty. It is the same too for my friend Rachel—a nurse who was physically injured in the line of duty. I know that this has had a tremendous impact on her.

This bill ensures that the HHS's obligations to prioritise the safety and wellbeing of their workforce are clear. It requires boards and HHSs to promote a culture and implement measures within their HHS to support the health, safety and wellbeing of the staff. The obligations will apply to all staff working in public sector health services—our doctors, nurses, midwives and allied health professionals through to the operational and administrative staff who keep our HHSs running.

Further, health security officers do an important job ensuring everyone within a hospital stays safe and secure. My friend Jamie is a security officer at Queensland Health and I know how seriously he takes his job of keeping everyone in the hospital as safe as possible. The bill amends the Hospital and Health Boards Act to make clear that health security officers cannot provide a direction for a person to leave the hospital and health service if the person requires emergency medical treatment. This amendment is reflective of current practice whereby security officers communicate with clinical staff before providing a direction to a person to leave a HHS to ensure that they are not preventing access to essential medical treatment.

The bill also amends the Public Health Act 2005 to authorise schools to disclose student information to Queensland Health's vision screening program. Each year Queensland Health's vision screening program screens around 45,000 Queensland prep students for the presence of amblyopia, known as lazy eye, and amblyopic risk factors. Screening a child takes less than five minutes but can help to give them the best possible start to their education. Early detection of vision problems ensures a child can be treated early, reducing the impact on their learning and development.

I have seen firsthand the benefit that this vision screening can have at our local state schools. Many hundreds of children each year are referred for further tests and treatment, which makes a huge difference to the lives and learning of these students. I recently signed the consent form for Odette to have her screening done at her state primary school as a prep student.

**Ms Pease:** I can't believe she is in prep already.

**Ms LAUGA:** She is in prep and she is enjoying it immensely. It is amazing the support services that Queensland Health and the Department of Education offer in terms of early detection and screening programs. It makes a world of difference to these young people and to their future.

The Public Health Act already allows student information to be shared between schools and public dental and immunisation programs. The bill inserts the Queensland Health Primary School Nurse Health Readiness Program, known as the vision screening program, as a program to which the student information can be disclosed under the Public Health Act. This will enable vision screening nurses to oversee the consent process for vision screening without relying on school staff. It helps take the burden off those school staff who already have so much administrative work to do.


While I am on my feet, I take this opportunity to put on the record again in this place my thanks, on behalf of the community, to the Central Queensland Hospital and Health Service for all the work they do to keep our community as safe and healthy as possible. Under the leadership of CEO Dr Emma McCahon, the CQHHS provides public health services in hospitals and communities across Central Queensland. In regional cities, coastal communities and remote rural towns, the CQHHS team of more than 3,700 delivers great care for Central Queenslanders.

It is wonderful to have the skills, leadership and expertise of Dr McCahon at the helm, not to mention Chief Financial Officer Nicole Trost; Executive Director Workforce Shareen McMillan; Executive Director of Nursing and Midwifery and Quality and Safety Sue Foyle; Executive Director of

Medical Services Professor Pooshan Navathe; Executive Director of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health and Wellbeing Donna Cruickshank; Executive Director of Allied Health Services Kerrie-Anne Frakes; and Chief Operating Officer Pauline McGrath. How fortunate we are to have women in seven of the eight executive roles at CQHHS. Women are definitely leading the way in health in CQ.

I am also proud of our Central Queensland Hospital Foundation, CQShines. Driven under the leadership of chair Dan Smith and executive manager Hannah Gardner, CQShines provides valued financial support to the public hospital and health services network across the Central Queensland region. All donations contribute towards critical funding for education, training and research in medical and health science which will advance, support and promote public health for the members of our community.


The establishment of the statutory Central Queensland Hospital Foundation is a great success for the Central Queensland community. Hospital foundations play a significant role in supporting their associated HHS and local communities. Thank you to Dan, Hannah and the team at CQShines. I look forward to working together with them in the future to help advance, support and promote public health in Central Queensland. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr MILLAR** (Gregory—LNP) (12.57 pm): Like the member for Keppel, I am very proud of the Central Queensland Hospital and Health Service. They do a fantastic job. The staff—the doctors, nurses, the administrators and everybody involved—do a great job to cover a big area from Yeppoon, Rockhampton and Gladstone all the way to Emerald. We need them.

I support this bill which makes some administrative changes to a variety of acts within the health portfolio. Of all the amendments in this bill the ones that have been given the most attention by the government are the ones strengthening the protection of the physical and psychological wellbeing of the public health workforce by requiring hospital and health services to proactively consider the health, safety and wellbeing of staff of the public health service facilities. This is very important.

In the seat of Gregory we also have the Central West Hospital and Health Service which covers from Alpha all the way out to Birdsville and down to Bedourie, Longreach, Blackall, Tambo, Winton and all the other areas. I pay tribute to the staff in the Central West, especially Dr David Walker, a long-time doctor in Longreach. He is currently acting as the health service chief executive. He and his wife, Dr Clare Walker, make a massive contribution to our health services in the Central West. Dr David Walker, Dr Clare Walker and staff go above and beyond what they have to do. They are also major contributors to our social scene in the Central West with Dr David Walker being heavily involved in the Longreach Jockey Club. They are a sensational couple who continue to drive the social calendar around the Longreach area.

Sitting suspended from 1.00 pm to 2.00 pm.

 **Mr MILLAR:** The amendments to the Hospital and Health Boards Act 2011 are designed to strengthen protections for the physical and psychological wellbeing of the public health workforce by requiring hospital and health boards and hospital and health services to proactively consider the health, safety and wellbeing of staff of public sector health service facilities. No-one in this House could deny that. We need to do that. We need to make sure that our health workforce—whether they be doctors, nurses, administrators or security staff—are protected and looked after.

One of the issues we have in Western Queensland is that we have a brand new hospital in Blackall—and I thank the minister for that: \$20 million—but we have not had permanent doctors there to facilitate health prevention or obviously any emergency. The doctors are not there.

**Mr Power:** They keep meeting you, Lachie, and going away.

**Mr MILLAR:** I hope not. The Blackall-Tambo Regional Council has teamed up with Queensland Health and the Central West Hospital and Health Board to create a video promoting the town's lifestyle. This social media campaign started about two weeks ago. There are four permanent senior medical officer positions available that have been vacant since the hospital opened. The salary packages include free accommodation, subsidised utilities, relocation assistance and additional leave. Basically they are prepared to pay a medical practitioner, a doctor, around half a million dollars to come to Blackall and play an important role in providing the health services that we need there.

The state government funded our state-of-the-art new hospital at Blackall—\$20.1 million in 2020: thank you for that—but we need doctors. The Blackall-Tambo Mayor, Andrew Martin, said towns have been relying on locums to service residents and tourists who cause the population to triple each season. We have a fantastic tourism industry in Western Queensland, and we are absolutely proud of that, but we get a lot of what they call 'grey nomads' coming out into Western Queensland. I suppose if you look

at a health risk chart they would probably be up there more than your 18-year-olds or your 20-year-olds or even your 30-year-olds. The population of Blackall triples in every tourist season. The hospital has to deal with cardiac arrests and illnesses, yet we cannot find local doctors to be able to provide that service to the community.

**Mr Stevens:** It's like a pub with no beer.

**Mr MILLAR:** I take that interjection from the member for Mermaid Beach. He is a former Richmond boy. He knows what a pub with no beer looks like—or maybe not! He is right. We need to have those doctors there. I am calling on the current government to work with all of us to provide doctors for places like Blackall.

I mentioned earlier that I have a lot of admiration for Dr David Walker and Dr Clare Walker—they have been doctors in our Central West community since they started out. Dr David Walker came up as a young doctor and decided to stay and have a family. He has played an integral role in the Central West community. At the moment in the Central West we are relying on locums. People fly in—they come for four weeks—and then they fly out. We need doctors who are going to come and stay for five or six years and practise as a GP but also work with the Blackwater Hospital. I call on the Labor government to work with us in the west to try to find a solution to this.

The Blackall-Tambo Regional Council and the Central West Hospital and Health Board have created a social media campaign to go right around Australia to try to attract doctors, but we need a little more help than that. We need to look at finding ways to attract four doctors to Blackall. Blackall is a wonderful community, as is Tambo. We need to not rely so heavily on locums coming in, whether they be locum doctors or nurses. We need permanent residents to ensure an adequate health system.

I hope this social media campaign works. I know that Mayor Andrew Martin from Blackall-Tambo is passionate about this. I remember him talking to me about 30 years—he talked to me the other week, but 30 years ago—

**Ms Boyd** interjected.

**Mr MILLAR:** No, I did not talk to him 30 years ago. He talked to me the other week that they were trying to attract doctors to Augathella. They had a \$200,000 package on the table to try to get a doctor and they still could not get a doctor. We need to find more incentives to get practitioners out west because we desperately need them. Why do we desperately need them? It is about preventive health out there. It is about getting to the cause before it becomes a problem so people live longer. You have heard the statistics that people in regional and remote Queensland die younger than they do in the bigger cities. The facts are there. We need to find a way to make sure that that happens.

**Mr Perrett:** Then there are social factors.


**Mr MILLAR:** Exactly. I have a question to the minister. It is an obscure question. I was reading the explanatory notes, which state—

*Clause 11 omits the definition of primary producer, which refers to a person producing or storing agricultural products, and replaces it with a definition that provides that a primary producer 'in relation to land, means a person using the land to commercially produce agricultural or horticultural products'.*

That is very vague. The explanatory notes go on to state—

Under this amendment, persons who are storing but not producing products on their land, and persons who engage in non-commercial production are not primary producers. They therefore must comply with the requirements of the Act, for example, by seeking necessary approvals from Queensland Health, or complying with the requirements in section 44 regarding use of household pesticides.

This is in regard to fumigation. A lot of grain handlers use fumigation. Now they are required to get an approval under Queensland Health. My question is: have we put that out there to the grain handlers and to the produce enterprises in regional Queensland? Do they know about this? Is this more red tape they have to deal with? I am just asking the question; I am not complaining about it. Is this more red tape for our agricultural production?

 **Mr POWER** (Logan—ALP) (2.07 pm): Members in this place do not recognise often enough the workers who make our health system deliver for Queensland. Instead the LNP in particular see them simply as a cost—a line item on a budget to be 'pruned'. We saw this extraordinary attitude of the LNP when the shadow minister for health attacked rural and regional health workers and called them duds.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Lister): Order, members! The member for Logan is the only member with the call.

**Mr POWER:** Thank you for your protection, Mr Deputy Speaker. That simply is not good enough. That is not my attitude and that is not the attitude of this government. The Health and Other Legislation Amendment Bill reflects this government's attitude and the health minister's attitude that we must value our health workers. We must support hospital workers and our hospitals by getting health services to take active steps to back health workers by having a special focus on their health, safety and wellbeing.

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The members for Thuringowa and Mudgeeraba will cease their quarrelling across the chamber.

**Mr POWER:** We should never forget the work stresses that hospital workers went through in the last few years of COVID-19.

**Mrs Frecklington:** What about the last eight years?

**Mr POWER:** It is great that the member for Nanango is here, because they called 64 times for the borders to open prematurely and they wanted to open them—

**Mrs Frecklington** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Nanango, please cease your interjections.

**Mr POWER:** They called 64 times for the borders to be prematurely opened before vaccination, and we know from history that would have exponentially added to the stresses of health workers. I know they are making a lot of noise, but I want to repeat that by dangerously opening the borders—they called for it 64 times—before vaccination they would have put extra stress on our health workers and hurt our economy. During COVID-19 I regularly visited testing clinics throughout Logan, especially at the Logan Hospital.

**Mrs Frecklington** interjected.

**Ms Boyd** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The member for Pine Rivers and the member for Nanango will cease their quarrelling across the chamber. The next time I will issue a formal warning.

**Mr POWER:** I can see the member for Nanango speaking out, because 64 times she called prematurely to open the borders before vaccination. That would have put stress on hospital workers, but when I spoke to security they talked in a calm and professional way about how they dealt with the stress that so many patients felt and the unknown features of the pandemic. I simply want to say thank you to hospital workers from cleaners to security, nurses, doctors and administration. Your work saved thousands of lives and thousands of jobs. The reason we have created so many jobs since COVID is because we started from the position of so many families having a breadwinner because of good policy and leadership—certainly that is true—but also because of the professionalism and bravery of health workers who lead the way in getting vaccinated and continue to work to keep Queenslanders healthy.


As MPs, we have all sat down with people who have talked to us about their hospital experience. We know that, for many of them, admission to hospital is one of the most stressful things they will go through. Recently a father contacted me about a really serious industrial accident that hurt his son. He was under immense stress as he worried about his son and the treatment he was getting. In this case he ended up being immensely grateful for the treatment his son received during a very busy period, but that does not make the concern and stress he felt in that moment any less real. From the moment he got the call that his son had been injured to arriving at emergency, surgery, and even now in recovery, the family stress he would have felt would have also been transferred and felt by workers.

As noted by Queensland Health, that is why we are introducing wellbeing activities that can include wellbeing check-ins, wellbeing monitoring programs, peer support programs, nutritional food options, flexible work arrangements, and intervention for health risks like fatigue, vicarious trauma and occupational violence. These are designed to create healthy workplaces, promote staff consultation measures and provide details about how staff wellbeing is taken into account. This is good for the workers, but I think it is also good for patients who know they are going to get a worker in a better mental and physical state. It will also mean better outcomes for our state, and that is why I support the bill.

Everyone in Logan knows how fast Logan is growing, with new families moving in every day. That is why there is pressure on health workers, but it is also because of facilities. We know that we support patients and workers through investments, and in Logan we are delivering through the new mental health lounge, the new car park, the new ward 2B and major extensions. These major extensions were all unsupported by the Morrison LNP government, which was very disappointing.

I want to recognise the contributions of the QNMU and Australian Workers' Union. They know the details of the stresses that health workers face, and their members know that any day they can face difficulty or even danger from patients. They know that in some cases their co-workers and managers could do much better to ensure the wellness of workers. Earlier this year we invited thousands of prospective health workers to attend the first annual Logan Hospital Careers Fair. This was a major local employer, the Logan Hospital, looking after the wellness of local employees and keeping locals healthy; that is, locals looking after locals and local employment.

There is a real contrast in this House: the government on this side invests in Logan, in growing communities and the health services that new families and Logan seniors need; or the pruners over there who see the Logan Hospital as just a cost and workers as something in need of pruning. Our growing communities cannot afford to risk the LNP. How do we know that is not rubbish? Because we know that is what they did last time they were in government. They cut services, they sacked nurses and they did not invest in the Logan Hospital. Our growing communities cannot afford that, so we cannot risk an LNP government. We need to keep investing. I know that the entire Logan team and myself will continue to pressure to keep up investment. I commend this bill because it is about health workers and the wellness they need to bring wellness to others.

 **Mr KRAUSE** (Scenic Rim—LNP) (2.15 pm): The LNP will not be opposing this bill. As other members have noted, it is a commonsense bill in many respects and there are elements of the bill which we acknowledge to be common sense and modernisations across the portfolio. I know that the member for Nudgee outlined many of the opposition's concerns and points of interest in relation to the bill.

Looking after the health, wellbeing and security of our health workers is something that we should all take very seriously. I want to acknowledge that in the past few years Queensland Health has put in place some enhanced security arrangements at one of the hospitals I represent, which is Boonah Hospital, and I want to acknowledge that and thank them for that. I also want to thank all of the hardworking health professionals and other staff at the local hospitals that service the Scenic Rim electorate: Boonah Hospital, Ipswich Hospital, Logan Hospital, Gold Coast University Hospital and Laidley Hospital in the electorate of Lockyer—which is just a few kilometres past Grandchester, which I represent—and also Beaudesert Hospital in the heart of the Scenic Rim. Beaudesert Hospital is a great success story in terms of maternity and other surgical services there which the LNP reinstated after many years of neglect before we came to office.

The amendments to the Health and Hospital Boards Act 2011, which are what I will primarily focus on in my contribution, are designed to strengthen protections for the physical and psychological wellbeing of the public health workforce. This is the issue that has received the most attention. In this debate I want to raise the fact that quite often the failure of HHSs and Queensland Health to properly plan for staff and services is a great source of stress for health and hospital workers, doctors and nurses, whatever they may be. Just recently it has been brought to my attention very directly, although similar concerns have been raised over a number of years, that there is quite often a lack of doctor coverage at Esk, Laidley and Boonah hospitals. They are part of the West Moreton HHS, which obviously has the major hospital at Ipswich. It was noted that this is a regular occurrence. In the specific occasion raised with me, there was no coverage from around 6 pm one day to 11 am the next day. That is a very, very long gap for there to be no doctor coverage at a hospital—wherever you are—particularly in these places where there can be a considerable distance or time between hospitals. There is stress caused to staff who are left to manage situations which are quite often beyond their skill set, although they all act extremely professionally. I have had personal experience with that with my own family.

The stress caused by that situation is enormous, and that is the result of poor workforce planning and an inability to get properly skilled professionals into the small hospitals that need them. There is a great fear—by nurses, mainly, who are left to deal with these situations—that there will be adverse outcomes and deaths resulting because there is no adequate doctor coverage. It is recognised by the people who raised these concerns with me that there is only so much nursing staff can do in these situations, but it comes from a lack of workforce planning. So I say again that, to achieve the goals this bill talks about, small hospitals in our networks need to be staffed adequately, and that is something I have consistently raised with the West Moreton HHS.

I note that this stress and impact on wellbeing is compounded by the ramping situation at Ipswich Hospital. It has been the epicentre of the ramping crisis facing our state for some time because over 50 per cent of ambulances there regularly wait longer than they should to off-load patients. It sometimes takes a very long time to get an ambulance out of Ipswich to places like Boonah, Esk or Laidley to transport those people because the ambulances are ramped. I want to thank the paramedics who work

so professionally to look after those people while they are ramped at Ipswich Hospital or any other hospital. Logan and the Gold Coast have similar issues; in fact, we have similar issues all over the state. Sometimes an entire ambulance shift is spent waiting for admission.

The point is that that would be extraordinarily stressful and frustrating for those paramedics, not to mention the patients and not to mention the people in other parts of the network who cannot get access to services because of that blockage of ambulances in the larger hospitals. One ambo said to me last year at an anniversary event for one of our ambulance services that they were fed up, they felt underappreciated, they were burnt out and it was like they were just a number to the QAS and the government.

**Mr Harper:** I can tell you what it felt like under you lot.

**Mr KRAUSE:** I will take that interjection from the member for Thuringowa. The feedback given to me is that it is worse now than it ever was in past years because at least when the LNP were in office our health system performed better than it is performing now. The member for Thuringowa can interject all he likes, but all of the statistics about ramping, elective surgery wait lists and all manner of measures show that the health system worked better when Lawrence Springborg was the minister. He was the best minister for health that Queensland ever had and the numbers show that. The system worked better in past years, and that is what the ambos say, that is what the nurses say and that is what the doctors say.

They are stressed because they cannot do the job they want to do at the moment because of a lack of workforce planning as well as a lack of capital planning. I thank the member for Thuringowa for raising that because it gave me the opportunity to respond to those spurious allegations about the record of the former government when our system worked better. This is how a failure to plan and a failure to fix ramping impacts the health and wellbeing of our ambos.

Beautesert Hospital's maternity section is a great story. The Beautesert Hospital's maternity section won a national award for their service in 2022. As I said, it was restored in 2014 after being left to wither away for nearly 10 years by the Bligh and Beattie governments. I thank that hospital for the outstanding work they do. In late 2021, changes were proposed to their workforce situation. I have been advised that that process has now been completed, but it was an extremely long process and I understand it was stressful for many of the people involved. I want to thank them for their work. We must support that service, including through adequate resourcing and certainty for midwives and doctors at Beautesert Hospital. It is part of a growing region. I heard the member for Logan talk about the strong growth in residential numbers in his electorate, and many of those people are also connected to the Scenic Rim electorate. Beautesert Hospital needs to be supported to grow to take pressure off other hospitals in the network. It is something that needs continuous work.

Increasing overnight and weekend coverage for doctors in Beautesert is also something I have been fighting for over many years—not only to better serve the community, although that is extremely important, but also to enhance the wellbeing of staff at the hospital over those times. I have been informed that earlier this year there were to be two junior doctors engaged in an effort to remediate against this issue. This would improve overnight coverage and improve weekend coverage from a doctor point of view. I cannot say with certainty whether those doctors have been employed at this point, but it would certainly be a step in the right direction to improve coverage—as I said, not just for the community but also for the wellbeing of all the other staff.

Local staff at Beautesert Hospital are frustrated because they can plainly see that they could do more, yet they have to turn away people sometimes because there is not enough dedicated rostered staff, particularly specialists. Procedures that could be done at the hospital from a physical point of view cannot be done because the staff are not there. I was recently told about a local woman who needs intervention by way of a hysterectomy, yet the gynaecological services offered at Beautesert Hospital are very limited in scope due to the small number of days there is a visiting gynaecologist at the hospital, despite there being a significant demand for those services in the community and capacity for it to be carried out there.

I will continue to advocate strongly for that hospital to have more surgical lists allocated to it and for the Metro South HHS to make available those specialists. That would improve the situation for everyone who works at the hospital. They could take more pride in the place they work, whilst also enhancing health services in the Beautesert region and the broader region as well.



**Mrs GILBERT** (Mackay—ALP) (2.25 pm): I would like to support the Health and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022. The bill will amend a number of Health portfolio acts to better support the delivery of high-quality, responsive health care in Queensland. I thank the stakeholders and the

Health and Environment Committee for their comprehensive consultation on the bill. The Minister for Health and Ambulance Services and Leader of the House has already outlined the major amendments in the bill.

I will take this opportunity to highlight some of the considerations regarding the changes to the Public Health Act 2005 to support the vision-screening program and the modernisation of the Queensland Cancer Register. Before I do, I would like to say that we have great health workers in our state looking after the people of Queensland. I find it a bit fanciful that the member for Scenic Rim would think that having over 4,000 fewer health workers in the health system would make it a better health system because I know that the workers under the LNP were very stressed. When the member for Scenic Rim was going through—

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Lister): Order! The member for Mackay is not speaking loudly and I want to be able to hear what she has to say. I give members to my left a general warning not to interrupt when the member is not taking interjections.

**Mrs GILBERT:** The member for Scenic Rim spoke about stressors that health workers have, and he could also add to that the stress they have when they are being put down by those opposite. Health workers contact me and say how distressed they are, especially when the member for Mudgeeraba is always talking down health workers and talking down health sites. Our health workers are really proud of the work they do and they are also proud of the health sites they work in. An apology is overdue from the member for Mudgeeraba to those health workers she called duds.

The bill will amend the Public Health Act to authorise schools to provide specific student information to the Queensland Health Primary School Nurse Health Readiness Program—a free statewide vision-screening program for students in prep. Registered nurses use two non-invasive screening tools to test for common visual abnormalities—a card-matching game and a special automated camera. The screening process takes approximately five minutes per child, which is fantastic because it does not interrupt the school day. If a visual abnormality is found, a registered nurse will follow up with a parent or guardian and refer the child to an eye specialist for further assessment.

If the bill is passed, schools will be able to share the student information with the vision-screening program through a secure electronic process. This means the program will be able to obtain student information from schools so that they can directly contact families to see if they would like to consent and they can answer any questions. This will reduce the administrative burden on school staff and vision-screening nurses associated with following up consent forms. It will maximise the number of children who are screened for preventable vision loss.

There are existing safeguards in place to protect the privacy and interests of children in relation to information sharing. These include: restrictions on who can access Q Vision, the database for the program; offences and disciplinary action for unauthorised information disclosures; and obligations under the Information Privacy Act 2009. Importantly, school principals may withhold identifying information if disclosure is not in the student's best interest—for example, for safety issues. Families who do not wish to participate in the screening program may also inform the school principal or return a consent form stating their wishes. Information kept on the child's record will be destroyed accordingly.

Overall, the amendments aim to give Queensland's children the best possible start to their education. They will allow registered nurses to screen more prep students for preventable vision loss, subject to parental and guardian approvals. As a former teacher, I know how crucial it is for these early years of learning.

**Mr Harper:** You were a teacher?

**Mrs GILBERT:** Yes. Vision screening in early childhood is critical for detecting common visual abnormalities. If not treated early, these can result in behavioural issues, concentration difficulties and in turn poor learning outcomes. Children know when they are not achieving at the same rate as their peers. Not being able to see clearly has a huge impact on their ability to learn to read and also on their numeracy. This flows on to all the other subjects they come across in a usual curriculum. Those of us who now wear glasses know how difficult it is when we try to read something if we cannot put our hand on glasses to wear, so imagine trying to read with impaired sight. This is an important health screening initiative and it has the potential to minimise long-term impacts on a child's learning and development by providing opportunity for early detection.

This bill also amends the Public Health Act to include new notification requirements for hospitals, pathology, laboratories and diagnostic imaging practices. This will allow Queensland Cancer Register to better monitor the prevalence of cancer and evaluate the effectiveness of treatments. The objective



of these amendments is to reflect on temporary cancer management and diagnostic techniques. This is so important, given cancer is the biggest contributor to the burden of disease in Australia and a leading cause of death. The data collected by the register is used to inform research on cancer screening, detection and patterns.

Australia has the highest melanoma incident rates in the world and, most concerning, of all the states in Australia, we have the highest rates. My mother, 30 years ago, had a melanoma removed. Early detection and early treatment means she is still with us today.

Statistics from the Cancer Council Queensland indicate that one in two Queenslanders will develop cancer in their lifetime. These statistics speak to the need to make sure our legislation is contemporary to assist the efforts to reduce the burden of cancer. The amendments to this bill will complement the Queensland government's plan to construct a new 150-bed, stand-alone cancer hospital in Herston Health Precinct, offering specialist treatments.

Cancer has substantial social and economic impacts on individuals and families in our community. Over the last 10 years, there has been more than a 30 per cent increase in the number of Queenslanders being diagnosed each year. This means more and more people need treatment and care. The new notification requirements will allow more data to be obtained to better support cancer research and education programs.

In January this year, my father lost his battle with bowel cancer. It is not a battle that I want to see any other families face. I would like to put on record my sincere thanks to the oncology team at the Mackay Base Hospital. Their care of my father, James, was outstanding. Their care and compassion was immense. Thank you to all the health workers looking after Queenslanders.

The amendments in this bill are a result of thorough consultation by Queensland Health, and stakeholders have described them as necessary, workable and practical. I commend the bill to the House.



**Dr MacMAHON** (South Brisbane—Grn) (2.34 pm): I rise to give my contribution on the Health and Other Legislation Amendment Bill and would like to focus in particular on the changes being made for hospital and health services to proactively consider ways to support staff health, safety and wellbeing. This bill is pretty typical of lots of bills that we see from this government: some small, simple measures mostly beneficial, aimed at improving a range of health acts but without ever coming close to addressing the real issues which we are facing in our healthcare system here in Queensland.

I want to pay specific attention to clauses 5 and 6 of the bill which will amend the Hospital and Health Boards Act. These amendments will introduce a requirement for hospitals and health services and hospital and health boards to proactively consider the wellbeing of workers in the public health system. Obviously, every employer should have regard for the wellbeing of their workers, and that is true for our government and is true for our public health system. What I find striking is that this government can legislate a requirement for hospital and health boards to consider the wellbeing of healthcare workers while, at a systemic level, failing to do so themselves. It is not clear that this government genuinely has regard for the wellbeing of those frontline workers, judging by the manner in which our healthcare system is run.

The failing in our healthcare systems impact hospital worker wellbeing in a number of ways: chronic underfunding, under-resourcing and underpaying of staff; stringing staff along on temporary contracts; high patient-to-nurse ratios leading to burnout; expensive and inaccessible health care for patients; and massive disparities in the kinds of care you get depending on which HHS area you are in. These are all problems of this government which this government has the power to fix but is choosing not to. Legislating hospital boards to proactively consider the wellbeing of workers will achieve little when hospital boards can only work with the hand the government has dealt them.

The pressures that our healthcare workers are under, both in their roles treating patients and also as everyday Queenslanders facing a cost-of-living crisis and challenges in accessing health, are the responsibility of the government. Hospital boards cannot look holistically at the wellbeing of health staff. The government has every opportunity to legislate and govern in a way which would improve hospital worker wellbeing, but they do not. Instead, they want to pass the buck onto someone else.

I draw attention to the Queensland Nurses and Midwives' Union, which submitted the results of their members' survey to the inquiry into this bill. More than 5,000 nurses and midwives responded to the survey: 70 per cent said that dangerous workloads were a barrier to them staying in the workforce and 76 per cent said moral distress and fatigue was an issue. Almost two-thirds cited insufficient pay.

The QNMU in their submission are calling for: safer workloads; a physically, psychologically and culturally safe environment; an environment that promotes autonomous and collaborative practice; active inclusion in organisational governance and decision-making; involvement in research and innovation; and recognition of nursing and midwifery leadership at all levels.

This is the reality on the ground that healthcare workers are facing: chronic underfunding, chronic understaffing, dangerous workloads, unsafe conditions for workers and patients, insecure employment where nurses do not know where or if they will get another contract, limited training opportunities, and falling real wages for workers at a time when workers are seeing the broader cost of living go up, the cost of housing go up by hundreds of dollars a week in the space of just a few years.

What can a hospital board do when the government does not allow a system for workers to have a clear pathway to permanency after one year? What can a hospital do when there is not funding for more staff or more resources? This government would rather blow billions of dollars on a single stadium than properly fund our healthcare system. What can a hospital board do when the government offers nurses wage agreements that will see their real income go backwards, with inflation outstripping any increase in wages? What can a hospital board do when the government offers nurses wage agreements that do not support them when they are calling out and saying, 'We are dealing with understaffing and underpay'?

What would proper regard for the welfare of our hospital workers actually look like? For one, it would look like investing the enormous wealth of this state into our hospitals and health services. There is money in this state for hospitals. We heard from the Treasurer this morning—

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Lister): Order, members. I am watching the members for Maryborough and Gympie.

**Dr MacMAHON:** We have a massive surplus as a result of finally implementing a progressive coal royalties policy that the Greens had been calling for. We are an enormously wealthy state and yet we are hearing the kinds of stories that we heard about the PA Hospital, of people being left in absolutely dire conditions. We have so much money sitting around that apparently we can spend \$3 billion knocking down a school and a stadium! Last financial year we saw gas companies more than double their revenue to \$22.5 billion on the back of inflation-causing price gouging—

**Mr HARPER:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. It is on relevance, 118(b). I ask that the member be brought back to the bill before the House.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** There has been a reasonable degree of latitude afforded by Deputy Speakers so far, but I do fail to see the relevance to the bill of what you are talking about now, member for South Brisbane. Would you please come back to the long title of the bill?

**Dr MacMAHON:** The relevance to this bill is we are looking at the wellbeing of health workers who are dealing with a health system that is systematically underfunded. How can we maintain their health and wellbeing when they are going to work in dangerous conditions? This is what we are hearing from healthcare workers. This is what I have heard when I have visited hospitals: 'We are understaffed. We are overworked. We do not get the support we need.' How can we look after the wellbeing of hospital workers when we are not investing in our health system in the way we should be?

We do not have the money to fund maternity wards in regional Queensland or implement safe nurse ratios for staff. We somehow have money for vanity projects, but we do not have money for the basics of a healthcare system that would serve Queenslanders. What else could we be doing? We could be improving worker wellbeing by giving hospital workers a pathway to permanency so that people are not strung along on temporary and casual contracts. They cannot build professional relationships with colleagues if they cannot get permanent roles. They cannot have the security and peace of mind they deserve. Instead, they have to worry about where they live or if they will have a job in a few months time.

We put forward amendments to the Public Sector Bill last year that would have given public health sector workers a pathway to permanency after a year. That would have been a very clear measure to address the kind of issues the QNMU have put forward. The QNMU Secretary, Beth Mohle, said—and I have to agree with her—that the rental crisis is impacting the delivery of health services and it is a critical issue that the government needs to turn their attention to. The really pathetic amendments we saw yesterday are going to do nothing for the healthcare workers who are being priced out of their neighbourhoods, who cannot afford to live close to their workplaces and have to travel even further to get to work. How can we look after the wellbeing of workers when they cannot find a safe place to live? Last month the ABC reported on the story of—


**Ms KING:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I note your previous ruling and I question the relevance of the member's contribution under 118(b) and ask whether she could be brought back to the long title of the bill.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Yes, you are continuing to stray beyond reasonable latitude regarding the long title of the bill, member for South Brisbane. Would you please confine your contribution to what is in the bill?

**Dr MacMAHON:** To be clear, it is relevant to the bill because the government is legislating hospital boards to have responsibility for the wellbeing of hospital workers, which we welcome. We hear stories like Colleen Clark, a registered nurse working in Theodore, who was kicked out of her rental and is on the precipice of homelessness because there was nowhere for her to live. She had a job at the Theodore hospital. She wants to stay working in regional Queensland, but there is nowhere to live. How does the hospital board look after the wellbeing of someone like Colleen in the face of a massive housing crisis? How do they make sure that the patients going to that hospital receive the kind of care they need from healthcare workers if they are being priced out of their neighbourhoods? What is the hospital board meant to do to look after the wellbeing of people who are facing that in the midst of a housing crisis and being let down by this government?

I also want to draw attention to the massive disparities in care that we see between different HHSs and being mindful of the way that HHSs implement these wellbeing strategies to make sure we have consistent support for healthcare workers right across the state. What we see is massive disparities between the way different HHSs are run, the culture of those HHSs and the quality of care being offered. We saw during COVID massive disparities in care depending on whether people lived north or south of the river. We saw massive disparities in terms of access to terminations and access to dental care for under five-year-olds depending on whether they were north or south of the river. How are we going to make sure that HHSs are consistently implementing wellbeing strategies for their staff when we have such massive differences in the way that HHSs are run and the services that are offered to patients?

In closing, we welcome these measures to improve wellbeing. However, I stress that if the broader conditions are not improved we are going to see more people leaving the healthcare sector, as we already are. We are going to see worse care for patients. When our healthcare workers suffer, it is all of us who suffer because we rely on those workers to come to work and do their best job, and they cannot do that in the face of a housing crisis and a cost-of-living crisis.

 **Mr McCALLUM** (Bundamba—ALP) (2.45 pm): I think the contribution from the member for South Brisbane has gone past the normal levels of Greens spin that we see and into a new Greens dystopia. It was unbelievably hypocritical to hear a contribution reflecting on difficulties and stresses for our healthcare workers from a member of a political party that is holding up \$10 billion worth of housing investment. All of the healthcare workers who work at the PA who might want to live in the electorate of South Brisbane or Maiwar can contact their local members and say, 'Stop protesting the building of more houses in the electorates of South Brisbane and Maiwar.' It is extreme hypocrisy.

I am very happy to rise and contribute to the debate to support a bill which supports and helps strengthen protections for our frontline healthcare workers. I want to acknowledge all of our hardworking healthcare staff, including the wonderful healthcare workers at West Moreton Health. I note that West Moreton Health took the time to make a submission on this bill, and I thank them for that. I thank them for their tireless work in looking after our community, for helping people during their times of most need, especially through the pandemic.

Of course, all of our healthcare workers went above and beyond to help protect Queenslanders through the pandemic. I give a special mention and a special shout-out to: the staff at the Goodna public health clinic, who were working unbelievably long hours doing contact tracing in the midst of the pandemic; our healthcare workers who were out there during the pandemic at COVID clinics; and the healthcare workers who were maintaining healthcare service provision throughout an unheralded public health emergency and all of the difficulties that came with that and all of the stresses. That is why this bill, a bill which strengthens the protection of the physical and psychological wellbeing of our public health workforce, is so very welcome. Our public health workers can rely on the Palaszczuk government to deliver these increased protections.

The measures in this bill will help our hospital and health services and their boards proactively consider the health, safety and wellbeing of our public sector health staff. It will strengthen the provisions for the wellbeing of workers. Importantly, this includes, obviously, our frontline clinical

workers but also our hardworking health administrative and operational staff who are part of the broader health family and who are every bit as dedicated and critical and who form part of the overall health family that go above and beyond in protecting Queenslanders.

No-one would argue that our health workers are often in extremely high pressure and challenging environments and situations in their workplace—none more so than throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. It is completely understandable that the complex nature of their work and the high pressure of these challenging situations and environments can pose unique risks to their wellbeing, whether that be a physical threat from a virus like COVID-19 or whether it be psychological impacts on their overall health and wellbeing. In this bill, 'wellbeing' includes physical and psychological health, safety and wellbeing as well as emotional wellbeing and cultural safety. It is great to see cultural safety being included in this legislation. West Moreton Health, for example, has a wonderful First Nations unit. They engage brilliantly with the local First Nations community—they have a yarning circle. It is wonderful to see elements of culture being brought into the health system to create a better environment for staff and patients alike.

It is hard to imagine a more egregious breach of the health and safety—particularly the psychological health and safety—of our healthcare workers than calling regional healthcare workers 'duds' or calling our chief health officer during the COVID pandemic 'a punch-drunk bureaucrat'. If that happened in a workplace under the provisions of this bill it would absolutely breach the standards contained in this legislation. That is what the LNP have said about our healthcare workers. It is quite extraordinary. Calling 64 times for us to open the borders during the height of the pandemic—this would have overwhelmed our stressed healthcare system and put more pressure on our health workers—represents a threat to the physical and psychological wellbeing of our public health workforce.

The Palaszczuk Labor government will keep on delivering more resources in terms of record staff levels. We have delivered more than 17,000 additional frontline health workers since 2015. That is over 17,000 frontline health workers who are going to benefit from the new protections that are contained in this bill. That is a 38 per cent increase in nurses; a 29 per cent increase in doctors; a 29 per cent increase in ambulance officers; and an almost 25 per cent increase in allied health professionals. In fact, around nine out of 10 employees work in frontline and frontline support roles. This year in Ipswich we have already welcomed 35 new doctors and 89 new nurses as part of another 1,036 frontline health workers right across Queensland.

**Mr Harper:** That lot would prune them.

**Mr McCALLUM:** I take the interjection from the member for Thuringowa. Quite the opposite to pruning, we are growing. We are building new, state-of-the-art facilities for our frontline healthcare workers. These brand new workplaces will help them to deliver world-class health care to our communities—like the Ipswich Hospital expansion with 200 beds and a 50-bed mental health unit, like the satellite hospital in Ripley which is well under construction. I had the opportunity to inspect the progress, and it is on track. Right next door there will be a 90-bed subacute facility. All of these brand new, state-of-the-art facilities will be filled with frontline healthcare workers who are going to benefit from the protections in this bill.

It is disappointing to consistently hear the LNP talking down our healthcare workers. They cannot contribute to this debate and say that everything in Queensland when it comes to the health sector is bad but 'I don't want to criticise the workers'. That is what those opposite are doing.




**Mr MICKELBERG** (Buderim—LNP) (2.56 pm): In my contribution today, I want to focus on the amendments to the Hospital and Health Boards Act. I say at the outset that we support measures to ensure the safety and wellbeing of public sector workers is protected. Our health workers are the key to ensuring Queenslanders are able to access quality health care in their hour of need. I place on record my thanks to those health workers for their commitment and sacrifice, particularly over the last couple of years. It is that commitment and sacrifice that is the reason for ensuring their welfare must be a priority. Forty per cent of doctors report that they have been bullied in any given year. Nurses report that they are subject to violence, dangerous workloads, moral distress and fatigue.

I have spoken previously about the toxic culture running through the wards of the Sunshine Coast University Hospital and about how bullying complaints and serious allegations were ignored by the hospital board, by Queensland Health and by the government. A number of years ago, multiple staff from the Sunshine Coast University Hospital came to me. They spoke of a dysfunctional workplace characterised by bullying, harassment and humiliation. They told me of their fear of reprisal by senior management, and they told me that patient care was suffering as a consequence.

At the time, the clinicians wrote to the director-general and to the board of the Sunshine Coast Hospital and Health Service and they asked for intervention. They described it as a 'pervasive and brutal culture of blame, fear and retribution'. Doctors wrote directly to the board to raise their concerns and specifically called out the mismanagement and bullying of the former CEO, Naomi Dwyer, and her chief operating officer, Karlyn Chettleburgh. Rather than deal with those issues in a meaningful way, the concerns of frontline staff were dealt with in a superficial and inadequate manner by the members of the Sunshine Coast Hospital and Health Service Board. I suggest that those board members failed to meet their obligation to take reasonable steps to ensure that the health service they were charged with overseeing met its health and safety obligations and that the executive officers of the health service were carrying out their duties in accordance with legislation, expected of every business and entity in the country.

There is little wonder that we have to have this legislation when the former board of the Sunshine Coast Hospital and Health Service failed so miserably to look after the workers of the Sunshine Coast Hospital and Health Service when they were afflicted by a CEO and a chief operating officer who were harming them regularly. That harm inflicted by Naomi Dwyer and Karlyn Chettleburgh and the culture they created at the Sunshine Coast Hospital and Health Service drove doctors, nurses and administrators to resign from Queensland Health. Perhaps more concerning—

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Lister): Member for Buderim, the time for this stage of the debate has expired. Under the provisions of the business program agreed by the House and the time limit for this stage of the bill having expired, I call the Minister for Health to reply to the second reading debate.

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Minister for Health and Ambulance Services) (2.58 pm), in reply: I thank members for their contribution to the debate on the Health and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022. It is refreshing to have support across the House for the bill and to hear members opposite describing amendments as commonsense and practical. These comments are consistent with positive feedback from stakeholders who considered the bill was workable and contemporary and would implement best practice. The bill will support initiatives that promote the health of Queenslanders and prioritise the health and wellbeing of our frontline public health workforce. The bill also makes technical amendments to ensure health portfolio laws are up to date and effective.

I firstly want to echo the sentiments from across the House about the amazing work done by our frontline clinicians, nurses, midwives, allied health care workers and, for that matter, every single person who works across the health service. We know how challenging the work can be day in and day out. That is why this bill ensures staff wellbeing is front and centre in health service planning and delivery.

We have heard members opposite say that they support the staff wellbeing amendments in the bill but that the bill will not solve every issue our health system is facing, and that is stating the obvious. This is not a bill that seeks to wave a magic wand and fix everything overnight. In fact, if there was such legislative possibility to fix the pressures of the health system in Queensland and what is happening nationally through a piece of legislation, I look forward to seeing the opposition's private member's bill that does that. I really look forward to seeing that bill and how that is going to solve all of the pressures and demand issues, including the failing of the primary healthcare system, access to GPs, affordability of GPs, shortage of international doctors and national doctors and not enough placements at universities held back by the Morrison government. In fact, he took university places off us in Queensland and gave them to regional New South Wales. I am really keen to see that private member's bill when it eventually arrives.

We all know the pressures facing our health system. These issues are not unique to Queensland. In the wake of the global pandemic, countries across the world have experienced health workforce issues. There is no silver bullet for these issues and of course no one piece of legislation will alleviate these global pressures. This bill is just one of many measures that the Palaszczuk government is taking to ensure our health system continues to provide world-class health care to all Queenslanders.

Some members have noted that hospital and health services already have obligations to protect staff health and safety. Yes, of course HHSs have existing obligations under general work health and safety legislation. The bill does not duplicate or displace work health and safety obligations. Instead, it amends health legislation to make it clear that staff wellbeing is a core consideration for boards and hospital and health services. It requires boards and hospital and health services to proactively consider ways of supporting the wellbeing of our public sector health workforce. It sends a clear signal to our health workforce that we value the contribution they make every day, we understand the pressures they face and we are committed to prioritising their health and wellbeing.

I note that this amendment has been supported by the Australian Medical Association Queensland. These amendments will support the many initiatives that Queensland Health already has in place to support staff. For clinical staff and students, this includes wellbeing workshops, a statewide wellbeing and resilience program, a mental health and wellbeing summit and a wellbeing working group. This year a new online wellbeing education and training program has started for junior doctors across Queensland thanks to a partnership with Mater Education Ltd. There are also employee assistance services, peer support programs, staff wellbeing check-ins, wellbeing monitoring programs, nutritional food options, end-of-trip facilities, health education programs and leadership development programs. I also want to acknowledge what our other health stakeholders do—the colleges, ASMOF, the unions and the AMAQ, which also has initiatives to support its membership base in terms of wellbeing.

The member for Southport also mentioned that local hospitals need local solutions for their staff. Let me assure the member for Southport that the bill will further encourage HHSs and boards to meet their staff wellbeing obligations in a way that complements their unique operating environments, staff make-up and geographical locations.

Turning to the amendments for the Queensland Cancer Register, sadly cancer is something that affects all Queenslanders. The high incidence of cancer in Queensland is why it is so important for Queensland Cancer Register notification requirements to be modernised. More accurate data about cancer and treatment of cancer will inform efforts to prevent cancer and minimise the huge burden it imposes on our community. A number of members opposite have noted the submission made by the Australian Diagnostic Imaging Association, or ADIA, to the Health and Environment Committee. This association supports the bill and has been working closely with Queensland Health since 2021 on the expansion of Queensland cancer registration notifications. In its submission, ADIA noted that there is still work to be done to finalise the technology that will support radiology practices to comply with their new notification requirements.

The development of technology to assist diagnostic imaging practices to notify is well underway. Queensland Health has been supporting a large private radiology practice to trial technology developed by the CSIRO to help radiology practices comply with their new notification obligations. Queensland Health has also tested the technology and radiology reports from the public health system. In total, the technology has processed around 16,000 reports so far. It is extremely accurate in detecting notifiable information. Queensland Health is about to assist two other private radiology practices to trial and install the technology.

If the bill is passed, the amendments relating to the Queensland Cancer Register will commence by proclamation. It is intended that there will be an implementation period of approximately 12 months before the new notification requirements start to allow Queensland Health to engage with and educate all notifiers. Over these 12 months Queensland Health will continue to work closely with radiology practices and the ADIA to ensure radiology practices can confidently comply with their new obligations. Queensland Health will be taking an educational approach to supporting radiology practices and other notifiers to comply with their notification requirements. The notification methods for the other notifiers will be the same as they are now and will therefore have minimal operational impacts. For example, hospitals will continue to provide notifications by submitting relevant extracts of information from patient management systems on a shared hospital database. The new treatment data that hospitals will have to notify is already submitted to Queensland Health for auditing purposes.

The member for Mirani expressed some reservations about the Mental Health Review Tribunal being able to record proceedings other than electronically where there are compelling reasons. While the Recording of Evidence Act requires that evidence, rulings, directions, addresses, summings-up and other matters must be recorded, it does not prescribe the mechanism by which they must be recorded. The bill applies the same approach to the Mental Health Review Tribunal. It is intended that electronic recording will be the tribunal's default position. However, it is important to ensure that the tribunal has the flexibility to deal with the complexities that arise in mental health proceedings which are therapeutic in nature.

In some cases, the tribunal may have compelling reasons for not recording proceedings electronically. For example, in a small number of cases, a person appearing before the tribunal may become very distressed about recording devices and may say that they refuse to participate in the hearing if it is electronically recorded. Each case is different, but generally speaking it is not desirable from a health perspective for a person to disengage from proceedings that relate to their own health care. If the tribunal is not electronically recording a proceeding, it will need to record proceedings in another way such as in writing. The tribunal will document any reasons for not electronically recording

a particular proceeding. The approach in the bill aligns with the approach currently taken in courts and larger tribunals under the Recording of Evidence Act and allows the Mental Health Review Tribunal discretion to consider the diverse and complex circumstances of individual patients.

The member for Gregory asked whether the amendment to the definition of 'primary producer' in the Medicines and Poisons Act is creating more red tape for farmers. In short, the answer is no. The bill amends the definition of 'primary producer' to clarify that persons who are producing or both producing and storing agricultural products on their land for commercial purposes are exempt from needing a licence from Queensland Health for pest control and fumigation activities. This is the department's existing policy position that already applies to commercial farmers. The bill is simply clarifying it. This means that there will be no change to commercial farmers. They will continue to be exempt from needing a licence. The member also asked if stakeholders had been consulted on this change. I am pleased to advise that AgForce supported this change when Queensland Health consulted with it on the draft bill.

Queensland's health system is world-class, despite the unavoidable and continued impacts of the COVID pandemic and the other complex demands on our health system. In the 2021-22 financial year, Queensland public hospitals continued to exceed other jurisdictions in most performance metrics.

Before I finish and thank the committee and those stakeholders who contributed to the process of this bill, I also want to reply to the member for South Brisbane, and I again find her comments quite offensive in terms of simply playing cheap politics in relation to the health workforce. With regard to her comments around the wages and conditions of our workforce, particularly nurses and midwives, the fact is that they significantly endorsed the enterprise bargaining agreement that has recently been voted on which gives them one of the largest wage increases in the country. We have the best nurse-to-patient ratios in the country. We are supporting our nurses and midwives in the roles that they do. We have also significantly increased the nurse and midwife graduate intake for the next two years to boost their numbers as well as the other measures that we are taking to increase this workforce, not just graduates but also trying to attract more experienced nurses and midwives to Queensland to work.

We have to attract them to Queensland because many of them moved away between 2012 and 2015 because they lost their job. The LNP sacked experienced nurses and midwives. You cannot build that experience with graduates. You cannot bring in extra graduates without having the experienced staff to mentor them in their roles. That is the challenge we have. We are limited in our graduate intakes based on the experienced staff we have on the floor in the wards and in the emergency departments across our hospital system who can support them in their roles. Many people—I still talk to them today—left this state to find employment. They uprooted their families. Some have come back to Queensland. Thankfully some came back to Queensland Health to work in our system. It is so shameful that we lost all of those people. There would have been 5,035 fewer frontline health workers and over 3,200 fewer nurses and midwives over this term of government if the LNP had got into government. I fail to see how the LNP can, with a straight face, talk about a workforce shortage when under them there would be a larger problem when it comes to that workforce shortage.

The member for South Brisbane raised issues of resourcing and funding going into health. The Palaszczuk government has provided the biggest investment in funding that this state has ever seen. The Palaszczuk government has delivered the largest capital investment that has ever occurred in relation to Queensland Health in this state when it comes to new hospitals and expanded hospitals, replacing health facilities that are ageing and are no longer fit for purpose and building brand new ones in regional and remote communities. We are just as committed to delivering state-of-the-art health facilities in our rural and remote communities as we are in the big metropolitan areas in Brisbane. This government funds the biggest operating budgets each year for our hospital and health services and for Queensland Health. I note that that would never be acknowledged by the Greens. When they stand in this chamber in this debate and talk about housing—and we are building staff housing and student accommodation—at the same time their party is blocking funding for housing at a federal level, it is shameful and pure politics. The member for South Brisbane will not go back into her community and honestly tell them what they are doing. This is a cheap stunt by the member for South Brisbane.

I again thank the members of the Health and Environment Committee and the secretariat for their consideration and report on the bill. I thank those who took the time to provide feedback and make submissions on the bill and officers from Queensland Health and the Department of Justice and Attorney-General who have been involved in developing the bill and supporting the committee process. The bill is the result of significant discussions and consultation over time. This bill will build our knowledge about the impacts of cancer and inform efforts to address the burden of cancer; it will

alleviate the administrative burden on school and health staff involved in the vision screening program, helping to ensure more Queensland prep students can be screened for preventable vision issues; it will improve the efficiency of the organ donation consent process in private hospitals, increasing the chance of successful tissue and organ donations; and it will ensure that the health and wellbeing of our public health workforce is prioritised. I commend the bill to the House.

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


Motion agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

### Consideration in Detail

Clauses 1 to 5, as read, agreed to.

Clause 6—

 **Mr MICKELBERG** (3.15 pm): Before I was guillotined I was talking about the impact of the actions of the former CEO of the Sunshine Coast Hospital and Health Service and the consequence of her actions, which were reported to the board of the Sunshine Coast Hospital and Health Service but were not acted on in a timely or substantial manner. I want to place on record the consequence of the board not acting. Presumably this clause is in response to the fact that the boards previously had a requirement to take into account the interests of patients and a need to address resourcing, but at no point did it talk about staff. I understand the need to include that. I would have thought it would have been self-evident and one would hope that members of the board would have addressed that, but I want to talk about the consequence of the fact that the former members of the board of the Sunshine Coast Hospital and Health Service did not act when presented with the kinds of issues we are talking about in this legislation.

Doctors and nurses from the Sunshine Coast University Hospital have told me that the consequence of the board not acting resulted in their depression. Some of them have spoken to me about suicide attempts and they spoke to me about patient harm. I have raised this with the health service. This is nothing new. The minister is aware of this. The former DG was also written to about this. For me what the board did is unforgivable. To be clear, prior to this legislation the explicit obligation fell on the CEO, but in this instance the former CEO was the problem and so, in my view, the board should have acted. They did not at the time in a reasonable manner. The failure of the board resulted in serious consequences on honest hardworking Queensland Health workers. It resulted in adverse outcomes for patients.

The Sunshine Coast University Hospital is one of the newest hospitals in the state, if not the newest, and was one of the worst performing until recently. I acknowledge there is a new CEO and a largely new board—it has turned over considerably—and they are looking to address those problems. The fact that the former board did not address the toxic culture that existed within the health service which emanated from the former CEO meant that patients suffered. More particularly, as we are reading in this legislation, it meant that health workers suffered and it has had a long-lasting effect.


I personally think the board should be held to account for the lack of action. The board are well remunerated for their role. The fact is that they did not perform their duty as I believe existed under general workplace health and safety obligations, which are not as explicitly put as in this clause. It is a good thing that this clause now spells that out explicitly. It is my hope that all hospital and health service boards will now be held to account directly for the failure to act when these sorts of issues are presented to them. It is simply not good enough that doctors, nurses and administrators feel the need to come to members of parliament to raise these issues because the board has not acted in a timely fashion.

I do not want to criticise the government—far from it—and I want to make it clear that my criticism is not of the current board and the current CEO of the health service; it is of the former CEO and the members of the former board who did not act. Hopefully this sees an improvement.

Clause 6, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 7 to 10, as read, agreed to.

Clause 11—

 **Mr MICKELBERG** (3.19 pm): Clause 11 deals with the definition of ‘primary producer’ which the minister addressed in her summing-up speech. I seek clarification with respect to those who may no longer be assessed as primary producers. The kinds of entities I am talking about are those involved in the supply chain, organisations such as GrainCorp, AWB, and Riverina Stockfeeds; companies that



may not produce a commodity but store a commodity, are essential to the supply chain and, I would suggest, would be some of the biggest users of the very pest control measures that this clause deals with.

I note the minister said that AgForce was consulted but I would be interested to know if organisations such as Cotton Australia and GrainGrowers were consulted because I would suggest that those organisations will be the ones impacted in this instance. I seek clarification from the minister in relation to the process that will apply. For those entities that are now no longer considered primary producers, will it be a one-off process? Does the entity have to apply every time they seek to access pest control? For organisations such as GrainCorp that have large silos full of grain, that is a regular process that, in many cases, they do day in, day out. It is important to ensure, particularly in instances where we have mouse plagues across the state and across the country at times, that they have access to pest control products such as Mouseoff and phosphine gas, for example, for weevils and the like. Those are important products. Under these provisions they would require approval. As I understand it, such organisations would no longer be considered primary producers because they do not produce a commodity themselves; rather, they are part of the supply chain. I seek from the minister an understanding with regard to the rationale.

I note that hobby farmers, for example, are exempted. If an individual sold a couple of head of cattle for hobby purposes but did not have a meaningful large productive business then they would be exempt yet a very complex grain-handling company would not be exempt. To me that does not make a whole lot of sense. I would have thought that the grain-handling company would present less risk in terms of environmental and workplace health and safety issues than the small hobby farmer. I am keen to understand the process that will apply. Will it be a one-off? Does the entity need to apply in each instance? Will the approval rest with an individual or with the entity that is applying for it? It is the answers to those sorts of questions that I think industry needs to understand.

**Mrs D'ATH:** I thank the member for raising this particular issue. I am happy to seek clarification for the member beyond the debate of this bill. Obviously there are certain exemptions and we will ensure that, as we say, there is education and communication in the lead-up to this. We will make sure that that does provide clarity.

We have to remember the purpose in putting this here. This is happening to amend the definition around fumigation activity and pest control to clarify the use of gaseous substances. It is about the safety of the community. It is about making sure that we are monitoring the use of particular chemicals so we need to make sure that people in the supply chain are managing them properly and that there is tracking of that. However, the purpose is not to make it so cumbersome that it impedes people's businesses. We want it to be a streamlined process. Certainly, if any questions have not come up through the committee process or through the consultation that the department has done and if there are any concerns or doubts about who is or who is not included then I will certainly put that back to the department to make sure any materials we put out provide clarity in relation to the exemption.

Clause 11, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 12 to 41, as read, agreed to.

### Third Reading



**Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Minister for Health and Ambulance Services) (3.22 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a third time.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a third time.

### Long Title



**Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Minister for Health and Ambulance Services) (3.23 pm): I move—

That the long title of the bill be agreed to.

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

Motion agreed to.

**POLICE POWERS AND RESPONSIBILITIES AND OTHER LEGISLATION  
AMENDMENT BILL 2022****POLICE POWERS AND RESPONSIBILITIES AND OTHER LEGISLATION  
AMENDMENT BILL 2023**

Police Powers and Responsibilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022 resumed from 30 November 2022 (see p. 3738) and Police Powers and Responsibilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023 resumed from 21 February (see p. 62).

**Second Reading (Cognate Debate)**

**Hon. MT RYAN** (Morayfield—ALP) (Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services) (3.23 pm): I move—

That the bills be now read a second time.

The Economics and Governance Committee considered the Police Powers and Responsibilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022 and made one recommendation, namely, that the bill be passed. I thank the committee for its work and that recommendation. Additionally, the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee considered the Police Powers and Responsibilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023 and made three recommendations. I table the government response to those recommendations. I also thank the committee for those recommendations and its work in respect of analysing this bill.

*Tabled paper:* Legal Affairs and Safety Committee: Report No. 46, 57th Parliament—Police Powers and Responsibilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023, government response [\[512\]](#).

In 2014 the LNP's Child Protection (Offender Reporting) and Other Legislation Amendment Act changed the reporting arrangements for child sex offenders and shamefully saw the police monitoring of more than 1,700 offenders on the Child Protection Offender Register cease. The LNP's changes included reducing the period of monitoring for child sex offenders from eight years to five years and for those offenders found guilty of two relevant offences—for example, the rape of a child—the period for monitoring was reduced from 15 years to 10 years.

In 2014, the LNP claimed their soft-on-crime approach was based on research. However, the research quoted by the LNP sadly indicated that child sex offenders continued to reoffend despite intensive monitoring and supervision. I quote specifically from former LNP police minister Jack Dempsey's answer to question on notice 800 where he stated—

The research further indicates that of all child sex offenders, the proportion of re-offending is shown to be around 14% to 16% in the first five years after release, 4% to 6% at 10 years after release and 3% to 5% after 20 years after release.

The very evidence the LNP relied upon to justify cutting the monitoring of 1,700 child sex offenders from the Child Protection Offender Register indicated that those offenders were still at risk of reoffending. Our amendments to the Police Powers and Responsibilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill will right this wrong. Reporting periods for child sex offenders will be increased to 10 years for the first reportable offence, 20 years for the second and then reporting for life for subsequent offences.

Last year I visited the dedicated investigators and victim identification specialists from the Queensland Police Service's Task Force Argos as well as many others who are based at the Australian Centre to Counter Child Exploitation here in Brisbane. They do incredible work right across the state, as do the police officers and staff in child protection investigation units and at the Child Protection Offender Register.

The Palaszczuk government will always back the QPS with more resources and stronger laws. On this point I am advised by the commissioner that, to accompany the changes in this bill, the commissioner intends to double the resources allocated to the Child Protection Offender Register over the next eight years and this will be allocated from police growth positions already funded by the government. Our government's record on keeping the community safe is a strong one. Let us not forget that it was a Queensland Labor government that introduced the Dangerous Prisoners (Sexual Offenders) Act in 2003 and the Child Protection (Offender Reporting and Offender Prohibition Order) Act in 2004. It was the strongest legislation in the nation and was copied by other jurisdictions.

Common sense is a wonderful thing. It is common sense that underpins the drug diversion reforms in the Police Powers and Responsibilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023. It means treating a health issue—a health problem—with a health response. That is common sense. It is a commonsense approach that has been specifically requested by the Queensland Police Service and is supported by Police Commissioner Katarina Carroll. It is a commonsense approach that is also strongly supported by every single Queensland based former police commissioner who has served the people of Queensland since the Fitzgerald inquiry. In fact, former police commissioner Ian Stewart said—

Expanding drug diversion is not about going soft on crime. Just the opposite. It is a way of offering real hope to those caught up in drug use and providing a proven pathway to better personal wellbeing away from the criminal justice spiral.

Former corrective services commissioner Professor Peter Martin said—

This particular initiative is absolutely consistent with the best available evidence of what works around not only Australia but also internationally.

Former police commissioner Bob Atkinson said—

... there are many reasons why this is a sensible thing to do, but one of the standouts to me is the thousands of young people each year who obtain a criminal conviction for the possession of a small amount of drugs for personal use, who would never otherwise in their entire lives come into contact with the criminal justice system—and they're marked for life.

Earlier today, right in front of parliament, former federal police commissioner Mick Palmer stood in front of the media and said that the government was doing the right thing. He said it was right to treat minor drug issues as a health issue. The former federal police commissioner also said that the right thing to do was to hit those who profit from the misery of others, the drug traffickers, with a life sentence—exactly what we are doing in this legislation.

Under this new legislation, Queensland police will have new powers when it comes to dealing with people found with small quantities of drugs. This is about helping people, who are often young people, deal with a health issue. Previously, police had the power to divert people found with small quantities of cannabis to a drug diversion assessment program. Under the new legislation, that power will extend to other drugs and provide a tiered health response. This brings Queensland into line with all other jurisdictions across the nation.

According to police, diversion programs result in the majority of those individuals never having contact with police again. In Queensland each year, police will come across approximately 20,000 people in possession of a small quantity of drugs for their own personal use. Currently, police can spend around nine working hours processing a minor drug offence case through to its conclusion in court, where the individual who has been charged may not receive the early interventions from the health experts that they actually need. This new expansion of the police drug diversion program will free up police time to focus on serious drug offending such as drug supply, trafficking and manufacturing while keeping people with a health issue out of the judicial system. It is a commonsense approach based on evidence: if you divert people early to health and education services, they are less likely to reoffend. It is also about preventing crime.

At the other end of the scale, the penalties for those intent on spreading misery throughout the community through trafficking dangerous drugs will increase significantly. The trafficking of dangerous drugs results in significant economic and social harm to the community. The increase in penalties will make it clear that there is zero tolerance for this form of drug offending. The penalty for someone convicted of drug trafficking will be increased, from 25 years imprisonment to life imprisonment.

I want to acknowledge the tenacious advocacy of Dr Erin Lalor of the Alcohol and Drug Foundation, Rebecca Lang of the Queensland Network of Alcohol and Other Drug Agencies, Dr Maria Boulton of the Australian Medical Association of Queensland and her predecessor Dr Chris Perry, and Matt Noffs of the Noffs Foundation. In relation to this proposal, members of this House have a clear choice: they can be on the side of the police, on the side of the research and on the side of national consistency, or they can choose the opposite.


I intend to move an amendment during consideration in detail to the Police Service Administration Act 1990. Currently, there is no ability to employ a police officer other than on a full-time or part-time basis; nor is it possible to employ a police officer past the statutory retirement age of 60. The amendments will give effect to a new category of police officer employed on a casual basis, to be called special constables (state officers). They will be a pool of relief or substitute police officers, similar to what currently exists in other jurisdictional policing services and in, for instance, the nursing and teaching workforces. Special constables will only be used to undertake frontline, first-response general duties and will be employed when and as needed by the Queensland Police Service.

The proposed amendments to the Police Service Administration Act will allow the Queensland Police Service to offer employment opportunities on a casual basis to this untapped pool of experienced officers. This will be achieved by expanding the concept of special constable so that it can facilitate the employment of former police officers on specific terms, enabling these officers to act as a relief police workforce. The effect of the proposed amendments will be that police officers will still be required to retire on their 60th birthday but, if suitable for re-engagement, can be re-sworn as a special constable of the Queensland Police Service. Those officers who resign or age-retire and immediately apply to join the special constable pool will not be required to be further re-evaluated but may be required to undertake annual medical and functional role capacity tests. It is noted that former police officers who have not yet turned 60, regardless of their length of departure from the service, can also apply to be a special constable. All new special constables will be required to complete and remain up to date on all mandatory training considered necessary for the role. Special constables will be subject to the same disciplinary provisions as any other police officer.

In addition to the changes to the monitoring period for child sex offenders, the Police Powers and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022 also amends legislation to improve the ability of the Queensland Police Service to investigate cybercrime and other offences committed by reportable offenders by making certain offences against the Criminal Code and the Child Protection (Offender Reporting and Offender Prohibition Order) Act relevant offences for controlled operations and surveillance device warrants in schedule 2 of the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act. Further, it will enhance the capacity of the Queensland Police Service to investigate organised crime by facilitating the use of civilian participants in controlled activities in certain limited circumstances. It also strengthens laws to deter hooning behaviour, with a new circumstance of aggravation for the offence of evading police under section 754 of the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act.

In addition to the expansion of the police drug diversion program, the Police Powers and Responsibilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023 amends legislation to allow for the appointment of a person as an executive officer rather than to an executive officer position. This will allow executive officers, for example assistant commissioners and deputy commissioners, to be appointed generically to their respective rank or to the particular position they will fill. The bill also makes minor amendments to legislation administered by Queensland Fire and Emergency Services by confirming that any request or application under section 64, 'Prohibition by commissioner against lighting of fires', or section 65, 'Granting of permits', of the Fire and Emergency Services Act must contain the information prescribed by regulation and, in the case of a request under section 64, must be made in a way prescribed by the regulation itself.

The Palaszczuk government will always back the hardworking frontline and dedicated volunteers who contribute to our community and keep our community safe. That is why we have also included in this amending bill a new section 150BA, 'Assault of persons performing functions or exercising powers', under the Fire and Emergency Services Act, and made consequential amendments to the offence outlined in section 150C, 'Obstruction of persons performing functions', under the Fire and Emergency Services Act. This bill in many respects improves community safety. It supports the front line and delivers better outcomes for Queensland. I commend the bills to the House and encourage all members to support them.

 **Mr LAST** (Burdekin—LNP) (3.38 pm): I rise to contribute to the cognate debate of the Police Powers and Responsibilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022 and the Police Powers and Responsibilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023. There are provisions contained within these two bills that the opposition fully supports and there are other provisions that we do not support. I will go into more detail in due course. I will commence with the bill introduced in 2022 given that the short titles are identical other than for the year. No Queenslanders would object to the strengthening of child protection laws, because all Queenslanders acknowledge the importance of protecting our children from people who commit or attempt to commit the most despicable acts against our most vulnerable. It must be stated that the amendments relating to reportable offender reporting periods are based on national laws and that this government can in no way claim to be at the forefront of strengthening protections for children.

That being said, the increase in the reporting period for an offender convicted of a child sex offence for five years to 10 years imprisonment is welcomed by those of us on this side of the House. We also support the increase in the reporting period of a repeat offender from 10 years to 20 years, as

these two measures will ensure these offenders are monitored for longer and, importantly, provide an avenue for police to apply for a surveillance device warrant when intelligence suggests a reportable offender has breached their conditions. What must be placed on the record is that these amendments make no change to reporting obligations for repeat offenders who are classified as post dangerous prisoner sexual offenders under that act.

What must be called into question yet again is resourcing for police. In his introductory speech, the minister acknowledged that these amendments were expected to 'increase the number of reportable offenders under Queensland Police Service management'. Every Queenslanders knows that, thanks to the youth crime crisis, a horrific road toll in 2022 and myriad other issues, our police are already stretched beyond breaking point. I call on the minister to address in his reply how he will ensure there are adequate resources to act on these amendments whilst also ensure there are resources to address youth crime and the road toll.

While we support these measures, it is not just the resourcing question that the minister needs to answer. While the minister may claim to be righting a wrong, it was under the watch of this minister that we saw a 15-year-old girl allegedly abused by a known sex offender on the grounds of a Queensland prison and just three months later—

**Mr RYAN:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I understand that that matter may be the subject of criminal proceedings and may be before the court. I direct you to the standing orders in respect of sub judice.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Martin): Even if you have not mentioned a name, member for Burdekin, it is clear what you are talking about. I would ask that you move on.

**Mr LAST:** The minister referred to the need for a significant upgrade. In other words, this government had failed to ensure the security of a facility that houses known child sex offenders. It is rank hypocrisy for this minister to be talking about righting wrongs when so much is going so wrong under his watch.

What is also an illustration of hypocrisy is the fact that, despite having had over six years to right the wrongs, as the minister claimed, he chooses to introduce this bill whilst at the same time the CCC is reviewing the same laws. The CCC has in fact labelled these proposed amendments as premature given their ongoing work, but either the minister chose to ignore their concerns or he simply does not care.

I will touch briefly on the amendments that authorise civilians to take part in a controlled activity. Those on this side of the House and all Queenslanders would fully support the need to take the necessary steps to ensure appropriate surveillance of convicted child sex offenders to ensure they are complying with their obligations and that the community is kept safe. To those civilians who assist police in that surveillance, we say thankyou and acknowledge the work that they do.

With regard to the controlled operations, it is clear to all that cybercrime, identity theft, the distribution of intimate images and associated activities are an area where organised crime groups, in particular, are increasingly becoming a problem. Police must be provided with the necessary tools and legislation to identify offenders and protect Queenslanders. Whilst we support the amendment and note the minister's commitment to providing a great level of protection, we must also highlight that again we have seen the Queensland Audit Office raise concerns regarding the security of information systems in state controlled entities. What is especially concerning are the Audit Office references to the continuation of the same common weaknesses and the fact that over a quarter of deficiencies were not addressed within the agreed time frames.

I move onto the amendments relating to hooning. It is beyond question that the actions of hoons endanger themselves, spectators and the community at large. Just like we have seen with youth crime, we are seeing social media and other platforms being used by hoons in an effort to claim their 15 minutes of fame. In his introductory speech the minister referred to deterring the audience attracted to hooning activity. What the minister failed to address is the fact that this is a great source of frustration for police and other authorities that he has failed to address. Again, this minister has had six years to address this issue. The creation of new offences and the increases in maximum penalties should go some way to deterring both participants and spectators, but I would ask the minister why it has taken so long to do so.

As someone who has personally attended far too many failed incidents involving vehicles, it is clear that these people either do not realise or simply do not care about the danger they are putting themselves into, let alone the dangers faced by spectators and innocent members of the community. In the interests of community safety, we fully support these amendments because this is becoming an increasing problem right across Queensland, and particularly in the Gold Coast area.

I now move onto the Police Powers and Responsibility and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023. I put on the record my disappointment that this bill is being debated in cognate today. Both of these bills and, frankly, some of the individual amendments deserve more attention, more debate and more respect than is available as a cognate debate. People could be forgiven for thinking that debating these bills in cognate is a deliberate strategy by this government.

The opposition fully supports the amendments to the Fire and Emergency Services Act that will clarify the process for prohibition orders made by the commissioner in relation to the lighting of fires. As members have heard me say many times, the Rural Fire Service protects the safety of 93 per cent of Queensland's landmass. Assaults against volunteers is an issue that the Rural Fire Brigades Association Queensland has raised many times, and quite rightly so. In times of emergency, both paid and volunteer responders are putting themselves in harm's way for the benefit of the wider community. What these people do is acknowledged and respected by the vast majority of Queenslanders, but, sadly, we must ensure that these people are protected from those who wish them harm or seek to obstruct them in the performance of their duties. For that reason, we fully support the amendment. The LNP will not be opposing the amendment within the bill to allow executive officers to be appointed to a position or rank.

As I mentioned earlier, road safety is a major issue for all Queenslanders and one that I have a personal interest in. The introduction of a circumstance of aggravation for the offence of evade police is an important step in targeting dangerous drivers and those who are recidivist offenders when it comes to driving offences. However, another key reason for this circumstance of aggravation is in targeting violent juvenile car thieves. As those of us on this side of the House have said repeatedly, there must be consequences for actions with regard to these young offenders.

While the act of evading police is one that the community abhors, we must remember that these are juvenile offenders. Whilst attempting to evade police, these offenders put members of the community and police in danger as well as themselves and their passengers, with quite often devastating consequences.

We only have to look at the streets of Townsville and what is going on in that community to see the dangers posed by these offenders, but the reality is that some of these offenders are not just attempting to evade police: they are effectively targeting police by ramming and damaging police vehicles. Several times now we have seen police effectively retreat due to the actions of these young offenders. Whilst we welcome the amendments to address the issue of evading police, we call on the minister to also step up to ensure appropriate protections for police who are deliberately targeted by these offenders.

The need to create a greater deterrent for evade police is obvious to all Queenslanders and it is a sad fact that Queensland's recidivism rate sits 10 per cent higher than the national average. Therefore, the steps to ensure that the owner of a vehicle involved in an evasion offence provides details of the driver are welcomed by those of us on this side of the House.

I move on to the amendments relating to drug trafficking. Let us be very clear: those who traffic drugs profit from its misery. It is the vile acts of these offenders who destroy families, destroy communities and destroy lives. They will go to any lengths to profit while others face the consequences that drugs have on the lives of Queenslanders.

While traffickers and dealers promote the highs associated with drug use, it is the community that is left to clean up the mess. That mess includes increased crime in order for users to fund their habits, the health consequences for users and the impact on the health system as well as family breakdown, violence and much more. Like many in this place, I have seen too many lives destroyed by drugs. I am sure the vast majority of Queenslanders would agree with the increase in the maximum penalty faced by people convicted of trafficking drugs for, indeed, the people they supply and the community in general often faces a life sentence due to their actions and it is only fitting that the traffickers face the same penalty.

The drug ice, or crystal methamphetamine, is just one of the drugs these traffickers supply and, given the increase in its use, it is one of the drugs that traffickers will have a specific interest in. The Positive Choices website, which operates in collaboration with the federal Department of Health and

Aged Care as well as the University of Sydney, provides resources for a range of drugs to be used by teachers. According to their ice fact sheet, one in 100 students aged 12 to 17 used amphetamines, including ice, in the past month. They go on to state that the number of deaths and hospital admissions for dependence and psychosis are increasing.

Now remember that these are facts presented to teachers by a group with a direct link to the federal Department of Health and Aged Care. Yes, drug use can be regarded as a health issue, so let's look at the effects. Anxiety and panic attacks and aggressive behaviour are just some of the immediate effects. Long-term effects include strokes, psychosis, paranoia, depression, malnutrition, heart problems, kidney problems, lung problems, dental problems and, of course, drug dependency. The handout even includes the following sentence—

... methamphetamine is a very unpredictable drug. Toxic, and sometimes fatal, reactions can occur regardless of the amount used, whether the person is a first-time, occasional or regular user.

Given those side effects and the potential for death, it should be ringing alarm bells that one in 100 students use these drugs on a monthly basis. There is no doubt that the health impacts of these types of drugs are real and there is no doubt they pose a threat not just to users but to the community. Drugs are something the community is genuinely concerned about and it is those concerns that are addressed somewhat by the increase in the maximum penalty for drug trafficking. Those particular amendments make it clear that Queenslanders will not tolerate the peddling of dangerous drugs and that when they are trafficked there will be severe consequences. It is a process called deterrence.

What we see in the amendments relating to the possession of drugs effectively removes the element of deterrence for users. Yes, it is absolutely right to target traffickers, but a key strategy in shutting down their trade in suffering is in deterring users, the people that the traffickers actively target. The government claims that the amendments relating to the expansion of the police drug diversion program will allow for the expansion of drug diversion for minor drug offences and expand the range of alternative options available to police to divert minor drug offenders from the criminal justice system and into appropriate health interventions.

Those on this side of the House agree that drug users need health interventions, whether those interventions are to address dependency or the long list of side effects including mental health conditions. It is hypocritical at best to talk about deterring drug trafficking with increased penalties whilst effectively condoning the purchasing and carriage of the same substance that drug traffickers are dealing in. We are talking about dangerous drugs here. We are talking about heroin, cocaine and ice. The suggestion is that drug use is solely a health issue, and I cannot agree with that. The reality is that drug use is a health issue, a law enforcement issue and a rehabilitation issue.

It is concerning to me that this bill proposes to essentially define what is a minor drug offence by regulation rather than by legislation. That will be achieved by prescribing the quantity a person can hold, and still be eligible for diversion, in regulation—regulation that is not subject to the same level of scrutiny as legislation and regulation that can be amended by the relevant minister.

The committee heard that the quantity for methamphetamines such as ice is proposed to be one gram. According to the University of New South Wales, 'The typical dose of methamphetamine is a point of base or ice which is taken once or twice over the course of an evening or day.' They go on to define a point as 0.1 of a gram. In effect, under this bill a person can be carrying 10 doses of ice, or enough for five days. If police were to intercept a motor vehicle containing five persons and they each had a gram—under this legislation they would be required to be diverted—they would be dealing with a massive amount of a dangerous drug.

A five-day supply of a drug that can cause death simply cannot be treated as a minor offence. We must as a society do all we can to not only provide treatment for users but also deter people from using these drugs in the first place. I want to make it very clear that the LNP fully supports legitimate diversion programs. We fully acknowledge that drug diversion initiatives can help people get back on track and we note that diversion can be used as a strategy to reduce demand for drugs as outlined in the National Drug Strategy 2017-2026. What we cannot and do not support is the abandonment of consequences for actions and the abandonment of deterrence. Harm minimisation simply cannot come at the expense of the rule of law.

This bill has garnered significant media attention with a poll conducted by the *Courier-Mail* showing, as at 1 pm today, that 65 per cent of respondents were opposed to 'relaxing drug possession laws'—65 per cent of respondents were opposed. The government would do well to take that into

consideration when debating this bill over the next two days. Perhaps the difference in those polls is partly attributable to the range of effects that drug use has on particular communities as well as access to services such as rehabilitation.

A young lady from regional Queensland recently contacted my office with regard to her experiences. With her permission I will share her story. For the purpose of protecting this person, I will refer to her as Jenny. Jenny grew up in a traditional family and describes herself as a shy child. She did well at school and was accepted into university in Brisbane to study her chosen degree. Within four weeks of being in Brisbane, Jenny had found her niche. The shy child from the bush was no more and Jenny was enjoying both her studies and her social life.

Just a few months later, Jenny was introduced to drugs. By her own admission, she enjoyed being high mainly because it helped her overcome her shyness. Jenny's story is not unique in that she became an addict whose life revolved around drugs and the social life that came with them. Jenny was lucky for a few reasons that make her story a little different and that illustrates the challenges faced in regional Queensland especially.

Jenny's experience with drugs saw her university results plummet and, luckily, Jenny realised that she needed help. With the support of her family, she returned home to regional Queensland to 'get away' from drugs. Sadly, it was not long before the drugs found her, and Jenny describes fighting an intense craving that eventually she could no longer resist. I am happy to inform the House that today Jenny is healthy, has a family and a career, but the important part is what helped her achieve what she describes as a '90 per cent recovery'.

I mentioned before that Jenny was lured back into drugs, but when she told me that she was using far less than she previously had in Brisbane I asked her why. Her reply was that quite often when she was about to buy drugs or use drugs she would spot a police vehicle. Despite being at her lowest and having told her family what she had done to finance her drug habit, she simply could not face her parents being told by police that she had been arrested.

Jenny's story illustrates the deterrence that exists when we treat drug use as a law enforcement issue as well as a health issue. Jenny's story does not end there. Getting clean was, in her words, sheer hell. She speaks of the pain, sickness and, worst of all, being alone. She was lucky in a way. A family member was able to secure her a paid position in a drug rehabilitation facility in Sydney. For months Jenny's family had tried to find rehabilitation closer to home but there was none available, and the best on offer was for her to be put on a waiting list. To this day Jenny does not know what her rehabilitation cost financially, but she knows that the personal cost was, in her words, months of tears.


In Jenny's words, 'Queensland doesn't have the rehab beds it needs now, let alone asking the police to send more people their way.' Sadly, Jenny is right. We heard the minister not half an hour ago stand up in this place and talk about 20,000 minor drug offences in Queensland each year. Of course the question the minister needs to address is: how will our health system, which we know is in crisis, cope with this increased demand on their services? It is undeniable that rehabilitation services are in short supply in regional Queensland and, in many cases, a police referral will simply mean that someone else misses out. As I mentioned earlier, I cannot support laws that condone citizens carrying illicit drugs. While we continually focus on improving our response to drug use, we cannot undermine the deterrence factors and the rule of law.

The opposition is not asking for drug use to be treated solely as a law enforcement issue. Queensland can be tough on crime while also offering diversion and harm minimisation strategies. What must be remembered is that the only people who benefit from drugs are criminals and quite often criminal networks who trade in human misery. What must be remembered is that the drug trade results in lives being ruined. Just like a health response, a law enforcement response to drugs is about ensuring we have as many ways to attack this problem as possible. I cannot, and will not, agree to give any ground when it comes to the fight against drugs. I cannot, and will not, agree to reduce options to protect Queenslanders and Queensland communities from the ravages of drugs. For those reasons I cannot agree to the provisions within this bill relating to the expansion of the police drug diversion program, and I call on all members to do likewise.

If I could briefly turn to the amendments just spoken about by the minister regarding the Police Service Administration Act and the proposal that retired police officers be introduced into the Police Service as special constables. I will certainly speak in more detail on this particular amendment during consideration in detail. Fundamentally, the opposition has no objection to the recruitment of retired police officers as special constables in the state of Queensland, but this is proof positive that the recruitment strategy of this government has failed miserably. In their attempt to try to claw back some



ground regarding police recruitment they have had to resort to hiring retired police officers. We do not for one moment dismiss the benefits of having that experience back on the streets, but let's be honest with ourselves: the recruitment of those retired officers is but a stopgap measure in the overall recruitment strategy, and I will talk more about that during consideration in detail.

 **Mr POWER** (Logan—ALP) (4.01 pm): I rise to support the passage of the cognate bills, specifically the Police Powers and Responsibilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022 that was introduced to the House on 30 November by the police minister and referred to the Economics and Governance Committee. The committee's report was tabled 17 February. I ask all members to examine that report, especially the committee's recommendation that the bill be passed.

As stated in the minister's second reading speech, the House would be aware that the bill makes amendments to: strengthen child protection laws; enable the further investigation of cybercrime; make clearer and enhance the process of using civilian participants in controlled activities in limited circumstances; and strengthen laws and increase penalties to further deter dangerous hooning. Members may not be fully aware of the very unusual—I am being kind here—past decision by this House in 2014 to decrease the reporting periods for those who had committed, and were found guilty of, serious sexual and other offences against children. This severely mistaken decision made Queensland's reporting periods the shortest in Australia; that is, for the purpose of protecting their state's children, every other state made their reporting periods longer than Queensland's. I notice that the shadow minister made reference to leading the state, but he made no reference to the fact that before 2014 we were leading the country and we were taken backwards in 2014. Instead of reducing reporting periods, as happened in 2014, this bill will increase the reporting periods designed to protect children.

Mr Anthony Brown, of the Policy and Performance Division of the Queensland Police Service, representing the Commissioner, stated in our hearings that reporting periods are 'an important pillar for the protection of Queensland children'. The Queensland Child Protection Offender Registry seeks to monitor offenders who demonstrate a propensity to commit offences against children. As of 31 October 2022 there were 3,971 reportable offenders being managed by the registry. Between 1 January and 31 October, 881 reportable child sex offenders were charged with 2,183 offences for breaching their reporting obligations. Some of these were very serious offences, which shows they were in danger of hurting children again.

The Queensland Family and Child Commission stated that it welcomes additional safeguards for children. Members may be aware there was research conducted by the Australian Institute of Criminology in 2018, Prescott and Rockoff in 2011 and Agan and Prescott in 2014 which found that registration schemes in the US resulted in a significant decrease in the overall number of sex offences. The QLS supported the principle of reporting periods and stated—

A reporting regime is absolutely essential for community safety and to enable police to properly target repeat offenders and gather necessary intelligence to provide protection to the community.

They further said, 'I do not think there is any argument.' Apparently, in 2014 there was. While having some concern, the QLS noted that reoffending was often connected with other stressful events that can equally happen early in reporting periods or later in reporting periods and that picking up those events further out was valuable in protecting children.

We did not hear from the shadow minister as to why the LNP made Queensland the state with the shortest reporting periods. Was it just to save money? I do not know. We will no doubt hear from LNP MPs who did vote to make this change. I do note it meant that 1,700 offenders were no longer being monitored. In his second reading speech the minister showed that offenders are many times more likely to reoffend than someone who has not been convicted.

I also strongly support the changes to further strengthen hooning laws. When I reread the transcript I noted that I made a rather unusual remark in the section discussing hooning. I said, 'This is something I am red-hot angry about.' Well, that is what I said at that time, but upon reflection I am still red-hot angry about it. This builds upon our laws to reverse the onus to the registered owner and other laws that we put in place to allow emergency services to cut up hoon cars. We know how antisocial and dangerous these activities are. In my local area I work with police and the Logan City Council to assist them in gathering evidence.

The bill creates a new offence that would prohibit a person from: willingly participating in a group activity involving a motor vehicle—which we do know is a significant problem in Boronia Heights, Logan Village and Yarrabilba—being used to commit a speed trial, racing, burnout or other hooning offence; organising, promoting or encouraging another person to participate in or view a group activity involving

a motor vehicle being used to commit a hooning offence; and filming, photographing or publishing a film or photograph of a motor vehicle being used for a hooning offence for the purpose of organising, promoting or encouraging a group activity involving a motor vehicle being used to commit a hooning offence. Importantly, this bill also makes it an offence for those who wilfully lose traction but do not necessarily create smoke, closing an important gap, especially when the road is wet and it is even more dangerous to wilfully lose traction.

I have worked with the police minister and I have asked local police what they need. I am proud to have played a small part in these laws, which support safer streets and reduce antisocial activities. I frankly could not believe that the shadow minister, the member for Burdekin, has done nothing as a private member to target hooning. The minister has introduced more well-thought-out laws to target hooning than any police minister in the history of this place. I guess the opposition thought that, to paraphrase someone, if you are going to mislead, mislead in a big way.

Police who are asked to retire at 60 are often fit and active and have great skills and corporate knowledge. Ensuring that they are of use once they have retired is important and something that I have spoken to the police minister about. In fact, the member for Hervey Bay and I put this forward as the 'Ninderry amendment' because we thought he must be of some use after he leaves this place. No?

**Mr Stevens:** No chance.

**Mr POWER:** The member for Mermaid Beach suggests he would not be any use for the police afterwards. We will just have to agree to disagree on that one.

Although this next point was not in the bill that we examined, I want to speak very briefly about the new approach of maintaining drug possession as an offence while focusing on directing that person to rehabilitation. We heard the shadow police minister talk about Jenny, and I have encountered many such stories where the act of engaging them in rehabilitation was the thing that changed their behaviour that had been destructive for themselves, their family and their communities. Equally important, and it should not be missed, this bill focuses on getting police to target those who are selling to users like Jenny.

There is really important rehabilitation work being done by organisations like Lives Lived Well in Logan, and I will continue to support them. I think we need more funding and I will push for that. I want to see those same resources that go to the police to deal with those very minor drug possessions—and that takes them off the front line for so long—being focused on those who are doing that selling. I know the police maintain this as an offence and do not in any way condone it, as was the misleading statement from the shadow police minister. This bill further increases the penalty for those who have serious amounts and are doing the active selling of drugs. In that way, this will make a difference for people like Jenny and the people I have met. It will push them towards making a change in their lives, while targeting those who are selling drugs and making it more restricted. In that way, I support the bill and the amendments. I endorse the bill to the House.



**Mr STEVENS** (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (4.11 pm): I will be speaking mostly to the Police Powers and Responsibilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022 that was referred to the Economics and Governance Committee. It added to our workload and broadened our perspective on these matters. Members will notice that there was no statement of reservation on this bill from the LNP members. This is rather unusual, but the LNP supports any measure that increases the powers for the police to enforce the blue line in Queensland. We will never resile from that position. We would oppose any matters that weaken that position and that may be brought to the House through amendments. We are an opposition waiting to go into government to bring about changes that support the police in their activities to prevent the increase in crime across Queensland.

As we have heard, the major changes in relation to the child protection were in relation to the lengthening of reporting times of these offenders. We believe that is a good thing but it will require increased police numbers. In typical Labor fashion, the police minister said that the Premier would double resources over the next eight years. It is always on the never-never. It is always in the distance. It is always on the horizon. Yet we have new reporting requirements now that will require a lot more police officers on the beat.

We know that the problem is that the police are leaving the force in droves. Even though we have these new regulations, we need police to enforce them. We have heard the police minister talk on many occasions about the numbers we have now and the approved numbers. When I ring the police about the guy who is breaking into my house, I do not want an approved number sent to save me. I want a real police person to arrive on my doorstep, but that is not happening.

We have just seen that they are looking at overseas people and bringing back retired police officers. Why would a retired police officer come back and face the problems that police in the force are facing today? They are being spat on and being badly treated. I have had senior police tell me that 60 per cent of their labour resource time on the Gold Coast is spent on domestic violence activities and that they are not properly trained for those matters. That is a big part of why the police cannot service other areas of their enforcement to the proper degree, and that is why they have had it and are leaving the force.

On a social note, I met with a young police officer last week. He did not know who I was and I did not know who he was until later in the conversation. He had been in Rockhampton and had just been transferred back to Surfers Paradise. He said how horrible police morale is at the current time. He said, 'I do the job. I turn up. I get paid. My wife is an ambulance lady. She turns up and gets the job done.' He complained about the way they were being treated and he said that morale in the force was the lowest. He said, 'I don't care about it anymore. I just turn up and get paid.' That is not the attitude we need for a successful police service to enforce these police powers in the state. As I said, we have good legislation to increase the powers. They are now looking at cybercrime offences, but we need more actual police—not approved police—to go onto these screens and chase down the dark web or whatever it is that these perpetrators and particularly the paedophiles et cetera live on.

That is why there has to be a complete turnaround in the direction of the police force in Queensland. It needs to be a job that they aspire to, a job that they are happy with, a job that they are respected in and a job where they have the proper resources to look after Queensland's interests. Youth crime is a problem and the police tell me that they spend a lot of time and resources on catching the kids but the courts then let them out in five minutes. Unfortunately, the police can only do their fair share and catch these young kids, but then they see them back out on the streets the next night committing crimes. That is the problem we have in terms of police time allocation.

I notice that penalties for hooning behaviour have increased, as well as the penalties for ownership of dodgy plates and for the owner of that vehicle. They are good measures, but again they will require police numbers to enforce these matters, not approved police numbers. They will require police on the ground who are happy with their job and content to go out and keep Queenslanders safe around all of these stupid hoons. We have a heap of these hoons on the Gold Coast. In fact a hooning cartel, if you like, broke into the member for Mudgeeraba's office a couple of years ago and forced the relocation of that member's office. That is how serious it is on the Gold Coast and why our community is concerned.

We have seen all of the polling. This government lives on the polling. We see the dying animal in its death throes, kicking out and making last-minute changes to its legislation and bringing things in at the last moment. That is what we are now seeing from this dying animal across there called the government. We can see them thrashing and kicking and trying to come up with last-minute answers to the big problems that are out there in the community. Obviously, the health situation is a problem, and I am not going down the health track.

Importantly, we are seeing crime in Queensland which the police have to control, and the government are saying, 'We're now going to do this with youth crime and we're going to do this with hoons. If you trust us for another eight years, we'll have it all under control.' I think the people of Queensland have run out of trust for this government. We are having all of these last-minute amendments and thoughts and whatever Shane Doherty comes up with as an answer to their polling problems. It will be interesting to see what Shane comes up with as an answer to the problem of the Premier's position. I will wait with bated breath. I am sure we will see some changes over there to—

**Mr Power:** What about relevance?


**Mr STEVENS:** We are getting to the relevance of it.

**Ms LINARD:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. While deeply enlightening, I would question the relevance of this contribution.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Martin): Thank you, minister. Member, if you can—

**Mr Stevens:** Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. I am coming back to the bill. I got it. The fact is, yes, we will support the police powers bill, but the reality is that without the proper policing resources and without a proper mandate for the police to carry on their activities in Queensland in a proper, supported, defined measure and a government that supports the police properly and does not push them off into newsworthy areas when they are not absolutely trained for those particular areas is a reason that the police will not be able to put in place the proper enforcement of these new regulations.

We support them, as I said, and to see us go down the track of another amendment and another bill that we have not dealt with and I will not go into the drug issues, but I can inform the House that one of my school mates is a doctor in Canberra who deals out methadone. While he will deal out methadone to heroin addicts quite freely, he will not stand in a room and deal out methadone to an ice addict without a security guy there because the ice addict is never able to be controlled. Any measures to allow any ice et cetera as a drug to be a part of a legal activity is absolutely nonsense and tells me what this dying animal of a government is over there, thrashing out in its death throes, and I cannot wait for October 2024.

 **Mrs McMAHON** (Macalister—ALP) (4.21 pm): I am not quite sure what those last couple of minutes were about, but I am rising to speak in support of the Police Powers and Responsibilities and Other Legislation Amendment 2022 and the Police Powers and Responsibilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023 before the House. My committee, the Economics and Governance Committee, inquired into the 2022 bill and I will briefly cover the amendments in that bill before turning to the second. In making my contribution, I note that I choose not to speak to the amendments in the Child Protection (Offender Reporting and Offender Prohibition Order) Act other than to say that what we do in this House impacts the safety, lives and wellbeing of young people now and into the future. No-one is going to sit back and trawl through the debate here, years from now, to see who blames whom for what laws or loopholes that were created. Our laws are not perfect, they never were perfect, and all we can do is seek the best ones we have in our circumstances. I wish laws as strong as these had been around decades ago, I really do, but the reality is we will do what we can when we can, and let's try to avoid the finger-poking.

The other aspect in this bill which I wanted to address with that particular amendment that the member for Mermaid Beach seemed to have missed when he was in the committee is that the QPS, with the increased reporting times, reported that their staff within that unit whose job it is to task and follow up the reporting of those offenders was actually increased from 22 to 42 just last year. The staff are actually there and ready; in fact, it is almost a doubling of the staff. In terms of the police being resourced to deal with that increase in reportable offenders, I point out to the House that the resources are there.

I wish to now address the area of the bill that seeks to address one of the most frequent causes of concern and outrage in my electorate, and that is hooning. We have all heard and seen them—hoons at the lights, in the wet—and if we have not necessarily seen the offending behaviour, then we see the telltale signs down the middle of our roads and intersections the next day. What many may not realise is the level of organisation that goes into hooning events, not only for the one-off opportune or show-off acts but also the highly coordinated and communicated events which see large numbers of hoons gather at locations on short notice and can appear to just as quickly disperse when law enforcement become aware of them. The other aspect to these types of offences that were not present when I was involved in policing hooning behaviour in Logan and the Gold Coast was the ability to film and upload or even broadcast these offences live. In fact, that internet notoriety often spurs these offenders on to engage in more dangerous activities than before.

The amendment bill seeks to create new offences under the Summary Offences Act which are often seen in conjunction with or seen to promote or encourage these type 1 vehicle related offences. A new offence will be created of willingly participating in a group activity involving a motor vehicle used to commit a speed trial, racing, burnout or other hooning offence which will include organising, promoting, encouraging and filming or publishing film or photograph of a motor vehicle being used for a hooning offence. It should be noted that the filming and publishing provision must be connected to the encouragement or promoting of hoon offences. This means that those members of the public who film evidence of hooning offences for the purposes of reporting offending behaviour to police or authorities are not captured. I would again advise all members of the House that the QPS does have an ability for members of the public to upload videos to report hooning offences.

I also note that the increased penalties have been included in vehicle registration offences associated with hooning. Offenders seeking to evade being identified in hooning offences by either their own filming or being filmed by the network of road safety cameras around this state will often attach false plates to their vehicles. Currently it is a \$287 ticket for someone who attaches false plates. When the offence is associated with a vehicle used in a hooning offence, that penalty will be increased to over \$570. That is for the ticket. Obviously, should the matter be dealt with by a court, then the magistrate may impose fines of up to \$5,750.

I would like to now turn to the 2023 Police Powers and Responsibilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. Of note in this bill is the expansion of the police drug diversion program. This involves expanding the definition of a minor drugs offence and increasing the scope of people eligible for the drug diversion program. This amendment starts with the proposition that drug addiction is a health issue, not a criminal issue. I reject the premise that this is some progressive leftie take on drugs.

If I look at the opposition's statement of reservation citing that no evidence was forthcoming, that there was limited consultation and a lack of community support and acceptance, I would ask those opposite what rock they had been hiding under for the past decade. The National Drug Strategy 2017-2026 was crafted under their conservative federal government, one that recognised the community-wide benefits citing an evidence informed approach that diverts people into health interventions and away from the criminal justice system. Let me repeat: the National Drug Strategy, released under the LNP, sought to divert people away from the criminal justice system and into health interventions.

As for no evidence, I am not sure where the opposition members in the committee were when they heard the results of the current police drug diversion program. Since it commenced in 2001, 158,000 people had been diverted and 72 per cent of those who completed the drug diversion program did not reoffend in the post-evaluation period—72 per cent! I am sure some members of the opposition would like to see 72 per cent in some of their polling. Other jurisdictions reported the same levels of success with their diversion programs. The QPS provided that information to the committee, yet the opposition members still could find no evidence. I was on the front line in Logan and the Gold Coast when the drug diversion program was first introduced in 2001, and I can tell you that it did make a difference in how long it took police to deal with drug matters.

As for limited consultation, there are a significant number of inquiries already conducted and recommendations already made around the expansion of drug diversion: the Youth Justice Strategy, the Queensland Alcohol and Other Drugs Plan, the plan for Queensland's state funded mental health, alcohol and other drug service to 2027, the Queensland Mental Health Alcohol and Other Drugs Strategic Plan, the Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce's *Hear her voice* report, the parliamentary committee inquiry into the opportunities to improve mental health outcomes for Queenslanders, the Queensland Productivity Commission's inquiry into imprisonment and recidivism, and the *Queensland drug and specialist courts review—final report*. After all those inquiries and reports, with all those experts at both the state and federal level, the opposition think we need more time to consider it.

As for lack of community support and acceptance, the *Courier-Mail* did in fact publish an article today—an actual article supported by an independent survey which canvassed thousands of Queenslanders from Cairns to the Gold Coast, not the Facebook poll cited by the member for Burdekin. It showed that Queenslanders were in support of the measures contained within this bill pertaining to expanding a minor drugs offence to include other illicit drugs. If you want to get your details from the *Courier-Mail*, go right ahead. I table a copy of that article.

Tabled paper: Article from the *Courier-Mail*, dated 19 April 2023, titled 'In favour of drug laws' [513].

I heard the member for Burdekin's story about the young woman and her descent into drug addiction. I commend anyone who can come back from that, but how would that young woman's story have ended if she had been imprisoned for drug offences or had convictions been recorded? What does her family look like now? What would her job prospects look like? It is great that a young woman can have her rehabilitation funded and paid for by family, but let's be realistic; this is not happening for even a fraction of drug addicts out there.

Honourable members do not have to take my word for it; I have only spent a couple of decades on the front line. How about the AMA Queensland, which said it has been—

... calling for urgent drug law reform for several years and welcomes the introduction of the Bill.

They stated—

Those at risk of addiction also need prevention and early intervention measures such as mental health support and education about drug harm.


That is drug diversion. What about the Mental Health Commission? They stated—

The Commission welcomes the *Police Powers and Responsibilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023* that includes the expansion of the Police Drug Diversion Program ...

...

Justice focused approaches are inconsistent with contemporary evidence, best practice and the harm reduction pillar of the *National Drug Strategy* ...

We want Queenslanders to thrive. We want Queenslanders who have addiction issues to have the opportunity of intervention at the first opportunity. If police offer those referrals, then those Queenslanders will have the opportunity to thrive and be part of a community.


 **Mr CRANDON** (Coomera—LNP) (4.31 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the Police Powers and Responsibilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022 and report No. 40 to this parliament of the Economics and Governance Committee of which I am a member. I thank my colleagues on that committee for the work they did as well as our secretariat for the hard work they put into that report.

Collectively, the amendments that we are talking about in this particular bill propose to: enhance the capability of the Queensland Police Service to monitor reportable offenders by lengthening the time for which an offender must report; investigate cybercrime and offences committed by reportable offenders by making certain offences relevant for controlled operations and surveillance device warrants; investigate organised crime by authorising the use of civilian participants in controlled activities in certain limited circumstances; and address the danger and disruption caused by hooning by creating additional offences and increasing penalties for certain offences. I am going to focus my attention on that last area, the hooning aspect of things.

Hooning is a massive issue on the northern Gold Coast, and I am sure other members would say it is a massive issue in their electorate as well. Because of the large areas of caneland and the large industrial areas in the state electorate of Coomera, the hoons seem to be drawn to it. Police work very hard; they do a great job, but at times their hands are tied because of the lacking aspects of the laws. So it is good news to see that we are bringing in some changes in relation to hooning in circumstances that involve speed trials, a race between motor vehicles or burnouts, for example, dangerous operation of a vehicle committed on a road in a public place, careless driving, racing and speed trials on roads, wilfully starting a motor vehicle or driving a motor vehicle in a way that makes unnecessary noise or smoke as well as evasion offences.

The Summary Offences Act 2005 is the act in question. It is intended that this bill will strengthen the hooning offences provisions in that act to create new offences that prohibit a person from willingly participating in a group activity involving a motor vehicle being used to commit a speed trial, racing, burnout or other hooning offence; organising, promoting or encouraging another person to participate in or view a group activity involving a motor vehicle being used to commit a hooning offence; and filming, photographing or publishing a film or photograph of a motor vehicle being used for a hooning offence for the purpose of organising, promoting or encouraging a group activity involving a motor vehicle being used to commit a hooning offence. The previous speaker, the member for Macalister, made the point that if someone was making a video or taking photos of a hooning event with the intention of reporting that matter to the police, they would be protected from any prosecution under this bill. It is those people who intentionally go about the videoing or photographing with the intention of promoting the event as well as possession of things that could be used for hooning that will be captured; that is also an offence. If someone is pulled up and they have a couple of extra tyres and wheels in the boot of their car, a hydraulic jack and maybe a numberplate sitting somewhere, in the past there was nothing the police could do about those things but under this new bill they will now be able to.

All of this is designed to make it easier for police. I welcome these changes. They will enable police to better go through the process of arresting alleged offenders and putting them through the prosecution process.

 **Mr TANTARI** (Hervey Bay—ALP) (4.36 pm): I rise in support of the Police Powers and Responsibilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022 and Police Powers and Responsibilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023 that we are debating in cognate this afternoon. In my contribution I want to address the Police Powers and Responsibilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022 that the Economics and Governance Committee, of which I am a member, examined. The main objective of the bill is to address several issues of community concern including child sexual offending, hooning and cybercrime offences. It will do that by amending various acts covering these offences. Firstly, I will turn to child sex offender reporting periods.

By way of a little bit of background, child sex offender reporting obligations in Queensland are currently five years, 10 years and then life. As a result of amendments introduced in 2014 by the previous Newman LNP government, at that time Queensland had the shortest reporting periods of any Australian jurisdiction. All other Australian jurisdictions have incremental reporting periods from eight years to 15 years and then life, depending on the offender's history or child related offending. This bill will amend the child protection act of 2004 to make the incremental reporting periods in Queensland

from 10 years to 20 years and then life. This will result in Queensland having the toughest child protection reporting regime in Australia. This change to the legislation locks in and enhances protection for some of the most vulnerable within our community and that is our children. With this legislation the Palaszczuk government is ensuring the reporting obligations of child sex offenders are extended to provide maximum safety and security for the community. This must be welcomed by all of us in this chamber.

I want to now concentrate on the other offences in this legislation, which are covered by that section of the bill that relates to offences connected to type 1 vehicle related offences. There is no single hooning offence under the Queensland law. The type of antisocial driving behaviour collectively recognised as hooning is defined as type 1 vehicle related offences. They include any of the following offences committed in circumstances that involve: a speed trial, a race between motor vehicles or burnouts; an offence against the Criminal Code, effectively dangerous operation of a vehicle committed on a road or in a public place; an offence against the transport operations act, basically careless driving; an offence against other parts of the transport operations act, which includes racing and speed trials on roads; or wilfully starting a motor vehicle or driving a motor vehicle in a way that makes unnecessary noise or smoke.

Under this legislation if a person is caught committing a type 1 vehicle related offence, their vehicle may be impounded for 90 days for that offence. If a person is caught committing a subsequent type 1 vehicle related offence within five years of committing their first type 1 vehicle related offence, the vehicle may be forfeited to the state. For five years after the first offence, the offender is on notice that if they are caught committing another offence, their car could be seized. Members may recall an example of that recently when we saw what happened to a seized car out the front of this place. Suffice to say it was not pretty by the time Emergency Services staff had finished their training on it.

We know that this penalty is pretty strong, but it is meant to be. This legislation serves as a warning. This change to legislation is necessary because far too many drivers are endangering the lives of others by their reckless acts of dangerous behaviour on our public roads. Our local roads are not racetracks. If you like the thrill of speed and want to drive a vehicle at speed, join a motor club. There are many safe options available for people to pursue that activity and keep our local roads safe. Like many in my community, I applaud the police minister, Mark Ryan, and the Palaszczuk government for taking this action to further secure the safety of the drivers on our roads who do the right thing.

It is acknowledged that there is frustration for police and the wider community with the mass gatherings at night that attract hooners at locations such as industrial estates, shopping centre car parks and other car park areas. At these places, individuals are encouraged in their hooning activity by spectators who may upload recordings. Organised groups record and promote this offensive behaviour by uploading recordings and images on social media. Investigations of these offences are made very difficult by offenders hooning in motor vehicles that cannot be readily identified through the removal or alteration of the vehicle's numberplates, or by the attaching of numberplates that are stolen or do not belong to the vehicle. Additionally, individuals may have been located by police at car meets in the possession of vehicle registration plates that do not match any vehicles that are present at that meeting. It is suspected that these plates will be later fixed to vehicles intended to be used to commit type 1 related offences.

The bill amends the Summary Offences Act to include conduct involving a type 1 vehicle related offence by including new offences that prohibit the encouragement of and complicity in hooning offences and by including the possession of items for the purpose of committing a type 1 offence; for example, numberplates, spare wheels and hydraulic jacks. These offence provisions will carry a maximum penalty of 40 penalty units, or 12 months imprisonment. Elements of the offence will not capture a person who films hooning activity for the purpose of making a complaint to police or who films or photographs as a part of a lawful event. The effect of the new offence will be applicable to a person who photographs or films a motor vehicle being operated to commit a type 1 vehicle offence for the purpose of organising or promoting the participation of persons in such group activity.

We all know through our electorates that public notoriety has become a key determinant for individuals to commit serious offences, particularly in this age of social media. This alteration to the act will limit and deter this behaviour. What the government is doing here is effectively nipping this type of activity in the bud, limiting the capacity for individuals and their mates to grandstand and endanger our community. We all need to fight this hard, and this legislation enables the Queensland Police Service to take action against this rampant narcissistic behaviour.


It is acknowledged that a further loophole that is exploited by hoons is the wording of the offence of making 'unnecessary noise or smoke'. Hoons place substances on the road, such as fuel or oil, to reduce friction between the vehicle and the road resulting in the loss of traction and enabling the reckless driving a vehicle without necessarily causing noise or smoke. This bill includes a new offence in the transport operations act to prohibit a person from wilfully operating a motor vehicle in a manner that causes the vehicle to undergo a sustained loss of traction by one or more of the vehicle's wheels. This offence will apply in a public place as well as on the road.

A common tactic to avoid detection when committing hooning offences is to obscure or remove the numberplates of the vehicle used to commit the offence. An alternative method to avoid detection is to affix the numberplates from another vehicle. Although the transport operations act regulation comprehensively outlines the various ways numberplates can be inappropriately used, this offence provision does not appropriately penalise offenders who commit this offence when hooning. The bill changes this and will increase the maximum penalty for these offences from 20 penalty points to 40 penalty points where the circumstance of aggravation of a type 1 vehicle offence is involved.

I take this opportunity to give a shout-out to those hardworking men and women of the Queensland Police Service across the regions who undertake their work in a very professional way every single day and who give their heart and soul to their duties for the people, particularly of Queensland and Hervey Bay. They do a great job and work hard to keep our community members safe. I have no doubt that members in this place are grateful for the service that members of the Queensland Police Service give to our community, albeit at times subject to the most disgraceful and threatening behaviours from individuals who believe it is their right to abuse and threaten.

I would also like to support the amendment to be moved by the minister in consideration in detail. The amendment of the Police Service Administration Act 1990 is to establish a police reserves workforce. I think this is a good move to support frontline policing and will use the vast experience of former police officers who can be employed at short notice. While not underplaying the value of this amendment, it may also give opportunity for some of our current sitting members—such as the member for Ninderry—to take up employment after their time here, particularly if things go south for them at the next election! We are looking after you, Dan. We considered you when formulating that amendment.

I thank all participants for their contribution to this legislation. As a member of Economics and Governance Committee, I acknowledge the work done by the committee and acknowledge the chair, the member for Logan; the deputy chair, the member for Mermaid Beach; and the committee secretariat for their work in reviewing the legislation. I have no doubt that members in this place are grateful for the work that has been done. This legislation creates a more modern legislative framework to underpin policing powers in our state. I support the bill and the foreshadowed amendments.

 **Mr PURDIE** (Ninderry—LNP) (4.45 pm): I rise to contribute to the cognate debate on the Police Powers and Responsibilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022 and the Police Powers and Responsibilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023. I would like to thank my fellow members of the Economics and Governance Committee and the secretariat for their valuable contribution in relation to the deliberations of the 2022 bill, which is the bill I intend to address first. While I will be referencing both of the PPRA amendment bills, I intend to use most of my time today to talk specifically about the serious implications of the amendments that pertain to the police drug diversion program and the child protection offender reporting amendments. At the outset, I highlight my disappointment at the watering down of drug laws in this state. Essentially, this government raising the white flag on the war against drugs should warrant the full attention of this House in a separate standalone bill—not stuck in a larger bill and then considered cognately with yet another bill.

I begin by referencing the Child Protection (Offender Reporting and Offender Prohibition Order) Act 2004. The bill increases the length of reporting periods a reportable offender may be obligated to report under the CP(OROPO) Act from five years, 10 years and life to 10 years, 20 years and life under clause 14 of the bill. There are currently 3,971 registered child sex offenders at large, living in communities across Queensland, and only 44 dedicated police officers assigned to monitor them. Police districts like Logan, Moreton and South Brisbane have between 300 and 400 offenders each. My colleagues and I on this side support any measures to help better monitor paedophiles and protect children, but I am concerned that the timing of this bill is just another thought bubble devised by the minister and his media team more concerned about how things look than how they actually are. At a time when the thin blue line has never been thinner, with police numbers and resources stretched like never before, with actual police numbers well below historic police officer to population ratios and while



police are leaving in droves, burnt out by a crisis in youth crime, domestic violence and others, these amendments will place approximately 1,700 extra reportable offenders on the register by 2028, taking the total to 5,722 approximately.

We already know that, due to a lack of resourcing, police are struggling to monitor the most dangerous and serious sex offenders in this state. This was evidenced the day the minister tabled these amendments, in the last sitting week of last year. Accompanied with his usual tough-on-crime pantomime, which we saw again in the chamber earlier, he was hoping to roll into the Christmas break with the illusion of being tough on crime. It was revealed by the *Courier-Mail* the next day that a recidivist child sex offender—supposedly under the strictest monitoring regime in the state—had reoffended by sneaking a young girl into the dangerous and serious offender residential precinct at Wacol. It is no wonder that I and many others have concerns about the government's conviction in providing police with the staff and the extra resources they need to monitor the extra number of registered child sex offenders when the current regime is at breaking point. This was flushed out during the committee's inquiry into the bill. During the public briefing, the police admitted that they would need extra resources to properly monitor the extra offenders. When asked about the catalyst for this legislative change they admitted that it did not come from the police, particularly from frontline police in this field; it was a decision of government.

When asked if they could point to any underpinning evidence or any recent instances of offenders coming off the register and reoffending, they could not and took the question on notice. It was actually the Queensland Law Society which stated that its submission included—

... consideration of matters such as the effectiveness of reporting obligations and the adequacy of police resources, powers and practices in administering the Act.

As such the amendments proposed under this Bill are inextricably linked to matters being examined in the CCC's legislative review. The evidentiary basis for these proposed amendments to the offender reporting scheme, and the police powers available to monitor compliance, is unclear.

It went on to say—

The amendments reverse changes made in 2014—

by the LNP government—

which shortened reporting periods for reportable offenders.

The QLS went on to say—

We understand this was based on evidence at that time 'that sex offenders present the highest risk of re-offending within the first three to five years of their release into the community'. However, the justification for the extension of reporting periods is now said to be due to 'the inherent difficulties associated with the rehabilitation of child sex offenders and risk factors resulting from recidivism'.

We raise the following concerns with the bill as currently drafted: amendments to the offender monitoring periods should be reserved pending the outcome of any related recommendations which may arise from the CCC's review. As I said earlier, my colleagues and I support any strengthening of the law when it comes to protecting our kids from paedophiles, but this needs to be coupled with appropriate police resources because we know that our police are already struggling to keep their heads above water.

Moving now to the amendments in the PPRA bill 2023, this is the legislation that I will be focusing on in the second part of my contribution, particularly in relation to the drug diversion program and the expansion of drug diversions for minor drug offences as well as the inclusion of all dangerous drugs and certain pharmaceuticals. Previously a minor drug diversion was for a small amount of cannabis sativa and implements. The bill makes amendments to the Queensland Police Service and the Queensland Fire and Emergency Services. However, it is primarily the expansion of the police drug diversion program that I mentioned earlier which I have very serious concerns about.

The main feature of the amendments relates to expanding the range of options available to police to divert minor drug offenders from the criminal justice system. It says this will be achieved by introducing a drug diversion warning for minor drug offences, allowing an eligible person the opportunity to participate in subsequent drug diversion and expanding the eligibility for a drug diversion assessment program. Essentially, drug users will be given three chances when found to be in possession of dangerous drugs before facing a criminal charge, including schedule 1 dangerous drugs under the Drugs Misuse Act like heroin and methamphetamine. The most alarming aspect of these amendments, however, can be found in the expansion, as I just outlined briefly, of the definition of a minor drugs

offence in section 378B which will broaden the application of the police drug diversion program to include small quantities of any type of dangerous drugs and schedule 4 and schedule 8 medicines under the Medicines and Poisons Act 2019 along with items and utensils used in association with these drugs. I ask how in good faith this government can be dragged kicking and screaming to finally act on the dangerous trend of vaping on the one hand and on the other hand allow dangerous schedule 1 drugs and illicit drugs like heroin and meth to freely circulate in our community? That paradox is not lost on Queenslanders.

In my maiden speech I said—

One of the most devastating links between organised crime and ordinary Queenslanders is the drug ice. Criminals, particularly criminal motorcycle gangs, generate their profits from this and other evil substances, and their customers are often Queenslanders who may have grown up in or been raising loving, law-abiding families.

I went on to say—

In my duties as a detective I have taken kids out of the harm, filth and neglect of a house where the parents are addicted to ice. Through no fault of their own, that child has been given an almost insurmountable handicap in life.


I also went on to say—

I have also comforted parents who have lost a child to ice—parents who nurtured their children like any other family and who had them ripped away by this evil drug. As families are torn apart by ice, the community begins to tear apart, and regional communities are bearing the brunt of this epidemic. We have to do more. We have to do better.

Watering down drug laws and raising the white flag on the war against drugs is not doing better.

I know I have spoken about my previous policing experience many times in this House, but when it comes to the war on drugs I think there is some information that I can give, and I appreciate that every member has experiences that they can bring to this House. I first saw street-level drug addiction when I was a general duties police officer in the Valley back in the nineties dealing with overdose deaths in the streets and in boarding houses and the subsequent increases in crime that addiction played on the community and then from a higher level working at the Covert & Surveillance Unit, the State Drug Squad and the Australian Crime Commission. I have arrested drug importers and traffickers to street-level dealers. What I did not say in my maiden speech because my kids were probably in the gallery is that I have also retrieved dead babies from the houses of parents who are addicted to heroin and ice. In all aspects of life, like we are seeing now with youth crime, removing deterrents only increases incentives. Giving someone three free chances to take schedule 1 dangerous drugs like heroin and meth is too much rope. In my experience, by the time police have caught an offender with heroin or meth for the third time, their life is almost certainly already over.

I heard the minister talk about this being supported by other legislation. The legislation that I have seen more recently differs from that, and the prime example is San Francisco where my brother lives. In early 2000 it started implementing a harm minimisation strategy which essentially removed barriers for people taking drugs. In 2000 there were 17,415 overdose deaths in America. In 2020 there were 93,330, an increase of 535 per cent. There is believed to be about 25,000 injecting drug users in San Francisco and the other stats are even more alarming. Hopefully I will get a chance to talk more about this in consideration in detail tomorrow.

 **Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, Minister for Women and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence) (4.55 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Police Powers and Responsibilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023. This government has a demonstrated record on strengthening our laws where it counts. Increasing the penalty for the offence of trafficking to life imprisonment brings Queensland broadly into line with other jurisdictions and is consistent with the offence of aggravated supply of dangerous drugs. The bill also expands the diversionary response to low-level drug offending. The expanded police drug diversion program will amend the eligibility criteria to eliminate barriers around participation, expand the definition of 'minor drug offence' to include different drug types and offences and introduce a tiered approach to drug diversion. The evidence clearly demonstrates that providing a health response to this type of offending instead of a criminal justice response is vital to reducing reoffending and has many social, criminogenic and economic benefits.

There are many underlying factors that can contribute to low-level drug offending including victimisation and trauma history, including domestic family and sexual violence, mental health issues, poverty and homelessness. Drug use can often lead to a pathway of further offending, at times escalating to result in a sentence of imprisonment. In 2021 the Palaszczuk government established the independent Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce which brought together experts from various fields

and was led by the Hon. Margaret McMurdo. The task force heard from hundreds of women and girls about their experience within the criminal justice system and I want to acknowledge and thank the many women who spoke out about using drugs to cope with or forget about other traumas in their life, particularly domestic and family violence. To divert women from offending behaviour and ultimately from custody, the task force in its second report recommended increasing the use of adult cautions and police drug diversion and the expansion of diversion for small amounts of illicit drugs in addition to cannabis. In implementing these recommendations, both types of diversion are included in the new three-tiered diversionary response. We are also taking action to establish a legal advice hotline to support the expanded adult diversion options which was also recommended by the task force.

Diversionary programs also play an important part in reducing the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples entering the justice system. The Australian Human Rights Commission's Wiyi Yani U Thangani report, led by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner June Oscar AO, recommended expanding diversionary options at the earliest contact with police. Commissioner Oscar spoke to over 2,000 women and girls from over 50 locations around the country and emphasised the importance of diverting women from the criminal justice system. One woman told the commissioner—

But what they should look at doing, because they are mostly minor offences ... those women then losing their kids and their homes and everything. Look at alternative pathways to dealing with our women rather than putting them in prison for these minor offences.

The Palaszczuk government is committed to breaking the cycle of reoffending by increasing the health response to what is primarily a health issue. The call for the expansion of the police drug diversion program has also been strongly advocated for by the Australian Medical Association Queensland, and the government has listened. The AMAQ called for this expansion to treat substance use as a health issue, address the underlying causes of substance use, encourage help-seeking behaviours and increase contact with the health system.


The AMAQ's position is informed by the insights and experiences of a multidisciplinary team of experts on the Queensland Drug Law Reform Roundtable. In 2019 the Queensland Productivity Commission found that diversionary options were being underutilised in Queensland. It found that imprisonment is an expensive response to crime. It is estimated that each diversion done by way of warning saves over \$2,000 and each diversion done by way of treatment saves around \$9,200 in criminal justice costs.

The Palaszczuk government is committed to delivering innovative projects that reduce demand on the criminal justice system. It is why we have established the Criminal Justice Innovation Office to identify, develop, implement and support initiatives to address the increasing imprisonment rate in Queensland. This bill strikes the appropriate balance between holding serious drug offenders to account and ensuring that individuals who would more appropriately be diverted away from our criminal justice system are provided with the treatment that they need. I commend the bill to the House.


Debate, on motion of Ms Fentiman, adjourned.

## MOTION

### Youth Crime

 **Mr KNUTH** (Hill—KAP) (5.02 pm): I move the motion given notice of by the member for Traeger this morning.

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** I will ask you to resume your seat while I take some advice. It is established procedure that while you can move a motion on behalf of another member, that member would be absent from the chamber. It is clear that the member for Traeger is here so the normal procedure would be for the member for Traeger to move the motion. It would be our advice that the member for Traeger proceeds with moving his own motion to commence the debate.

 **Mr KATTER** (Traeger—KAP) (5.02 pm): I move—

That this House endorses new solutions to the youth crime crisis engulfing Queensland, including introducing relocation sentencing as an alternative to traditional juvenile detention, which would see recidivist youth offenders ordered by courts to serve long-term sentences in highly rehabilitative environments in remote locations.

While relocation sentencing is a principal policy of the KAP, it was not developed by us but was a proposal put forward to us in the course of dealing with constituents on the issue of crime. We felt this was an urgent issue to act on four or five years ago. It seems to have made its way into parliament in

the last 12 months. This was a big issue five years ago when we started focusing on where we saw gaps in the system. What became apparent after discussion with police officers and magistrates was that it is difficult to get a kid, especially the biggest misbehaving kid in Mount Isa, to participate in programs. These are highly disengaged families. There are social workers coming to work in these programs in Mount Isa knocking on the front gate and saying, 'Is little Johnny here? We have a PCYC program we want him to participate in,' and they are given an expletive and told to get lost. I have literally had the mother of some of the worst behaving kids in Mount Isa say to me, 'Don't you send any more to my front fence because they do nothing to help me.' I sit back and say, 'The line I get fed from the government is that we are going to send more people to the front fence to get inside that gate.' It takes five to 10 years to form relationships with these families. If you are not going to engage the kids that way and they are not in Cleveland Youth Detention Centre, what else are you going to do? Relocation sentencing is an option.


We are always told it needs to be evidence based. Associate Professor Glenn Dawes from James Cook University prepared the report *Keeping on country: understanding and responding to crime and recidivism in remote indigenous communities*. I table that report.

*Tabled paper:* Report by Associate Professor Glenn Dawes, James Cook University, titled 'Keeping on Country: Doomadgee and Mornington Island, Recidivism Research Report' [\[514\]](#).

I encourage members, if you have an hour up your sleeve, to read that report. Associate Professor Dawes spent many years up in the gulf. He says that alternative sentencing is the answer. The Mareeba Shire Council took the same principle to the LGAQ conference and received 194 votes for, 11 against. Perhaps these mayors throughout Queensland know nothing about what they are talking about. Perhaps they would need evidence. The Western Australian Labor government said they needed something different. They announced \$40.4 million in last year's budget for an alternative sentencing model. All these other people think it is a really good idea, but we keep getting told it needs to be evidence based.

The other excuse we get is that you have to have staff and deliver these programs in a remote area. I am sorry this is a difficult issue. If it is too difficult for the government, go and tell the families in Mount Isa who are crying to me, sending me emails saying, 'We love Mount Isa. We had a great time here, but we cannot put up with this. We are not putting the safety of our family at risk.' It breaks my heart when I get these emails or phone calls from people saying, 'We have been here 30 years, but we cannot live with this anymore.' I am not sure if members in this House have an appreciation of that. You really need to live with that to know the impact it is having on community. It is very hard to get people to live in these remote areas, but when we do not get help with fixing these problems it is even harder. Other endorsements for this proposal come from Keith Hamburger. He was director-general of Queensland's Corrective Services Commission for nine years. He is a strong advocate for what we are proposing in terms of alternative sentencing.

We can say with a strong degree of certainty that the sentencing happening at the moment is useless. There is 95 per cent recidivism from Cleveland Youth Detention Centre which works in perfectly with the reports that we get from the police and magistrates. Around Christmas there is a big flurry of activity because kids want to go in for safety and security. They do not see going to Cleveland Youth Detention Centre as a penalty. It is not doing its job, nor is it rehabilitating these kids. I have been to Urandangi school. It is a school, it is not a prison and it is exactly what we could be doing if you have two strict parents and a good teacher. That would cost the state nothing. You do not need to lock these kids up. One of the kids burnt down the Mount Isa Police Station, but he is a great student at the school. We are asked for evidence; I have seen evidence. You need to get out in the field to talk to these people and live this stuff to have the confidence to make these decisions. You need to deliver a consequence to these kids. For goodness sake, they need an opportunity to rehabilitate. That can only be done in a remote location.

 **Hon. LM LINARD** (Nudgee—ALP) (Minister for Children and Youth Justice and Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (5.08 pm): I rise to speak against the motion moved by the member for Traeger and to advise that the government will be voting against the motion. Our government does not support relocation sentencing. Moving young people to remote locations is not a safe, effective or efficient solution to youth crime. There is very strong evidence that explains why young people offend and very clear connections between childhood trauma and offending behaviour. Many of the young people have been victims of crime themselves and have grown up experiencing family violence, have a parent who has been incarcerated and have had inconsistent schooling. When this is mixed with drug and alcohol misuse and untreated mental health issues, it drives youth offending.

Relocation sentencing takes young people away from their community and does not help them develop strategies that will stop them offending when they come back to their real life. It removes young people's access to the health, education, training and support services needed to address the root causes of their offending and break the cycle of reoffending. Young people who are a risk to community safety and are remanded or sentenced to custody should be held in safe and secure environments. Youth detention centres provide young people with the services I just spoke about in-house and also have access to the broader service systems available in Brisbane and Townsville which cannot be replicated in remote areas. Relocation sentencing would not provide any benefits that are not already available and may put community at risk.

A secure facility would be needed for relocation sentencing to ensure community safety expectations are met. If a secure environment is not provided then there is the risk of a repeat of the 2013 incident when two teenagers escaped from a boot camp in Kuranda, broke into a home and threatened a woman with a knife. That is not a risk that I believe the community would be willing to take.


The Katter's Australian Party has suggested that electronic monitoring makes a secure environment unnecessary. Relying on electronic monitoring in very remote locations where coverage may not be guaranteed is a significant issue. The Katter party's relocation sentencing proposal lacks detail but appears to be very similar to the former LNP government's sentenced youth boot camp program. In 2015, an independent evaluation found the boot camp program failed its core purpose, which was to reduce repeat offending. Of the 74 young people in the sentenced youth boot camp program, 63.5 per cent reoffended by the time the evaluation was published, which is no different to other forms of detention. The ultimate cost of the trial was \$16.7 million, more than eight times the initial estimated cost.

In contrast, on-country programs take young people onto country for shorter periods as part of a broader program that links them to their culture, community and family, and builds networks and supports that will last beyond the program. Our government has committed more than \$5 million over four years to pilot the program in Cairns, Mount Isa and Townsville. The program focuses on Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islanders aged 10 to 17 years who are repeat offenders with high and complex needs. The government is a strong supporter of on-country programs that form part of our comprehensive suite of measures to address youth crime. We want to invest in evidence-based programs that will actually make a difference. This proposal is not one of them.

We will invest in programs such as intensive case management. We are investing an additional \$30 million as part of the recently announced \$100 million funding boost into intensive case management that has delivered a 51 per cent reduction in the frequency of offending. Intensive case management provides targeted intervention to address multiple factors that impact juvenile offending, including substance abuse. It aims to enhance family and kinship connections and promote engagement in education and training. I think it was this program that the member was referring to, which I briefed him on recently, when he said he feels it is not effective enough. However, it is about people going, with cultural authority, when required, to people's gates to offer the support that is needed. There has been a 51 per cent reduction in the frequency of offending and an over 70 per cent reduction in the severity of offending. That is evidence based.

While the government is voting against this motion, I acknowledge that Katter's Australian Party at least has a policy regarding youth justice. The same cannot be said for the LNP. Our government will continue to listen to the community when it comes to youth crime and we will continue to invest in evidence based—

*(Time expired)*

 **Mr ANDREW** (Mirani—PHON) (5.12 pm): I was going to go through some of the statistics that we have on crime but first I will touch briefly on a story that a 21-year-old tribal girl told me at the airport. She said that the people who live next door to her have a 13-year-old boy who had been stealing cars and reoffending. When the police dropped him home his father met them out the front. His father gave the boy a serve and was going to give him the boot. The police took the father away and left the boy there. Pick that one up! I could not believe it. She said, 'Steve, that young fella has been in trouble the whole time and this is what we are dealing with.' The kid was left unsupervised and the father was taken away to jail for trying to chastise his own child because the kid had just rolled a car and almost killed someone on the highway.

There is absolutely no point in having tough laws if they are not being applied. And why would they be? Hundreds of pages of sentencing guidelines written by the former attorney-general clearly direct judges not to send juveniles to prison. Believe me: I sympathise with the concept that the rights of young offenders need to be protected. However, don't non-offending children have rights as well?

They have the right to feel safe in their homes. They have the right not to have their homes invaded. They have the right not to be attacked or robbed at night. They have the right to safety and the right to expect justice. In recent years thousands of child victims have been left traumatised by youth crime. Many of them have gone on to discover that the court and the government do not actually care about them or their trauma as offenders are rarely subjected to any real punishment. What kind of message does that send to child victims? It is no wonder that many of them now have no faith in Queensland's criminal justice system.

Unless the government is prepared to legislate minimum sentences then we are basically wasting our time with tough sentencing laws. That is why I support the motion's proposal for a mandatory minimum sentence of 12 months for youth offenders convicted of—

**Ms BOYD:** Mr Acting Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I refer to the motion that has been circulated in the name of the member for Traeger. I believe that you have already made a ruling that the first paragraph be deleted. The member for Mirani is specifically speaking to the first paragraph. I ask for your ruling on this matter.

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** I was giving some advice to another member. I will take some advice from the Clerk. Member, earlier the first part of the motion was ruled out of order and the motion has been rewritten. As per my earlier ruling, you can reference it in the broader context of the issue but you cannot speak directly to that part of the motion. Both the Clerk and I were advising other members. I will listen carefully. I ask you to continue your contribution.

**Mr ANDREW:** Thank you for your guidance, Mr Acting Speaker. I also support the motion's proposal for relocation sentencing programs to be seriously explored. Putting young people in prison just makes them better criminals. Alternatives such as relocation programs would send young offenders to remote areas with excellent facilities where they would be given a real chance of turning their lives around.


The police do a fantastic job, but they are understaffed and under-resourced. One of the government's 2020 election promises was to hire an extra 2,024 police personnel, including 1,450 officers by 2025. From July 2020 to 31 October 2022 an extra 401 officers were hired, leaving 1,000 more officer positions to be filled in order to honour that commitment. The whole policing sector has become thoroughly demoralised and the police are sick of having their hands tied when trying to curb youth crime. Over the past few years, significant feedback from regional public hearings and submissions clearly shows that the current sentencing by the Queensland courts has not met community expectations.

The options set out in the motion are not just about getting tough on crime; they are a plan of action for responding to a small group of young offenders who engage in persistent and serious offending, that is, the 17 per cent of serious repeat offenders who commit 50 per cent of the youth crime in Queensland. All Queenslanders have a right to feel safe in their homes and in their communities, no matter where they live. The young people who commit offences must be held accountable for their actions and the impact of those actions on their victims, their families and the broader community. I do support the motion.

I would like to touch on something that is allowing this to continue. In my electorate some of our police stations are not 24-hour policing branches, for instance, the Mount Morgan station. Marlborough has 1,000 itinerant workers who come to work at the wind farms but it does not have a 24-hour station either. It needs two police officers. I will speak to the minister again. I have spoken to him earlier. They need more policing, they need more resources and they need more infrastructure to house those resources. Sarina is another example.

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Member, I ask you to come back to the substance of the motion.

**Mr ANDREW:** This relates to the motion because when towns do not have 24-hour policing crime goes unchecked. The minute the police station shuts its doors the drug deals start. People form gangs. They gather outside the pubs to bum smokes off people. They make people's lives hell. They go into businesses and give the staff hell. I have seen it all. Many business owners have complained to me about this. Some have reached the point where they have shut up shop until the young people's witching hour passes. Some shop owners have even tried to give those kids jobs sweeping and the like, basically to pay them to stop committing offences and demoralising local people and tourists. It is a sad state of affairs and we need to get on top of it.

 **Mr KNUTH (Hill—KAP) (5.19 pm):** The motion moved by the member for Traeger seeks to introduce relocation sentencing as an alternative to traditional juvenile detention. This would see recidivist youth offenders ordered by the courts to serve long-term sentences in highly rehabilitative

environments in remote locations. This is being proposed as it has been proven, particularly in the past five years, that the system in place now is not working. We are quite frustrated. I know that Queenslanders, particularly the victims of juvenile crime, are frustrated. It is more or less ruining people's lives. We see cars stolen and burnt and businesses destroyed. Elderly people are too afraid to leave their homes, fearful that they could be bashed or harassed. As reported the other day in Mareeba's *Express* newspaper, an 86-year-old was taunted by youths, laughing and joking. These offences occurred after the government introduced a bill that was supposed to resolve all of these problems. A 2023 *Courier-Mail* article titled 'Queensland crime booming: Damning new stats revealed for your region' states—

Crime numbers have risen across Queensland and returned to pre-pandemic levels, new figures show, as experts offer explanations for the likely causes.

The bill has not resolved the problem. We are offering an alternative, and it is a good alternative. It was disappointing to hear the minister state earlier that the government will not even trial this alternative. He referred to other measures that have nothing to do with relocation sentencing, which we have pursued for the past four years. They have nothing to do with it. Their attitude is, 'Let's dismiss anything else. What the government has is sufficient and is working.'

Over the past few weeks we have seen that the government bill is not working. There are allegations regarding torture. As I mentioned, elderly people are being taunted and harassed. A newspaper article outlines that a driver was injured after kids threw an object from a stolen car. These kids are laughing about this. The sad part is that they are also laughing at these changes. They did not say, 'Oh, we can't commit crime anymore; they are going to come down hard.' They could not care less.

Another solution the government has put forward is to build more detention centres. Young people are committing crimes to get into detention centres, so that is not a solution to this serious problem. Ninety-five per cent of youths sentenced to the Cleveland detention centre—it costs \$1,500 a day—reoffend within 12 months.

As the member for Traeger mentioned, youth crime was discussed heavily at the Local Government Association of Queensland's annual conference, culminating in a motion from Mareeba Shire Council to establish diversionary facilities on remote state owned properties for wayward youths. Ninety-five per cent of the state's councils voted in favour of this motion because they are constantly being hammered by victims of youth crime. It is happening all over the state. They are sick of it.

This motion sends a clear message about support for relocation sentencing. We can reject it in here, but 95 per cent of councils across the state support it. They want another option, because the options we have are not working. The previous and current governments' youth crime policies have proven to be a dismal failure. Relocation sentencing will resolve this problem. We call on the government to trial this initiative and to support the motion.



**Mr LAST** (Burdekin—LNP) (5.24 pm): I move the following amendment—

After the word 'locations', insert—

'only after a review of programs of a similar nature already in force is conducted by the Auditor-General in the Auditor-General's current review of youth justice initiatives.'


I have spoken in this chamber on a number of occasions about the youth crime issue that is gripping this state, a youth crime epidemic that continues to this very day. We only need to scroll through today's media monitors to see what is going on in the north, in places like Townsville and Cairns. Cars are being stolen, cars are being destroyed, offenders are breaking into houses—and so it continues. The opposition has always maintained that there needs to be consequences for actions. It was the opposition that called for the reinstatement of breach of bail. We know what happened when that bill was debated during the last sittings. The government adopted the opposition's breach of bail amendment word for word. In terms of consequences for actions, we need to be realistic about what is happening at the moment—what programs are in place, what is working, what is not working and the deficiencies in the current system.

Across Queensland at the moment there are so many programs in place. By the Premier's own admission, since 2019 in excess of \$1 billion has been tipped into the youth justice space. Queenslanders have a right to now demand: what are the outcomes? What have we seen for that sort of investment? What are we seeing in terms of results for all that investment in these youth justice programs across Queensland? I think that is a fair enough question. That is what motivated the opposition writing to the Auditor-General requesting a review of youth justice initiatives, because we need a starting point. We need to know what programs are in place, what is working and what is not

working. We are hearing about all of these initiatives. Only this week we have heard announcements by the youth justice minister of further funding to community groups in this space. It is fair to ascertain whether we are seeing a return on our investment, whether we are seeing a decline in youth offending in Queensland. Clearly, at the moment we are not.

Queenslanders are calling for something to be done in this space. The opposition has been very vocal about the need for early intervention programs in Queensland. I know that I cannot talk about the other part of the motion given notice of earlier today by the Katter's Australian Party. Certainly, that comes back to consequences for actions—giving our judiciary the tools they need to do their job effectively, giving the judiciary the direction and the legislation they need to deal with these issues when youth come before them and to hand out penalties which reflect community expectations. You would have to say that, to date, that has been a dismal flop and the community outrage is growing. The community anger is growing. It is only right that the community should now be demanding that something be done to address this youth crime problem which is tearing this state apart.

We need to know what works and what does not work. There is no point throwing good money after more good money and not seeing a result at the other end. On a weekly basis I am approached by community groups and organisations, as I am sure most members in this place are, promising results, outlining programs that they can deliver, asking for the opportunity to deliver services to address this issue. We need to know whether it will work, because this is taxpayers' money that we are playing with. We need to know that there is going to be value for money at the end of the day.

 **Mr DAMETTO** (Hinchinbrook—KAP) (5.29 pm): I rise in support of the motion moved by the member for Traeger. Relocation sentencing needs to be explained in full tonight for those on the opposite side of the House who have not understood exactly what we are asking for here. It is a third sentencing option for magistrates. Magistrates now have very few tools in their tool belt when it comes to sentencing and sentences that may curb youth offending.

We had havoc on the streets of Townsville over the weekend. The members for Townsville, Thuringowa and Mundingburra would know this. Over the weekend it was absolute bedlam on the streets. The good QPS officers have done their job once again. As of today, 15 kids have been arrested and are being held on remand. Guess what? All those kids are recidivist youth offenders. Guess what? The reality is that they will be back out on the street—

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. Member, in terms of those individuals whom you are referring to, can you assure me that your references to them do not offend the standing orders in relation to sub judice? If they are on remand then they are in a process before the courts and you are potentially offending the rules around sub judice under the standing orders.

**Mr DAMETTO:** Mr Acting Speaker, I do not believe I am because I have not talked specifically about any crime. I will continue to let people know—

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Order! Member, I will take some advice before you continue. You are talking about matters that are before the courts and this could potentially be prejudicial to those matters. If you are going to continue your contribution I would urge you to not mention any further those matters which you have been discussing up to this point or refer to any other matter that is before a court.

**Mr DAMETTO:** I appreciate your guidance, Mr Acting Speaker. The magistrates who are sentencing these children are looking for an option to make sure we correct these children's rudder. Right now there is nothing.

The minister was talking a little earlier about the LNP's boot camps and the fact that there was a 63 per cent reoffending rate. It is 95 per cent at Cleveland detention centre right now. There is a 95 per cent recidivism rate out there. If that was a failure then this is absolutely dismal. If those opposite think it is working then that is an absolute farce. The minister also cited earlier things like the expense of running one of these detention centres or relocation sentencing facilities in a remote area. The minister said that it would be expensive. We have been told time and time again that money is no object when it comes to trying to curb this problem. We see right now a complete failure of the system from youth justice right through to child safety.

Guess what? Most of these kids do not come from a good, loving family. They come from a family unit that either has abused them or is not looking after them. Guess what? They end up on the streets. They end up offending. Guess what happens when they offend? They finally make it to Cleveland Youth Detention Centre and when they get out there they realise it is not so bad. When they get out they go into a residential facility. That is just like cotton candy to a kid. In the words of people who run these



facilities, there is absolutely no ability to keep a child under that roof at night and stop them from going out and reoffending. That is absolutely ridiculous.

We are proposing sending these kids to a remote location for six to 12 months for two reasons. One is to try to keep Queenslanders safe. How about we get these recidivist, hard nut offenders who are not being rehabilitated by the current programs or the current youth justice system on country and away from society? Here is another idea. While they are out there why not put them through some programs that work.

I talk to my TOs—I do not know whether anyone on the other side of the House talks to their TOs about youth justice—and those who are working in youth justice say that we have to get these kids away from where they are offending, away from the cohort of kids they are offending with and, even better, get them away from kids that they are influencing to go down a path of crime. We have to force these kids to go out there.

The reality is that if we put one of these kids in the Cleveland Youth Detention Centre they are there for about two or three weeks—12 weeks maximum. Guess what? Talk to someone who works with these kids and they say that the first three months is about cleaning them up, getting them off drugs, getting them off vapes, getting them off aerosol tins, getting them off alcohol and getting their health right. Once that is sorted we might have a chance of teaching them something. We might have a chance to give them an opportunity to change their ways and learn something. After six months we could reassess them at a relocation sentencing facility. If they are not reformed we let them stay there for another 12 months and reassess them once again.

That is how we help kids. Parents in this state have lost the right to raise their children. The state government thinks they are better at raising children. If the state government thinks parents are doing the wrong thing they take the kids off the parents. Guess where the kids end up? They end up in residential care and detention centres. If we were giving a mark for how these children are being raised by this state, I would give them an 'F'. They are failing the kids of this state. We will support alternative sentencing. We call on this state to consider relocation sentencing as an option.

*(Time expired)*

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

**AYES, 34:**

**LNP, 34—**Bates, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Camm, Crandon, 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, Weir.

**NOES, 54:**

**ALP, 50—**Bailey, Boyd, Brown, Bush, Butcher, Crawford, D'Ath, de Brenni, Dick, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Furner, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Healy, Hinchliffe, Howard, Hunt, A. King, S. King, Lauga, Linard, Lui, 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.

**KAP, 3—**Dametto, Katter, Knuth.

**PHON, 1—**Andrew.

Resolved in the negative.

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

Resolved in the negative under standing order 106(10).


## **POLICE POWERS AND RESPONSIBILITIES AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL 2022**

## **POLICE POWERS AND RESPONSIBILITIES AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL 2023**

### **Second Reading (Cognate Debate)**

Resumed from p. 1077, on motion of Mr Ryan—

That the bills be now read a second time.

 **Ms BATES** (Mudgeeraba—LNP) (5.43 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the Police Powers and Responsibilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022. First, let me pay tribute to the magnificent frontline officers, the men and women in blue who protect our communities from the cape to Coolangatta. Every shift they risk their lives trying to keep us safe from the worst elements of society. As a mother and an aunt of current serving police officers, I thank you for your service.

In Mudgeeraba, I can report that they too are doing a magnificent job, but it is not easy. I have spoken before in this place about the continuing problem of hooning. For years the Palaszczuk Labor government has failed to take meaningful action. Why they have not I have no idea. What I do know is that those opposite do not like to listen to the concerns of Queenslanders and do not care enough to do anything. While this government sits idle with their hands over their ears, the hooning continues. Last week the idiots of the Mexican Hoon Cartel were at it again doing burnouts and skids in front of my office. Hoons continue to be emboldened to engage in this behaviour because they know this government has weak laws in place. Hoons will not be deterred by a slap on the wrist, and the data shows this.

Under this government, from 2015 to 2021 the unlawful use of a motor vehicle has increased by 107 per cent—107 per cent does not seem like everything is under control, does it? That is not news to Queenslanders. Queenslanders already know the incompetence of this government. This is a dramatic difference to the previous LNP government which saw a reduction in the unlawful use of a motor vehicle of 27 per cent from 2012 to 2015—a reduction, not an increase of more than 100 per cent! Queenslanders want to know that they are safe on our roads. Queenslanders do not want to wake up with squealing tyres or exhaust backfires at all hours of the night. They want action—action that this government has failed to deliver, and the hooning idiots are thanking the government for it.

The LNP and I have been advocating to this government for years to implement stronger measures, but this government just does not care. We have recommendations and solutions on the table, but they do not want to look at them. We wanted to roll out tyre-shredding road treatments across the Gold Coast—a proposal that received overwhelming community support. They did not listen. We wanted new covert CCTV cameras installed in hooning hotspots. This inaction is beyond incompetence. It is a complete failure from this Labor government.

Weekly I receive numerous complaints of hooning across the Mudgeeraba electorate. Just a few weeks ago Richard and Lyn of Robina contacted me, raising the constant disturbance every day and every night with continual hooning and speeding in the area. They constantly hear the shrieking of tyres ripping around roundabouts and the backfire of exhausts as these hoons race each other. All they want is to live in peace. It is not much to ask and it is something that all Queenslanders deserve.

Robyn from out near Franklin Flats wants the noise to stop but also wants these idiots to be fined and charged for breaking the law as they rip up public lands with their criminal behaviour. Annette from Reedy Creek is also fed up. She fears hooning vehicles will lose control, flying off the road and crashing into houses. Annette just wants to be safe and for other road users to be safe too.

Whether it be hooning through Robina on Laver Drive or driving like idiots on the Nerang Murwillumbah Road or in quiet residential areas, the hooning continues. It is only a matter of time until another person's life is thrown into jeopardy because of the action of these idiots. This government is not helping the police. This government is making it harder for police men and women to apprehend these hoons by having fewer and fewer officers on the street. We know they are stripping our police stations of resources and officers. The police force are working tirelessly to make do with what they have but with one hand tied behind their back.

We know the extent of these funding cuts. The Labor government will take 32 years to reach its election commitment of 1,450 extra police—32 years! How ridiculous is that? Officers will continue to be diverted from Mudgeeraba, Robina and Nerang stations to other areas like Surfers Paradise all because of the shortcomings of this government. The police just want to do their job. This government needs to give them the resources and tools to do it. It is not fair for Queenslanders or for our brave police officers. The current police minister has been in that role for over six years and will no doubt try to blame a government that has not been on the treasury bench for a decade for its problems.

**Mr RYAN:** Mr Acting Speaker, I rise to a point of order. In addition to all the misleading statements that the member has made, I find her remarks personally offensive and I ask for them to be withdrawn.

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** The member has taken personal offence at your statement and ask that it be withdrawn.

**Ms BATES:** I withdraw. The minister is full of excuses but void of any accountability.

**Mr RYAN:** Mr Acting Speaker, I rise to a point of order. She has just repeated the same remark. I find the remarks personally offensive and I ask for them to be withdrawn. I am happy to keep taking points of order on this matter.


**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Resume your seat, Minister. I will take some advice. The member has taken personal offence. Member for Mudgeeraba, I ask you to withdraw.

**Ms BATES:** I withdraw. I would also like to address the proposal to amend provisions of the act pertaining to illegal drugs. The opposition cannot in good faith support laws which condone the growing of illicit drugs. The government would have us believe that they have no choice while trying to say that you cannot have tougher drug laws and you cannot have well-resourced rehabilitation and proven diversion programs. The reality is that it can be done. There can be tough penalties for those trafficking and supplying drugs and there can be legitimate diversionary programs in place for those with substance use disorders. We know there are harm minimisation initiatives that can, and have, worked; however, that should not come at the expense of the rule of law and ensuring appropriate penalties exist for those who do break them. We fear this is just another example of the tired third-term government going soft on crime. They are claiming it is about reducing workloads for the Queensland Police Service, but the reality is that they are simply not providing enough resources for our police.

The issue of illegal drugs is complex, but the answer is not in allowing more drugs to be carried around in the community. The idea that a health system in crisis can cope with more people being diverted to it for treatment is just laughable. Our frontline health workers are under enough pressure before this government tries to make police matters a health issue. We know that the track record of those opposite is to promise the world and deliver nothing, so our fear is that the aim of these laws, which is to get people off drugs and back on track, will be lost in a lack of follow-up from the government.

The opposition does believe that drug diversion initiatives are evidence-based and can help, but it does not have to be one or the other. There simply will not be enough mental health and addiction service workers to help those in need as the government shunts these people from the police to hospitals. We cannot condone the purchase and carriage of illicit substances because their production, manufacture and supply is undertaken by criminal networks that trade in human misery, including paedophilia, domestic and family violence, fraud and other serious crime, including on an international scale.

After eight years of watered-down laws and a youth crime epidemic, at least Queenslanders deserve some accountability and ownership of the mistakes this Palaszczuk government has made, but they will not listen. The Labor government is failing to keep Queenslanders safe in 2023. When will this government provide solutions, not just empty media releases littered with excuses? I will not hold my breath; I would probably have to wait 32 years. When will this government do something about restoring the safety and security of communities? This Labor government finally took our advice and re-introduced breach of bail as an offence to combat the youth crime epidemic—an epidemic of the government's own making. This government needs to listen again and implement stronger laws to get these behaviours under control. It is time for this government to get on with it. Queenslanders are fed up. Queenslanders deserve so much better than this tired and ignorant Labor government.

 **Mr McCALLUM** (Bundamba—ALP) (5.52 pm): I rise in support of these bills. I will deal with the issue of drug diversion to begin with. It is an issue that Queensland police have been dealing with for a very long time. Queensland police have been diverting people for cannabis possession for over two decades, and that program has been extremely successful. Since 2001 over 158,000 people were diverted from the criminal justice system to a health intervention through the current police drug diversion program. The Queensland Police Service's most recent analysis of recidivism among drug diversion recipients indicates that 72 per cent of those who completed drug diversion did not reoffend for a drug related offence within the study period, which I believe was around four years. The evidence of drug diversion that has been in place in Queensland, administered by Queensland police for well over 20 years, is very, very clear: it is overwhelmingly successful. I am very happy to see the laws before the parliament today. Queensland police will have new powers when it comes to dealing with people who are found with small quantities of drugs.

The drug diversion program will be expanded to include the minor possession of other types of drugs by implementing a new tiered approach. For the first minor drug possession offence a police officer will issue a warning accompanied by a notice and a referral to a support service. For second and third minor drug possession offences an officer will offer the opportunity for the person to participate in a mandatory—so the person must participate—drug diversion assessment program. For the fourth minor drug possession offence the officer issues the offender with a notice to appear in court.

It is important to note that this successful drug diversionary program, which is being expanded based on the evidence, is accompanied by a tough approach to drug traffickers. Under the bills before the parliament, the penalty for drug trafficking will increase from 25 years imprisonment to life imprisonment. This is a great suite of laws that are really going to make a positive difference by being tougher on drug traffickers and providing greater drug diversionary pathways for minor offences. It is a commonsense approach. Police spend thousands of hours that could be better focused on targeting drug traffickers.

It is very important to put on the record that the Queensland Police Service supports this approach. Every one of Queensland's Queensland-based commissioners since the Fitzgerald era has supported this approach. The Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce recommended that government should consider adopting a health system response to certain drug related offences like these. Health experts support this approach. The AMAQ is on record as supporting this. It would seem that the only people who do not support this are the Queensland LNP, who as part of this debate have stated their opposition to it.

I will read some quotes from some of the people who do support the measures that are contained in this bill. The current Police Commissioner, Katarina Carroll, is on the record as saying—

I wanted this reform because research shows that if you divert people early to health and education services they are less likely to reoffend.

She goes on to say, 'It just makes sense.' Former police commissioner Bob Atkinson is on the record as saying—

Our response to illegal drug use should have as many options as possible. This doesn't mean that they get off, but that they have chances to make better choices.

Former police commissioner Ian Stewart is on the record as saying—

Expanding drug diversion is not about going soft on crime. Just the opposite. It is a way of offering real hope to those caught up in drug use and providing a proven pathway to better personal wellbeing away from the criminal justice spiral. Increasing penalties for drug trafficking in the state while broadening the ability of police when dealing with minor personal drug use shows a commitment to going hard on the real criminals involved in the drug trade.

Former Australian Federal Police commissioner Mick Palmer is on the record as saying—

I welcome the government's decision to implement a diversionary approach to the use and possession of drugs.

Finally, the current President of the AMAQ, Maria Boulton, is on the record as saying—

We've been calling for this change since 2001. Our focus has to be on helping people to stop their drug use, not seeing them end up in the criminal justice system.

By drawing on the best evidence-based practices we can start treating drug use predominantly as a health problem instead of a criminal issue. Courts do not need to get needlessly clogged up with minor cases that are fundamentally a health issue. Indeed, sometimes unfortunately the individuals who are charged with these minor offences that are clogging up the courts do not get the help they need. It is a lose-lose situation for all parties concerned.


If we can get drug users into successful diversion programs and keep them out of the criminal justice system, that benefits the entire community. These reforms are about helping people, who are often young, to deal with a health issue.

I will now turn briefly to the issue of hooning. The Palaszczuk Labor government has taken strong action to combat hooning. The Queensland Police Service is the largest user of Axon Citizen, a technology that allows the community to easily upload digital evidence, such as video footage and photographs, to help catch hooners. That has been in use for a while now, along with provisions where any motorist who is found guilty of hooning can have their car destroyed. I am sure many members can recall when a hoon car was recently dismantled out the front of parliament.

The reforms that we have brought in to combat hooners to date have been very effective, and they will be further bolstered by the provisions that are contained in this bill. One of the measures used by hooners is the removal or alteration of vehicle registration plates. This continues to be a technique hooners use to avoid being detected or identified. This bill adds an additional penalty if a registration plate is altered in relation to hooning. The maximum penalty is doubled. It also strengthens offences that exist in relation to doing burnouts.

There are new offences to deter hooning spectators or those assisting or promoting hooning. The police are very clear in saying that these hooning networks can be very well organised and very sophisticated in their communication methods and how they hold events. These new offence provisions

will prohibit a person from: willingly participating in a group activity relating to a hooning offence; organising, promoting or encouraging another person to participate in or view a group activity involving hooning; and filming, photographing or publishing a film or photograph of a hooning offence. These are great measures and I commend the bills to the House.

 **Mr McDONALD** (Lockyer—LNP) (6.02 pm): I am pleased to be able to contribute to this cognate debate on the police powers and responsibilities bills from both 2022 and 2023. When we look at the details of these bills and some of the content, it is very clear that some of the changes that are recommended are very good. As our shadow minister outlined, we support many of those changes. I am particularly pleased about the evade offence and the onus of presumption that will be on the owner of those vehicles involved in those crimes. That is something that police have been asking for for a long time.

However, many other aspects of these two bills are very concerning. For those who are not aware and for those watching for the first time, I spent a long time as a police officer, with the last 14 years being as the officer in charge of police at Laidley up until 2017. I can tell that many laws that come through have got unintended consequences, and I am very concerned that these changes to the drugs issues and diversion programs are going to be one of those situations. These bills will go through tomorrow and it will be one of those days that we look back on and say, 'You see, we were right.'

Any evidence-based diversionary program is very good, but this government has gone way too far. The existing arrangements for drug diversions are for basically a small amount of cannabis and some utensils, and people who qualify can get that diversion. I have been saying for many years that health and education are the way to combat the drug problem, but we have offenders out there who are not good people and when this goes through they are now going to be walking in our community carrying a gram of ice, up to a gram of other amphetamine including speed, some heroin, some cocaine, a few pills and some green leaf material or cannabis and they will qualify for a drug diversion not just once but on three occasions. I can tell the government that this is just way too far.

If they were evidence-based diversionary programs that were designed to give opportunities to good people in our community for a small amount of those dangerous drugs, I could probably come to terms with that. However, the unintended consequences of this are going to be that parents who are pro drug use will be saying to their children, 'Just make sure you don't get more than a gram of those different substances.' Bikies are going to be saying to their customers, including children, 'Just make sure you get one of those because it's under a gram. You'll just get a smack on the wrist and get a diversion.' These are the unintended consequences that are going to cause a slow erosion of our society which will create more problems.

Queensland Police Service statistics say that there are 17,000 minor drugs offences in a year, and they include some of those dangerous drugs including heroin, ice, cocaine, other amphetamine types, MDMA and other tablets. Under this new system, all of those people are probably going to go across and qualify for a diversionary program, but there will be many, many more people than that because at the moment people in society say, 'I won't carry those drugs because it's a crime and I could get in trouble and maybe lose my job or never get a government job.' With this change, people will be carrying those amounts and the police work on attending to those minor drug offences will increase. It does not take five minutes to put together the paperwork to see a drug diversion warning or a drug diversion put in place, and people are now going to be able to do those things on up to three occasions.

I am also very concerned with the resourcing that under this government will not be provided to those drug diversion services, wherever they may be. The backlog there will blow out very quickly. The practical implication of that is that minor drug offenders who are carrying a gram of speed, a gram of heroin, a gram of amphetamine or a gram of cocaine are going to go to a drug diversion, but before they even get to that drug diversion they are going to qualify again. I wonder if the minister could tell us if it will be okay for somebody to get the drug diversion three times if they have not even been to the first. What are these unintended consequences?

I am genuinely concerned about the erosion of our society and the social impacts of these changes. I know there was an inquiry undertaken and there were some views that it was open season on drugs, but I can say as an experienced police officer who was supervising police and dealing with drug offenders, youth criminals and other criminals in our community that these drug offenders, youth criminals and other criminals are not mutually exclusive. Many of the recidivist youth offenders who we have talked about here on many occasions use drugs.

When you start to take away some of these things and say, 'It's okay to use drugs,' that is going to be an easy choice for them to make, but what about all of those good kids in our community who at the present time are being told by parents, teachers and anyone with influence on them, 'No, you can't do drugs'? This might not be decriminalising all of those drugs and, yes, there is a drug diversion—and, as I said before and I place on the record again, I support education and health responses to the drug problem—but this has gone way too far. It is wrong policy, and it is going to be a very great detriment to Queensland.

I want to also stress to the House here tonight and to the community out there that the use of drugs in our society is going to increase because of this.

**Mr Smith:** Rubbish. Absolute rubbish.

**Mr McDONALD:** I will take the interjection from the member for Bundamba. Let's see how many people in the future years to come—

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

**Mr McDONALD:** I took the interjection because—

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. Resume your seat, please, member for Lockyer. What is your point of order?

**Mr McCALLUM:** I did not make any interjection at all.

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** That is not a point of order.


**Mr McDONALD:** Acting Speaker, if it helps you and Hansard, I am sorry if I said 'Bundamba'; it was the member for Bundaberg. I can tell you, as an experienced police officer, that the rate of drug use will increase and it will be a terrible blight on our community here in Queensland.

The Premier of Victoria, Daniel Andrews, who is of the same colour as this government here in Queensland, is on record to say, 'No way, we are not going to do that sort of thing because it is not good.' Other countries around the world have experimented with the soft-on-crime initiatives and most of those have reversed that terrible situation. I can tell you it is going to happen here. It is absolutely going to be more work for police and it is going to be a lot more work for those people who will be conducting the diversionary programs.

I mentioned before that I am very pleased to see the evade offences and the owner having a presumption of driving that vehicle—that is a very sound policy decision. It is with these mixed parts of the bill—

**Mr Power** interjected.

**Mr McDONALD:** In this one, too, mate. This cognate bill has some good things, but it is this social experiment with regard to the drug offences which is going to affect—the member for Bundaberg said before it will not result in increased drug use. If people use amphetamines once—once—they can end up with a permanent drug toxicity. There are a lot of colloquial terms for that, but they will end up with a permanent drug problem and they are a huge blight on our society. Many of those people are part of the youth crime cohort who are doing terrible things right across this state in terms of crime and criminal offending, and this is a step down the ladder. It is going to make those youth offenders and others even worse.

 **Mr SMITH** (Bundaberg—ALP) (6.12 pm): After this bill passes, which I presume it will, I will have to call my grandmother because I am worried that, after the member for Lockyer's contribution, she will become a meth addict, apparently. I will call Gran to make sure she does not feel compelled by this piece of legislation to go out to the pubs and clubs of Bribie Island and have a score. Hopefully Gran will still be okay after this.

**Mr McDonald** interjected.

**Mr SMITH:** The member for Lockyer completely—I am talking about Grandma and the older members going, 'Oh, we are someone's grandparents, too.' It is not about the small amounts in the pocket, it is about the diversion of the future drug use that will occur year on year on year unless there is a diversion program for these people who are sadly addicted to dangerous drugs. That is what it is about. It is not about saying, 'There is a little bit in the pocket; therefore, we should make sure we drag you through the courts.' Instead, it is about diverting them away from a life of drug use, a life of drug use that will absolutely have the potential to ruin their lives and ruin the lives of their family. That is what this is about. This ridiculous notion that somehow this piece of legislation is going to bring about a wave

of professionals and of young people all deciding that they are going to become drug addicts because they can carry a small personal amount is absolute rubbish. I will stand by the interjection that the member for Lockyer took of mine: it is a rubbish suggestion. It is an absolute rubbish suggestion.

I will move to the elements of this bill that address hooning. Hooning is across all communities. It is across all communities because there is a social element to hooning that has existed all the way through since the creation of the wheel. Since the creation of the wheel, the creation of cars, there has been a social need, especially within young people with developing minds, to go fast. It is part of the developing mind to go out and test themselves, to go away from adults. It is a part of adolescence and it is a part of being in your early 20s and 30s, and there is a social element to it. We know that the social element creates antisocial behaviour and antisocial driving. That is what the elements of this bill are aimed at—the social context around hooning behaviour or type 1 driving offences.

I know that when I talk to some older people in my community, they say, 'Tom, we remember our mates used to go fast.' They talk about James Dean. We all know about the icon there of the fifties. We all know the member for Bundamba's favourite movie character of all time is Danny Zuko in *Grease*. He drove fast to win the heart of Sandy. Some might say he models himself on that.

**Mr McCallum:** The member for Bundaberg.

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Order, members!

**Mr SMITH:** I thought he might have taken personal offence, but he clearly has not, so it is on the record. I will come back. There is a very serious element that people who engage with hooning have been able to escape the full force of the law. It is absolutely not at the hands of the police that this has happened. It is about making sure that we are providing the laws that empower the police. That is what I am really glad to see in this element because Bundaberg is a community that has a longstanding social behaviour of hooning. It is what happens. It is a very flat area and there are long roads all throughout Bundaberg. It does bring about a form of encouragement for young people who are looking to drive fast and engage in these social behaviours.

We must ensure that police are given the powers that, when they identify rego plates at a hoon event which do not match any of the vehicles, they can act on what they know with regard to those plates so that they can assist the offender to avoid the crime in the future. This is a very important piece of legislation, a very important part of the amendment which brings that in, to make sure that we give police the powers to use their investigative minds. That is very important.

It is also important to ensure we are countering the other element with regard to social media which is the filming and promotion of hooning events, and also the association of being at the gatherings for the event. It is critical that we empower members of our community to play a role in combatting this antisocial behaviour. Quite often when I speak to my constituents, I remind them of the ability to film. It is very important to make sure that our constituents understand that you can film an antisocial driving event, whether it be a burnout or a drag race, for the purpose of lodging a police complaint. Even though we are ensuring that people who film these events for the promotion or future organisation of events are meeting a criminal standard, if you are filming to lodge a police complaint, you are doing your civic duty as you are contributing to keeping yourself safe, keeping those in your neighbourhood safe and ultimately in the long run keeping the antisocial drivers safe. That is very important.


I will move quickly to a point made by the member for Mudgeeraba on talking about this antisocial driving behaviour where she said that it is the Palaszczuk government that in a way is to blame because we are not giving powers to police and not supporting police by making sure the numbers are there. Quite often I talk about the LNP's record on police. It does not change. I will keep reminding them that when the LNP were in government, they oversaw the cutting of 110 senior police from the front line—110 senior police. All up, there were 300 personnel cut from the Queensland Police Service by the Newman government, and the majority of the opposition over there were part of that government. They were either the leaders or they were in the cabinet, and they made those decisions.

If the argument of the member for Mudgeeraba is that we need more police then do not cut the police—do not sack the police. It is very crucial that if they want more, they should not decrease their number. That is very important. In fact, the QPS strategic review, which was the Greenfield review, found there was a reduction of 500 unsworn FTE in 2012-13 contributing to the movement of administrative support and support service activities to sworn officers. The LNP—the 'tough on crime LNP' as they claimed to be—sacked police and then they sacked so many administrative staff that the police had to become the administrators. They actually withdrew the police from the front line and put

them into the offices to do the paperwork. That is not being tough on crime. That is not replenishing the police stock. The hypocrisy of the member for Mudgeeraba is very plain to see. I will make sure to remind the LNP of their record every single time they want to talk about police or crime.

While we talk about crime—and the police minister has expressed this—we should note that those opposite cut police monitoring of more than 1,700 sex offenders. That is their record. I went to look at that debate from 2014. None of the members of the LNP who are still in this House wanted to put their words to that particular debate, yet they all voted for it. They cannot escape the history on that. They cannot escape the fact that what we have seen from the LNP, especially over the last couple of years, is them coming in here and talking about youth crime. They run a political agenda against children—and we know there is an element of pseudo-racism that drives through the DNA of the LNP when it comes to youth crime. We know they play on the fears of people and we know they attempt to play on the fears regarding race as well. We know that there is an identification around Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people and Pacific Islander young people. When it comes to youth crime, they will pick on the kids, but what they will not do is be tough on paedophiles. That is their record: they decided to cut the monitoring of 1,700 sex offenders. They cannot ever claim to be tough on crime and they cannot ever claim to seriously represent Queenslanders when they sacked police and then they cut the monitoring of sex offenders. That is absolutely disgraceful.

It is important that we are making positive steps in this piece of legislation such as the provisions regarding drug diversion. I will go back to what I said at the beginning. It is not about the small quantity that might be caught in the pocket; it is about diverting people away from a lifetime of drug abuse. We know that quite often a lifetime of drug abuse can lead to a lifetime of crime. For the benefit of the member for Lockyer, I know people who have been addicted to drugs. I know people who have gone to prison because of their addiction to drugs and when they came out, they were still addicted to drugs. It is about more than just locking them up. We need good, dedicated diversion strategies.

 **Mr WEIR** (Condamine—LNP) (6.22 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the cognate debate of the Police Powers and Responsibilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022 and the Police Powers and Responsibilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023. I will start with the 2022 bill. The objectives are to: strengthen child protection laws by increasing the periods for which an offender is required to report under the Child Protection (Offender Reporting and Offender Prohibition Order) Act 2004; improve the ability of the Queensland Police Service to investigate cybercrime and offences committed by reportable offenders by making certain offences against the Criminal Code Act 1899; enhance the capacity of the QPS to investigate organised crime by using civilian participants in controlled activities; and strengthen laws to deter hooning behaviour by creating additional offences under the Transport Operations (Road Use Management) Act 1995 and the Summary Offences Act 2005.

The bill proposes to amend schedule 2 of the PPRA to provide the QPS greater capacity to apply for a surveillance device warrant or a controlled operation authorisation in certain circumstances. A controlled operation allows QPS officers and others to engage in specific activities that would otherwise be unlawful. The bill proposes that schedule 2 include the following sections from the Criminal Code: distributing intimate images; fraud; obtaining or dealing with identification information; and computer hacking and misuse. These amendments will allow police to use controlled operations and surveillance devices as an investigation strategy to combat cybercrime offending and increase the likelihood of identifying an offender. This is an offence that is increasing and we all need to be vigilant for it. I am sure all of us would have received those emails and texts that the vulnerable in our society click on and respond to. That can cost the victim large sums of money.

The proposed amendments will also provide the QPS with the ability to apply for a surveillance device warrant or a controlled operation when intelligence reveals an offender is not complying with their reporting obligations. The bill proposes to authorise civilian enrolment in a controlled activity in limited circumstances to assist a police officer in a covert operation. Civilian involvement would be limited to ancillary conduct such as conspiring with, enabling or aiding a police officer to engage in controlled activities. These provisions afford protection from criminal liability to the extent that the individual was acting under that authorisation and in accordance with the instructions of the police officer.

To safeguard the civilians, the following will apply: civilian participation is to be authorised by a superintendent; participation is to be limited to ancillary conduct; and participation will only be authorised in circumstances where the authorising officer, having regard to the nature and extent of the authorised controlling activity, believes that authorising the ancillary conduct is appropriate to the



circumstances. At the committee's public hearing the Queensland Law Society advised that the proposed amendment provides an incentive for private citizens to engage in this kind of activity given that it provides protection from criminal liability at the outset. If this helps to secure more arrests then we support it.

The bill proposes to create new offences designed to improve the capacity of police to target hooning events and to mitigate the harm that results from them. These offences will include any of the following: dangerous operation of a vehicle committed on a road or in a public place; careless driving; racing and speed trials on roads; wilfully starting a motor vehicle or driving a motor vehicle in a way that makes unnecessary noise or smoke; or an evasion offence. To strengthen the current hooning offence provision, the bill amends the Summary Offences Act to create a new offence that prohibits a person from: willingly participating in a group activity involving a motor vehicle being used to commit a speed trial, racing, burnout or other hooning offence; organising, promoting or encouraging another person to participate in such an event; and filming, photographing or publishing a film or photograph of a motor vehicle being used in a hooning offence for the purpose of promoting or encouraging a group activity. This sort of activity is becoming all too common and is a danger to both the participants and the general public. I will now move on to the 2023 bill.

The police drug diversion program is legislated under section 379 of the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000. It allows police to offer an eligible person the opportunity to participate in a drug diversion assessment program as an alternative to prosecution. It is only available for minor drug offences. These amendments have been supported by the AMAQ. They have publicly called for an expansion of the police drug diversion program and have taken the position that substance use should be treated as a health issue to address the underlying causes of substance use. The QPS also stated that drug diversion provides an opportunity to connect the users of illicit drugs with information and, most importantly, treatment. This is not only important for the individual and their health but also an opportunity to mitigate the impacts of illicit drug use in the community.

The bill proposes to expand minor drug offences to include: an offence involving possession of not more than the prescribed quantity of a dangerous drug—the relevant quantity of illicit drugs will be prescribed under the Police Powers and Responsibilities Regulation 2012—and an offence involving possession of a thing used for administering, consuming or smoking of a dangerous drug. A 'minor drug offence' does not include the above listed offences if the possession is related to the production, supply or trafficking of a dangerous drug. Drug Free Australia raised concerns that the bill would undermine the deterrent effect of existing laws as potentially it will only be the fourth time a person is caught with drugs that the police are to issue the person with a court notice to appear on possession. This is the part of the legislation that I do have a problem with.

Diversion programs I support, but three free strikes is an admission that the government is losing the fight on drugs. The list of drugs and the quantities allowed are deeply concerning. We are talking about hard drugs such as methamphetamine and Fentanyl. These are drugs that destroy lives; they destroy families. They are a blight on our society. To say that you can have three free strikes before you are given a criminal conviction is something that worries me greatly. We should never give up the fight on drugs, and this is a weakening of our stance on drugs. I have a serious problem with this part of the bill.

Clause 4 of the bill proposes to increase the maximum penalty from 25 years imprisonment to life imprisonment for the unlawful trafficking of dangerous drugs, and I support that. That penalty needs to be increased because that is where it starts. Bear in mind in terms of the people who are receiving three free strikes: the longer you are addicted, the higher the chance that you will move into a life of crime and trafficking that substance. That is my big issue with the three strikes. There should be a focus on rehabilitation. I heard the member for Lockyer speak earlier about education. This can never start too early, and all our efforts should be thrown into it.

Evasion of police officers is another part of this bill. That is increasingly occurring. Unfortunately, our young criminals are increasingly thumbing their noses at law officers, so that measure is to be supported. Most of this bill is fine but the three strikes, I believe, is a step too far and it will do permanent damage instead of good.



**Mr MADDEN** (Ipswich West—ALP) (6.31 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Police Powers and Responsibilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022 and the Police Powers and Responsibilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023. My contribution will focus on the Police Powers and Responsibilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023. The objective of the bill is to

promote the efficiency of the Queensland Police Service, the Parole Board and the Queensland Fire and Emergency Services through a range of amendments that will deliver operational and administrative improvements.

In relation to the Queensland Police Service, amendments in the bill will enhance the police drug diversion program through introducing drug diversion warnings, allowing an eligible person an opportunity to participate in a subsequent drug diversion assessment program, and expand minor drug offences to include the possession of prescribed quantities of any type of dangerous drugs and certain pharmaceuticals. Statistics clearly show that police drug diversion programs result in the majority of those individuals never again having contact with the police. The Police Service itself estimates that more than 17,000 minor drug offenders will be eligible for the new police drug diversion program in year 1 of its implementation. That is 17,000 opportunities to prevent somebody from developing a substance abuse disorder. The enormity of these opportunities will undoubtedly be life-changing for many Queensland families. Equally important are the experiences of our frontline workers who deal daily with the consequences of drug use and the impact it has on both individuals and the community.

It is the intention of the government with this bill that the drug diversion program will be available only to people who are in possession of dangerous drugs for their personal use and in circumstances where the possession does not have a nexus with other criminal offences. For that reason, the bill places limits on the operation of its framework. Currently in Queensland, drug diversion is available only with respect to the possession of small amounts of cannabis and things used in the smoking of cannabis. Prosecution remains the only option available to police in dealing with offences relating to the possession of small quantities of any other dangerous drug, the possession of anything used in the administration of such drugs, or the misuse of pharmaceuticals. This bill will expand the existing drug diversion program to make it available in respect of minor drugs.


The bill provides that drug diversion will not be offered unless the police officer reasonably believes that the drugs possessed are for the person's personal use. Subordinate legislation will set limits on the quantity of drugs to which the diversion framework applies. Further, people who have previously been sentenced to imprisonment for serious drug crimes will not be eligible, even if they are in possession of drugs for their personal use. Importantly, where the offence is committed in connection with another indictable offence, diversion will also not be available.

Another important aspect of this bill is that it will introduce a circumstance of aggravation for an offence of evading police under section 754 of the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000. Evade police offences are an issue of significant concern to the community. These offences are generally committed in concert with a range of other traffic offences such as speeding, dangerous driving or driving without due care to other road users. The consequences of committing these offences can be dire, as is evident from recent cases which resulted in fatalities. Although evade police offences already carry a significant penalty and policing strategies including the impoundment or forfeiture of motor vehicles used to commit these offences apply, these offences continue to occur, warranting a stricter policing response. Of particular concern are recidivist offenders who, through their actions, demonstrate a repeated failure to comply with traffic laws, a continued disregard for authority and an intention to persistently engage in offending behaviour.

Amendments to the Corrective Services Act, as provided for in the bill, will strengthen the no-body no-parole framework to incentivise earlier prisoner cooperation to locate a homicide victim's remains. The bill will introduce a new discretion for the board to consider a prisoner's cooperation in locating a homicide victim's remains at any time after sentencing, instead of requiring the board to wait until the prisoner applies for parole. As well, the bill will provide that where the board has determined that a no-body no-parole prisoner has not cooperated satisfactorily—a no-cooperation declaration—the prisoner is restricted from applying for parole where there is no new cooperation.

The bill will also provide the Parole Board Queensland with flexibility to manage its workload and the risks different prisoners pose to community safety. Amendments proposed to the Corrective Services Act include introducing a new discretion to the president of the board to declare that a life-sentence prisoner who has committed multiple murders or murdered a child—a restricted prisoner—must not be considered for parole for up to 10 years. They also provide that a restricted prisoner subject to a restricted prisoner declaration must meet a higher threshold for exceptional circumstance parole release. Where a declaration is not in force, it creates a presumption against parole which will place an onus on a restricted prisoner to demonstrate that they do not pose an unacceptable risk to the community.

The bill will make minor amendments to the legislation administered by the Queensland Fire and Emergency Services. It will confirm that any request or application made under section 64, 'Prohibition by commissioner against lighting of fires', and section 65, 'Granting of permits', of the Fire and Emergency Services Act 1990 must contain the information prescribed by the regulation and, in the case of a request under section 64, be made in the way prescribed by the regulation. The legislation will introduce a new restriction on section 150BA, 'Assault of persons performing functions or exercising powers', of the Fire and Emergency Services Act 1990 and make consequential amendments to the offence outlined in section 150C, 'Obstruction of persons performing functions', under the Fire and Emergency Services Act. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr KRAUSE** (Scenic Rim—LNP) (6.39 pm): In speaking to the Police Powers and Responsibilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023, I want to talk mainly about the police drug diversion program. First I would note that this bill gives a big green light to use drugs—drugs that are bad for people, bad for families and bad for the community—and for this the government should be condemned. Why? There is no risk to users—virtually none at all—of being caught up in the legal system. There is virtually no risk of going to court or being fined or suffering any of the consequences that come from that criminal justice system—no risk to your job; no risk to your reputation—but this does not mean that the impact of drug use that the government is going soft on in this bill is any less at all. When we consider that many people who already use these substances that the government is going soft on in this bill—and I reckon that that is a huge proportion of users of all types—never come into contact with the police as it is now, this move is literally lifting the last element of deterrence for people to start using.

Three times people will need to be caught prior to police action—three times—and we know that these substances are harmful. Almost every witness to the committee which I was a part of that reviewed this bill acknowledged the detrimental health effects to individuals, families and community from all of these substances. Ice use can result in addiction after one use. Heroin, cocaine, speed, ketamine and a whole range of other drugs are hugely harmful to people's health and addictive and lead to crime impacts on our community that we see evidence of every day. As I said, most witnesses to the inquiry acknowledged the use of these substances is harmful to individuals and should not be used. To this point our criminal law, which is the ultimate statement in our community set by this parliament of what should or should not be done, has complemented these health and wellbeing positions.

**Mrs McMahon:** How's that worked out?

**Mr KRAUSE:** How can we say to our kids, 'Just say no to drugs,' when our law does not say that anymore? The law does not say that anymore. It says, 'You can use it three times before there'll be any consequences for your actions.' What does that say about what we are saying about the impacts of drug use? It is watering down that position. Is it harmful or not? All of the experts in our committee process said that it was harmful, yet we are giving people three goes before there is any consequence.

I have no issue with—and in fact think there should be more work done on—diversion programs, education programs and health programs that discourage drug use and also help those in the grip of addiction to get off drugs. Before we get to that point, we need to ask ourselves as a community: what is acceptable? What is acceptable? Using heroin, cocaine, speed, ice and ketamine should not be considered a norm in our society. It should not be considered a norm in our society. I know that the government will claim that this bill does not make it a norm, but the practical reality is that in some parts of society it already is and this law will entrench that and spread that norm even further.

What is the government getting at here? First, there is a political deal that came about as a result of the government adopting the breach-of-breach stance that the LNP has been advocating for for years. Not long after it did that, we see this bill in the House. This was a deal between the Left and the Right: 'If you do that, we want this.' That is what this is all about.

**Mr Mickelberg:** Quid pro quo.

**Mr KRAUSE:** Absolutely: quid pro quo. The second thing to know about this is that this is the first step towards decriminalisation. This government has set us on a path to legalising the use of all of these harmful drugs altogether—heroin, cocaine, ice, speed, ketamine and others.

**Mr Harper:** It's ketamine!

**Mr KRAUSE:** Ketamine? Okay. You know about it, and I understand. It is interesting to note that the Queensland Mental Health Commissioner prefers this approach—the decriminalisation of all drugs—despite the huge impacts that drug use can have on the mental health of users, their families

and their communities. I also want to take issue with the claim that this bill sees drug use treated more like a health issue than a criminal issue. Why were there no health officials briefing the committee, of which I was a part, about the health impacts of this? It was the police we spoke to. Beyond acknowledging the harmful impact of drugs in a general sense, the police representatives could not offer any advice about the health impacts of the drugs which have been green lighted by this bill. What is going on?


**A government member:** Did you listen to the AMA too?

**Mr KRAUSE:** I saw the submission from the AMA, but I wanted to hear from Queensland Health on what the government's view is about the health impacts of this bill and about what it is doing. There was a submission from the Psychedelic Society of Australia and I noted that the submission from the Psychedelic Society of Australia supported the bill. I asked its witnesses if they could outline the health impacts of using these drugs and the Psychedelic Society of Australia was very obliging. In fact, it outlined quite a number of health impacts of using those types of drugs and I would submit that many of them were quite harmful. We did not hear from the government; we heard from some witnesses.

The bottom line is that all of this is going soft on drugs that are very harmful to our society and the government is putting its hands up and saying, 'We can't do any better. We are giving you three chances before we're going to take any action whatsoever. We're probably not going to come into contact with you anyway, so there's no consequence to using these substances.' I note the comments from the member for Burdekin about the threshold for a gram of ice. That is 10 uses, as he pointed out. That puts anyone, if they have that in their possession and use it, on the pathway to addiction and the horrific life of addiction to that substance and the impacts on the community that that has—the ripple effects on the broader community, but let us also remember the families of those people who are addicts—and we are stripping away any consequence and any deterrence if this bill is passed.

The reality is that this bill is all about lowering the bar of what is expected in our society, and I guess we should not be surprised that that is coming from the Labor government. Some spoke of people from marginalised or disadvantaged communities being caught up in the justice system with no support, and I acknowledge that that has huge impacts on the people who are impacted by that. However, the answer is not to lower the bar altogether; the answer is to support those people through those processes with better Legal Aid and other measures. It is not to lower the bar overall because that will just lead to a greater proliferation of a huge problem that we already have.

In closing, I want to talk briefly about proposed new section 150BA in relation to amendments to the QFES act—that is, introducing the assault of persons performing functions or exercising powers in the QFES act, and I welcome that amendment. It is an unfortunate thing that we have seen examples of this towards people who are carrying out or exercising powers under that act. I know that there was an example nearby to the Scenic Rim electorate in Lower Beechmont in recent years where a volunteer was assaulted which resulted in some criminal action, but we should absolutely support these amendments to support our rural fire volunteers and anyone else covered by this amendment. Our rural fire volunteers do a great job looking after the fire safety of so much of Queensland. In the Scenic Rim electorate in particular in 2019 they had an awful lot of work to do and we hope we do not have a fire season like that any time soon—and we never know when that is going to come about—but they should definitely be protected with this legislation to prevent assaults on them.

 **Mr HARPER** (Thuringowa—ALP) (6.50 pm): I rise to speak on the Police Powers and Responsibilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022 and the Police Powers and Responsibilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023. I will touch on a couple of distinct elements of the bills, mainly the monitoring of child sex offenders, hooning and drug diversion. First and foremost I recognise and thank the committees for their work and recommendations and the Minister for Police for ensuring that we right the wrongs of the past LNP government when it comes to the serious issue of monitoring of child sex offenders.

Once again we are here in this place to right the wrongs of the past. We are here to support community safety by reversing the decisions of the LNP. We are here to target child sex offenders. We are here to target those offenders that the LNP let go free. When in government one of the wrong-headed, soft-in-the-head decisions of the LNP was to dramatically reduce the monitoring of child sex offenders. Inexplicably, overnight, because of a deliberate decision of the LNP, more than 1,700 child sex offenders who had been monitored by police were no longer monitored, and that is a disgrace. Shame on those opposite. No wonder there is silence. There is nowhere for those opposite to hide. The

hypocrisy of those opposite is laid bare. They talk tough but go soft when it matters most. Never listen to what the LNP says, look at what they do. The LNP's interests are its own, not the interests of Queenslanders.

The laws we are debating today will reverse the shameful actions of the LNP. The government will double the length of time child sex offenders are to be monitored from five to 10 years, repeat child sex offenders will be monitored for 20 years and police will be given a new ability to get surveillance device warrants to monitor convicted offenders. With these new laws Queensland will have the toughest legislative framework in the nation when it comes to the monitoring of child sex offenders. Let us be clear about this: this rights a very significant wrong from the former Newman LNP government which, when it was in government, reduced the monitoring periods for those offenders. This is important legislation. It allows our dedicated law enforcement agencies to keep convicted child sex offenders under their watchful and ever-present eye for far longer than they previously could. This week we will rewrite the record and further crack down on child sex offenders. It is just another example of the LNP's complete disinterest in community safety and its lack of commitment to resourcing police properly. The Palaszczuk government is fixing that with tough new laws and backing our police 100 per cent.

Turning now to the proposed new hooning offences and alternative strategies to address hooning behaviour, this is an area I am deeply interested in. Members will know I was a huge advocate for Drivelt in Townsville, securing \$10 million for the driver education and motorsport precinct in Townsville.

**Mr Bailey:** Hear, hear!

**Mr HARPER:** Thank you, Minister Bailey. For me, getting behind this project was all about reducing road trauma by providing a safe environment to race.

**Mr Dametto:** There is no road into it though.


**Mr HARPER:** I will take the interjection. I will not actually, I will not bother, because my aim is to reduce road trauma. I have seen far too much of it in North Queensland. Over the last 20 years Thuringowa saw the dragway and speedway closed to increase the development of Thuringowa. The reason I support Drivelt is because it provides an alternative site for young people and car enthusiasts to race, drift and drag their cars in a safe environment. It was supported proudly by our government. Thank you, Minister Bailey and the Premier of Queensland.

We all know dangerous hooning on public streets can result in absolute tragedy with people losing their lives. It is a dangerous practice that must stop. Hooning encompasses a range of dangerous driving behaviours such as speed trials, races and burnouts, evading police and wilfully driving a vehicle to make unnecessary noise or smoke. The QPS reports hooning events pose significant enforcement challenges. Despite strong measures legislated by Queensland governments, including vehicle impoundment and confiscation, hooning is a persistent problem in many areas, including Townsville. We must send a strong message, and this bill brings in increased penalties.

Everyone in this place knows my background. We must acknowledge that the cost of road trauma in Queensland is significant and the emotional and psychological costs are immeasurable. The Queensland Road Safety Strategy estimates that the economic cost of road trauma in 2020 was \$6 billion and accounted for almost 15 per cent of hospital admissions. Although Queensland has some of the toughest measures in Australia to regulate antisocial driving behaviour, hooning remains a persistent problem requiring innovative methods to address it. That is why I support that part of the bill.

In relation to drug diversion, Queensland police have been diverting people for cannabis possession for over 20 years. The program has been successful. Since 2001 over 158,000 people were diverted from the criminal justice system to a health intervention through the current police drug diversion program. The most recent QPS internal analysis of drug crime recidivism amongst drug diversion recipients shows that 72 per cent of those who completed drug diversion did not reoffend. For the member for Scenic Rim to just get up and talk it down shows the paranoia of the LNP. This proves that what we are doing is right. That is a huge mark for the four-year evaluation period. Drug diversion provides an opportunity to connect the users of illicit drugs with information and treatment. This is not only important for the individual and their health, it is also an opportunity to mitigate the impacts of illicit drug use in the broader community. There are operational benefits to diversion. Diversions save resources and time for police and, importantly, the courts. As a result, police resources can be directed to areas where they have greater impact on the safety of communities.

The amendments in this bill do not decriminalise drug possession in Queensland. I will say it again for the LNP who want to go down that path: the amendments in this bill do not decriminalise drug possession in the state of Queensland. Drug possession will still be an offence and police will still have the same powers they always had. The only thing that changes is the way a person in possession of drugs is dealt with. The bill is aimed at dealing with people who possess small quantities of drugs for their personal use. These are all sensible elements of the bill that I support 100 per cent and I think the broader community of Thuringowa, my constituents, would also get behind. I know they would because they have got behind things like Drivelt when I talked about hooning and reducing the rates of road trauma in North Queensland. The drug diversion amendments are common sense and practical. They make real change. I commend the bills to the House.

 **Mr DAMETTO** (Hinchinbrook—KAP) (6.59 pm): I rise to give a short contribution to the Police Powers and Responsibilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022 and the Police Powers and Responsibilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023 that are before the House and being debated in cognate. I want to first talk to the hooning part of the legislation. I have become very much a motorsport fan over the years. I feel I am a strong supporter of the motorsport industry. I am also a part of the motorsport community in Townsville. I own a number of vehicles and conduct myself in a proper way, but I interface with some of these people.


On a daily basis people spend good money and time working on their vehicles. To hear a lot of those people labelled as hoons is worrying. I ask the House: when was the last time in Townsville that a hoon spun the wheels a little bit at a set of traffic lights and then killed a pedestrian as they drove down the road? I would say very little could be said by either side of the House because it has not happened.

The real problem on our streets is not the people who are labelled as hoons. The real problem happens when 10-year-old kids drive stolen cars until the car runs out of fuel or they go to sleep for the night and then are allowed to go scot-free. That is the real problem on the streets right now. A problem that we have with this state Labor government is that, instead of going after the real danger on the road, they go after people who can pay fines. They go after people who have spent \$50,000, \$60,000 or \$100,000 on their cars because those people can afford to pay fines. They seem to be the low-lying fruit.

Debate, on motion of Mr Dametto, adjourned.

## ADJOURNMENT

### Glass House Electorate, Small Business Awards; Mount Mee Road; Fleiter, Mr LH

 **Mr POWELL** (Glass House—LNP) (7.00 pm): It is Glassies time. For this year's Glass House Small Business Awards we have been inundated with a record 188 small business and employee nominations from across the regions of Montville, Maleny, Glasshouse Country and Moreton Bay. As the towns and villages of the Glass House electorate are built on the back of small and family businesses, I am encouraging all residents to cast their vote before 1st May at my website, [www.andrewpowell.com.au](http://www.andrewpowell.com.au). I look forward to sharing with the House just who takes out the coveted gold, silver and bronze Glassies following our gala on 16 May.

The RACQ has confirmed what D'Aguilar Range locals have been saying for years, that is, Mount Mee Road is unsafe. In fact, it was voted the fourth worst road in the state. The worst stretch is clearly between Ocean View and Dayboro where there are too many accidents. That stretch desperately needs upgrading. With the community growing, the road is no longer suitable for the daily traffic it receives.


Comments about the road received by RACQ members included: 'Refilled potholes don't last longer than a week', 'Shoulder damage is known to wreck tyres', 'It isn't fit for the amount of cyclist and motorbike traffic it's receiving', 'Corrugated bitumen affects steering and traction', 'Too many blind spots' and 'Lack of overtaking spots'. It is disappointing that petitions to the main roads minister to fix the road have fallen on deaf ears. What will it take to get him to listen? Hopefully we do not have to wait for Mount Mee Road to top the list of 'unroadworthy roads' before action is taken. I certainly do not want it to take a death to see improvements made.

This evening I conclude on a sad note as I say farewell to a real bastion of the Conondale community, Mr Loyd Henry Fleiter. Born on 20th January 1938, Loyd was a true man of the land. He spent his entire life living and working on Valmore, the Fleiter/Fritz family farm in Conondale that was

part of the original Conondale Station. Recently his brother Ian remarked that you would have to look far and wide to find another two brothers who worked side by side every day of their lives. There was a special brotherly bond.

Lloyd married his classmate, Mary Grundon, and together they raised their four children, Rex, Judy, John and Lois. He had a great love of working with wood and playing cricket. He was an active member of his community. Following in his father's footsteps, he served as president of the Conondale Hall Committee for many decades. Today his daughter Lois continues that family tradition, serving as the hall secretary. Lloyd also served on the board of the Maleny Cooperative Dairy Association and the Caboolture Dairy Cooperative Association. Apparently, in those roles his fact-finding trips into northern New South Wales were the only time he ever left Queensland. His children have fond memories of their dad coming home from Caboolture board meetings with a special treat: a Mars Bar and a carton of flavoured milk, such were the simple pleasures of life growing up on the farm. Vale, Lloyd Henry Fleiter—a man of the land, now returned to the land; loved by so many and missed by all.

### **Domestic and Family Violence, Red Benches**

 **Mr KING** (Kurwongbah—ALP) (7.03 pm): This evening I rise to commend the partnership between the Caboolture Sports Club, the Moreton Bay Regional Council, the Queensland Police Service and the Red Rose Foundation that has delivered another three red benches to our local community. It was an honour to be included in the recent launch alongside my parliamentary colleagues the police minister and local member of parliament, Mark Ryan, and our neighbour the member for Bancroft.


For many of our constituents the Caboolture sporto, which is the latest location of a red bench and our host for the launch, is the place to go for lunch or dinner and drinks, or a flutter on the pokies for those who are so inclined. Red benches remind us that domestic and family violence happens in our communities, with victims and perpetrators coming from all walks of life. We know that alcohol consumption can be a trigger or factor in some cases so the sporto is the perfect place to put a visible prompt for conversations about domestic and family violence that may otherwise not be had. Those conversations provide opportunities to call out those behaviours if and when we see them.

Across the Moreton Bay region there are now 25 red benches and three of them are in my electorate: one at the Burpengary Police Station, one at the grounds of the Moreton Bay Lions AFL Club and another right behind my office in the Narangba Valley Town Square Park. At the launch we heard that there are plans to install another six across the region, including at the Caboolture Sports Football Club in Burpengary, taking the total to over 30.

I want to make mention of the devastating impact that domestic and family violence has on children. A point that may have been a bit lost in the recent discussion that we had here around youth crime is this: children are not born bad. Regardless of your position on nature versus nurture, I think all of us in this place can agree that kids are not born bad. They are shaped, or sadly in some cases not shaped, in large part by their home and family environments. Children growing up in violent homes are already behind the eight ball and that is not okay. If a red bench can help change the outcome for even one family or one child then it is worth the effort and worth the investment. As the motto states, together let's take a seat to take a stand.

I conclude by saying a special thanks to the officer in charge at Burpengary Police Station, Senior Sergeant Michelle Dodds. Senior Sergeant Dodds has been driving the red bench initiative in our community for a couple of years now. Recently she organised a renovation within the Burpengary station to create a vulnerable person's safe room. That room provides an informal environment with a fresh coat of paint, colourful accents, comfortable couch seating and games and toys for children. It makes the incredibly difficult decision for a victim to report a crime, such as family violence, that little bit easier. Senior Sergeant Dodds's enthusiasm and commitment to the prevention of domestic and family violence is greatly admired and appreciated in our community. I want to thank her for her passion and her dedication to the force. I cannot finish without giving a shout-out to our local hardware owner, Jason Miller, from Millers hardware, who also donated a lot to that room.

### **Toowoomba, Youth Crime**

 **Mr WATTS** (Toowoomba North—LNP) (7.06 pm): Unfortunately, today I rise to again talk about youth crime in my community. As people know, we now have breach of bail, for which the LNP had been fighting for some time. However, it is only the first plank of what is required. I suggest that the government needs to look at unshackling the judiciary and removing detention as a last resort. I am

more than happy to trust the judiciary to make a good sensible decision in the interests of the safety of my community. They do not need the guidance of this House. If it is inappropriate to incarcerate then they will not incarcerate. However, they should not be told that they cannot, particularly with recidivist offenders who are causing much distress in my community.

Recently in Eastville, Cafe 63 was broken into. The video footage shows someone with an axe smashing the till. They smashed the safe. They caused a load of damage that made it very difficult for the business owner to operate the next morning. Obviously that has impacts on employees and it has impacts on customers. There are so many impacts. Unfortunately, that business is not alone. This is not uncommon. In the week before this sitting week, the front door of Aromas Cafe was smashed, causing thousands of dollars worth of damage. They ransacked the place, causing a great deal of distress to the people who work there. Customers are shocked that this is the community we now live in.

Probably the worst incident occurred at the Gowrie One Stop Convenience Centre. The owner saw somebody driving off in a stolen car. He saw what was going on so he literally stood in front of the car, to try to stop them driving off. The person who was in possession of that stolen vehicle drove straight into him and then drove down the road with him claspings desperately to the bonnet so that he did not get killed during the incident. That is what is going on in my community and the solution is very simple: it is boots on the ground.

I have been trying to find out from the police exactly how many police we have. This police minister will not give a straight answer. Recently I was told that it was too difficult and too much work to work out how many police were available to be rostered during the month of January. When I run my business, my payroll tells me how many people worked for me in that month, so I do not see why it is so complicated. The people of Toowoomba deserve to know that they are protected by the thin blue line with boots on the ground.

### Mansfield Electorate



**Ms McMILLAN** (Mansfield—ALP) (7.09 pm): Last week it was exciting to see the progress on our new \$37.5 million Eight Mile Plains Satellite Hospital with my colleague the member for Toohey, Peter Russo MP.

**Mr Russo:** Hear, hear!

**Ms McMILLAN:** And what a great member he is. The hospital is taking shape. The concrete slabs have been laid, the internal beams are in place and the roof is going on this week. The Eight Mile Plains Satellite Hospital will possess a minor injury and illness clinic to see patients with urgent and non-life-threatening conditions, alleviate pressure on local hospitals and emergency departments and focus on consumer experiences, ensuring that many patients will receive their treatment much closer to their homes, particularly those living at the southern end of the Mansfield electorate. The satellite hospital is located near transport links and major roads and offers free parking. The hospital is fantastic for our community. It will offer care closer to home and will create over 100 local jobs during construction. This satellite hospital is one of seven being built across South-East Queensland thanks to the Palaszczuk government's ongoing commitment to build world-class health infrastructure for all Queenslanders.

It was wonderful to meet this year's YMCA youth member of parliament and Mount Gravatt East resident, Grace. We spoke about issues of concern to her including youth mental health, vaping amongst our young people and the causes of youth crime. It is wonderful to see our young people understand the complex nature of youth crime and understand the complex factors that contribute to youth crime. I am very proud of Grace and I am excited to work with her this year in our respective leadership roles.


It was lovely to attend Easter mass at St Bernard's church with fellow parishioners. Our community is very blessed and grateful to have a great local parish priest, Father Pat Maloney, a friend to many in this House. Our community would also like to warmly welcome the Reverend Michael Calder, the new Anglican priest in charge of the parish of Wishart at St John's. I am sure that many local residents from diverse faiths have had a wonderful Easter with family and friends. I also look forward to acknowledging our local Muslim community as they celebrate the end of Ramadan this Saturday.

The Mount Gravatt Men's Shed hosted a successful open day for the community and today celebrated the 10th anniversary of the official opening of the shed. Sadly, I could not be there. I congratulate Ned Talay and Wishart local Keaton Luck, who run the fantastic Sharks Volleyball Club based at Mansfield State High School. I popped into their four-day holiday camp over the Easter break,



and it was wonderful to see 330 young people having a great time—being engaged, learning new skills and making friends. Well done to Ned and Keaton. They are great young members of our community who run this regular school holiday camp for our Mansfield electorate young people. Congratulations to these wonderful young men.

### Northern Gold Coast, Hospital and Health Precinct

 **Mr CRANDON** (Coomera—LNP) (7.13 pm): The *Hamlet* quote ‘something is rotten in the state of Denmark’, suggesting something bad happening in that country, has morphed into a quote used to describe corruption or a situation in which something is very wrong, often relating to government. In our case here in Queensland, a better description is a government in chaos—a government lurching from crisis to crisis. Let me give members an example. The new northern Gold Coast hospital and health precinct at Coomera is fast becoming another crisis for this government. Why would I say that?


In December last year I was provided with a briefing on the precinct. I was also told that a further briefing, in March this year, was available to me. On 9 February my office sent an email request to a policy adviser requesting that briefing—no response. In mid March my office sent a further email to the policy adviser requesting the same thing about the hospital—no response. On that same day, my office rang the policy adviser requesting the briefing. The policy adviser confirmed that she had received the request email, advised that she was finishing her role that Friday and confirmed that she would pass it on to her supervisor. On 20 March the assistant policy adviser who took over confirmed that she had received it and had also flagged it with the supervisor. On 22 March my office left a voice message for the assistant policy adviser—no response. On 24 March I rang and left a message asking for the minister’s chief of staff to return my call. At 1.30 the same day, my office rang asking for the same thing. At 2.30 the same day, I received an email from the assistant policy adviser advising that the briefing would not be happening during the week of 28 March. She said—

Our office will be in touch to arrange a briefing ... week of the 18th of April ...

You guessed it—no contact, no meeting. At 11 am on the day before yesterday my office rang again, looking for a briefing. At 11.05, the same thing. At 11.40 the same day we rang the assistant policy adviser and, again, we heard nothing back. At 2.24 yesterday my office rang again, and again at 2.36, at three o’clock and at 3.30. Finally, at 3.40 we did receive a call back from the assistant policy adviser, but there is still no response as to the time. As at today, 19 April, we still have no briefing on the hospital.

This government is in a state of absolute crisis and chaos. As I understand it, the deputy director-general has left after a few months in the role and it is basically rudderless. There is nothing happening as far as the site is concerned. There is a fence around it. Nothing has been happening for the past 2½ years. Once again, the northern Gold Coast community is going to be left wanting.

### Cairns Regional Trade Distribution Centre


 **Mr HEALY** (Cairns—ALP) (7.16 pm): On Wednesday, 8 March I had the pleasure of accompanying the Treasurer, Cameron Dick, when he officially opened the Cairns Regional Trade Distribution Centre at its site at Cairns Airport. Whether it is avocados from the Atherton Tablelands, lobsters from the Torres Strait or any other of our world-class products, the trade distribution centre will get far more Far North product up into the markets of South-East Asia and Asia. It will contribute to more international flights into Cairns, because every box of produce that flies out of Cairns helps create an economically viable environment for international flights. As we do not have the critical mass and the population in Cairns, being able to fill the bottom of the plane provides another stream of revenue for these airlines, which is fantastic. More cargo under the floor should create opportunities for more tourists in the seats above. This will help sustain farming and fishing jobs throughout the Far North and create more export opportunities for the many great companies around Cairns that export.

The trade distribution centre was an election commitment of the Palaszczuk Labor government in 2017, intended to boost fresh produce export capacity. It has generated jobs and it has improved productivity throughout not just the agriculture but also the aquaculture supply chain. The export industry is rebuilding itself after the ravages of COVID. It is also worth noting that the international freight assistance mechanism of the federal government has assisted a lot of those businesses. They were subsidising flights that were coming into various parts of Queensland. We are certainly seeing that Cairns is now well positioned to respond quickly to future growth in international demand. We know that the No. 1 priority of governments in the Asia-Pacific is food security. We have it in spades in the Tropical North.

During construction, the project supported over 200 workers in a range of local trades across more than 40 companies, with further operational jobs and business opportunities to be generated now that the facility is up and running. The new facility is approximately 2,400 square metres in gross floor area comprising over 200 square metres of state-of-the-art refrigerated storage, approximately 1,100 square metres of controlled climate transit areas and additional undercover loading areas.

It must be noted that the aviation industry is recovering. At Alice Springs at the moment, there are still over 100 aircraft sitting on the ground. As we rebuild, we are ensuring that key parts of our economy, particularly in Cairns, have the facilities to ensure we continue to grow and continue to contribute to our economy not just from an agriculture and aquaculture perspective but also from a tourism perspective. It is really good work and it shows the great commitment of the government. I am pleased to be talking about it.

### Ingham Hospital, CT Scanner

 **Mr DAMETTO** (Hinchinbrook—KAP) (7.19 pm): Tonight I rise to plead with the health minister to work towards health equality for regional areas like the Hinchinbrook electorate. The Ingham Hospital is one of only two regional hospitals in North Queensland without a CT scanner. The Ingham Hospital and the Ayr Hospital are without a publicly owned CT scanner. It is not only causing problems in diagnosing those people who have had a head injury or a stroke but also creating a situation for our medical staff who do not have the right equipment to do their jobs. If someone presents to the Ingham Hospital with stroke-like symptoms after hours then they are 121 kilometres away from a CT scanner at the Townsville Hospital. If someone were in Mareeba and this were to happen they are only 33 kilometres away from the closest CT scanner which is at the Atherton Hospital. That does not matter though because Mareeba has a CT scanner as well.

The reality right now is that there are two hospitals in North Queensland that have privately owned CT scanners. They both need a publicly owned CT scanner so that after hours we are not tying up our ambulances to go to Townsville. When someone presents with these problems or has a fall in hospital, the nursing staff and doctors should be able to wheel their patient down the hallway to get a CT scan. If people are anywhere else in North Queensland—Atherton, Innisfail or Mareeba—or in Central Queensland in Yeppoon or Emerald, they would have the opportunity to be wheeled down the hallway for a CT scan. Unfortunately, if the private operator is closed people have to go all the way to Townsville in an ambulance.


This presents a number of problems. Those who have suffered stroke-like systems need to have anticoagulant drugs as soon as possible. People might ask why. The longer the blockage stays in someone's brain the longer it takes for them to recover from their stroke. That could mean the difference between someone living with a complete disability for the rest of their life or being able to go back to work.

We recently met with the health minister's staff and Queensland Health staff in Brisbane. I came down with Tony Mooney, the chair of the Townsville Hospital and Health Service, and Peter Smith, the chair of CAN in Ingham. He has written to the health minister asking—

As you would be aware, in Ingham we are one of only two regional hospitals that do not have 24-hour access to a CT scan. Is this fair?

I echo his sentiment. Is this fair? What has the Ingham community done to not have a CT scanner provided? A good rhetorical question for the minister and her staff to ask themselves is: what have we done wrong or not done in Ingham that they do not have a CT scanner? That is why I will be asking for funding for one to be included in this year's state budget.

### Parliamentary Friends of First Nations Peoples; LGBTIQ+ Round Table

 **Hon. LM ENOCH** (Algeria—ALP) (Minister for Communities and Housing, Minister for Digital Economy and Minister for the Arts) (7.22 pm): The bipartisan Parliamentary Friends of First Nations Peoples, which I co-chair with the member for Noosa and the member for Southport, was established in 2021 to encourage respectful conversations related to the often uncomfortable and sometimes unknown truth about the shared history of our state. Last night, Parliamentary Friends of First Nations Peoples hosted an important panel discussion about the Voice to Parliament referendum. The incredibly informative panel discussion was moderated by Deanella Mack from EY and included Noel Pearson, Dean Parkin and Semara Jose who collectively shared their knowledge, experience and history of involvement in this important subject.

With close to 150 people in attendance, including around 50 members of parliament from right across the spectrum, this was an important conversation about what is a nation defining moment in our history. With a referendum proposing the recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in our country's Constitution via a Voice to Parliament expected later this year, last night's event was a chance to ask questions in a respectful environment and learn more about the intent of the proposed referendum.

Enshrining a Voice to Parliament in the Constitution will recognise the special place of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in this country and acknowledge their ancient connection to these lands as the longest continuous living cultures on the planet, but it will also recognise our collective Australian identity. It is a profound opportunity for all Australians to speak the truth of who we are as a nation and ask our Constitution to reflect that back to us.

The Premier, on behalf of the government, has reiterated support for the Voice and as a Quandamooka woman I support that position. I encourage all members to learn more about the decades long efforts to bring us to this point in history so as to engage in informed conversations with Queenslanders. More information can be found at [yes23.com.au](https://yes23.com.au).

Another significant event that has been held recently was the first meeting of the Queensland government's second LGBTIQ+ round table, which I was proud to convene. Reconvening the LGBTIQ+ round table is a key action in the Communities 2032 Strategy. The round table comprises 17 community members, representing diverse sexes, genders and sexualities, including people from First Nations and culturally diverse backgrounds. They are joined by six representatives from Queensland government agencies. The round table will help to inform government strategies, policy, programs and services. It will deepen the government's engagement with LGBTIQ+ Queenslanders, including in regional, rural and remote areas, and assist the government to understand the lived experiences of community members.

Since the decriminalisation of homosexual acts by the Goss government more than 30 years ago, it has been Labor governments that have delivered important reforms supporting LGBTIQ+ Queenslanders. For just over 20 years, Rainbow Labor has played a vital role as a conduit for many of the important reforms that have been brought about. I would like to congratulate Rainbow Labor members and activists on their important contribution over two decades and wish them all the best for the next 20 years.

### **Lockyer Electorate, Roads; Anzac Day Services**




**Mr McDONALD** (Lockyer—LNP) (7.25 pm): Locals and others using the Warrego Highway know that the intersection of Fairway Drive and the Warrego Highway is one of the most dangerous. Back in 2017 the LNP gave a commitment to our community that, if elected, we would deliver the upgrades to that intersection. Finally, a few years later, after many fights and petitions, we have been able to achieve that upgrade. I appreciate the work of TMR when it comes to Fairway Drive. We saw stage 1 completed a year ago. Stage 2 sees an additional right-turn lane into Fairway Drive separated so that those coming out of Fairway Drive have clear vision of the eastbound traffic. That is a great win for our Fairways community. That intersection upgrade has seen a great deal of improvement for the Regency Downs, Glenore Grove, Kensington Grove as well as Fairways Estate communities. I can tell members that everyone is very much appreciative of that.

While I am talking about road safety and road improvements, we have many roads in the Lockyer affected by floods. I ask people in our community to be patient. There is going to be a lot of roadworks happening now and over the next couple of years. The Lockyer and Somerset councils have until 30 June to complete all of the assessments necessary for QRA to take back to the federal government. Those assessments are being completed and we are finally starting to see some genuine works occur. The works will include some pavement improvements which means some betterment funding. There are some very significant projects such as upgrades to the Forest Hill Fernvale Road, Brightview Road, Gatton-Helidon Road and the Laidley Plainland Road—which is so much in need of improvement. I ask for people to be patient while the Lockyer and Somerset councils deliver those roadworks right across our region. We are going to see some real improvements in road safety.

I would also like to give a shout-out to our wonderful RSLs. Of course, next Tuesday is Anzac Day. In the Lockyer we have some wonderful ceremonies. I am only able to get to six this year. There will be commemorations at Withcott, Murphys Creek, Laidley, Helidon, Hatton Vale, Grantham and Winwill at Ma Ma Creek, Gatton, Forest Hill and Lowood. There will be dawn services and there will

also be main services later in the day. Please get out and support our wonderful returned service men and women and also those who are currently serving our nation. It is an important celebration for Australian society. It is something that makes Lockyer great, Queensland great and Australia great.

### Mount Lindesay Highway

 **Mr POWER** (Logan—ALP) (7.28 pm): I wanted to let the House and the community of Logan know that the consultation process on the really important Johanna Street to South Street four-laning project at Jimboomba is now complete. We are soon to be going to tender and heading into a construction phase. This is a fantastic project that will see four-laning through that section. It builds upon some of the other projects on the Mount Lindesay Highway.

From Jimboomba in the south to the north, important construction is going on right at this moment at the intersection of Illaweenah Street and the Mount Lindesay Highway. I note that the member for Algeester is here. She has been a real fighter for that project because it will allow traffic to get through that intersection so much faster and smoother. We also have the Rosia Road four-laning project, which was abandoned by the LNP. It took the new Minister for Transport and Main Roads, who is also in the chamber, to pick up that project and drive it through to get four-laning to Rosia Road. On top of that, just completed—and we were at the opening with the minister—was the four-laning section from Stoney Camp Road to Chambers Flat Road, which is the biggest and most significant section of four-laning.

There are so many great four-laning projects on the Mount Lindesay Highway. That is because we have a great advocate for those projects in the Minister for Transport and Main Roads. You would think that surely the LNP would have done some of those projects. Disappointingly, in the time they were in government, there were zero new four-laning projects or any projects between Brown Plains and Jimboomba introduced. What was worse is that, when the new minister took over the budget, there was nothing in the forward four years. We had a fighter in the minister who brought those projects into the forward four years and those projects are now being accelerated. We are going to see that new project at Jimboomba going ahead.

As a growing area, we cannot risk the fact that the LNP will make cuts to funding for the Mount Lindesay Highway.

**Mr Harper:** Pruning.

**Mr POWER:** Pruning—that is exactly right! All they see with those projects on the Mount Lindesay Highway is something ripe for pruning. No-one in the Logan community wants to see pruning of projects on the Mount Lindesay Highway. How do we know this? Last time, the LNP cut \$160 million in the 10-year forward estimates for the Mount Lindesay Highway. That was part of \$600 million that they cut across the state. We cannot let the LNP do that pruning. We need a minister who is committed to the Mount Lindesay Highway and other members, including the member for Jordan and the member for Algeester, who are absolutely committed to seeing continued investment in the Mount Lindesay Highway, and that is what I will continue to fight for.

The House adjourned at 7.31 pm.

### ATTENDANCE

Andrew, Bailey, Bates, Bennett, Berkman, Bleijie, Bolton, Boothman, Boyd, Brown, Bush, Butcher, Camm, Crandon, Crawford, Crisafulli, D'Ath, Dametto, de Brenni, Dick, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Frecklington, Furner, Gerber, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Hart, Head, Healy, Hinchliffe, Howard, Hunt, Janetzki, Katter, 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, Palaszczyk, Pease, Perrett, Powell, Power, Pugh, Purdie, Richards, Robinson, Rowan, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Scanlon, Simpson, Skelton, Smith, Stevens, Stewart, Sullivan, Tantari, Walker, Watts, Weir, Whiting