



RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

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FIRST SESSION OF THE FIFTY-SEVENTH PARLIAMENT

Tuesday, 9 May 2023

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TUESDAY, 9 MAY 2023

The Legislative Assembly met at 9.30 am.

ABSENCE OF SPEAKER

The Clerk informed the House of the absence of Mr Speaker for the commencement of the sitting.

Mr Acting Speaker (Mr 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.

I am sure we all join in congratulating the groups that gave us a wonderful welcome to Cairns and country today.

Honourable members: Hear, hear!

ASSENT TO BILLS



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

The Honourable C.W. Pitt MP

Speaker of the Legislative Assembly

Parliament House

George Street

BRISBANE QLD 4000

Dear Mr Speaker

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

Date of Assent: 2 May 2023

A bill for An Act to amend the City of Brisbane Act 2010, the Local Government Act 2009, the Local Government Electoral Act 2011, the Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation Act 2008 and the Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation Regulation 2009 for particular purposes

A bill for an Act to 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 for particular purposes

A bill for An Act to amend Child Protection (Offender Reporting and Offender Prohibition Order) Act 2004, the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000, the Police Service Administration Act 1990, the Summary Offences Act 2005, the Transport Operations (Road Use Management—Accreditation and Other Provisions) Regulation 2015, the Transport Operations (Road Use Management) Act 1995 and the Transport Operations (Road Use Management—Vehicle Registration) Regulation 2021 for particular purposes

A bill for an Act to amend the Drugs Misuse Act 1986, the Fire and Emergency Services Act 1990, the Penalties and Sentences Act 1992, the Police Powers and Responsibilities

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

Yours sincerely


Acting Governor

2 May 2023


Tabled paper: Letter, dated 2 May 2023, from the Acting Governor to the Speaker advising of assent to certain bills on 2 May 2023 [588].

ACTING SPEAKER'S STATEMENTS

Coronation of King Charles III and Queen Camilla

 **Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Honourable members, as we are aware, the King and Queen of Queensland and their other realms and territories were crowned on Saturday, 6 May 2023. Queensland was represented at the coronation ceremony by Her Excellency the Governor, who will be joining us in Far North Queensland later this week. On behalf of all members I extend the formal congratulations of the Legislative Assembly of Queensland to Their Majesties.


Regional Sitzings of Parliament, Cairns

 **Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Honourable members, welcome back to Far North Queensland. The parliament is meeting in Cairns as another demonstration to Queenslanders that we do not only govern from Brisbane. We are a big state and this parliament wants to connect with as many Queenslanders as we can. On behalf of all of us, thank you to those traditional owners of this region and to the wider community of Far North Queensland for allowing us to gather here. Thank you also, members, for gathering here and for paying your respects to our Far North Queensland community.

This morning we were welcomed to country by traditional owner groups of this region: the Gimuy Walubara Yidinji Elders Corporation, the Yirriganydji Gurubana Aboriginal Corporation, the Djabugay Aboriginal Corporation, the Zagraeb Island Dancers and a prayer on behalf of Torres Strait Islander people delivered by Reverend Patrick Van Den Broek Amber.


Honourable members, I wish to advise that during this week additional filming and photography permissions have been granted to members of the media and other organisations. Particularly there will be filming and photography aimed to catch historic moments from this parliament, including the creation of the documentary on the Path to Treaty.

Absence of Members

 **Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I have received advice from the member for Mansfield, Corrine McMillan, and the member for Burleigh, Michael Hart, that they will be absent from this week's sittings of the House. The members' notifications comply with standing order 263A.

REPORT

Auditor-General's Report

 **Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I have to report that I have received from the Auditor-General Report 12: 2022-23—*Growing ecotourism in Queensland*. I table the report for the information of members.

Tabled paper. Auditor-General Report 12: 2022-23—Growing ecotourism in Queensland [589].

PETITIONS

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

Chevron Island, Developments

Mr Langbroek, from 859 petitioners, requesting the House to reduce the building height of developments on Chevron Island to 33m (approximately 9 storeys) [590].

Beenleigh Railway Station and Ormeau Railway Station, Bus Services

Mr Crandon, from 362 petitioners, requesting the House to upgrade the 728 and 729 bus services between Beenleigh Railway Station and Ormeau Railway Station [592].

Ormeau Railway Station and Pimpama Shopping Precinct, Bus Services

Mr Crandon, from 276 petitioners, requesting the House to provide a regular daily bus service connecting people to the transport hub of Ormeau Train Station and the Pimpama shopping precinct [593].

Social Housing, Construction

Mr Crandon, from 833 petitioners, requesting the House to ensure the construction of new social housing to accommodate Queenslanders in need [594].

Northern Gold Coast, PCYC

Mr Crandon, from 465 petitioners, requesting the House to ensure the construction of a PCYC on the Northern Gold Coast [595].

M1, Exit 38

Mr Crandon, from 537 petitioners, requesting the House to ensure the upgrade and improvements to the operation of Exit 38 of the M1 [596].

M1, Exit 45

Mr Crandon, from 763 petitioners, requesting the House to undertake the completion of a full upgrade of Exit 45 [597].

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

Youth Crime

5,186 petitioners, requesting the House to undertake a number of initiatives to end youth crime in Queensland [591].

Rural and Remote Queensland, High School Students

899 petitioners, requesting the House to undertake consultation and devise a solution that enables Year 8-10 students living in rural and remote Queensland towns that have a state primary school to continue their formal education at the same facility [598].

South-East Queensland, Train and Bus Services

365 petitioners, requesting the House to ensure that Queensland Rail adjust automated and in person South East Queensland on-train announcements of stations to include bus services at which people can easily transfer to high frequency bus services or busways [599].

Petitions received.

MOTION

Citizen's Right of Reply



Hon. YM D'ATH (Redcliffe—ALP) (Leader of the House) (9.37 am), by leave, without notice: I move—

1. That this House notes report No. 213 of the Ethics Committee and the recommendation of the committee that a right of reply be incorporated into the *Record of Proceedings*; and
2. That the House adopt the committee's recommendation and incorporate the right of reply into the *Record of Proceedings*.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

RESPONSE BY DR ANDREW LAMING, TO STATEMENTS MADE BY THE DEPUTY PREMIER, MINISTER FOR STATE DEVELOPMENT, INFRASTRUCTURE, LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND PLANNING AND MINISTER ASSISTING THE PREMIER ON OLYMPIC AND PARALYMPIC GAMES INFRASTRUCTURE, HON DR STEVEN MILES, ON 23 FEBRUARY 2023

On 23 February 2023 in a statement made during Question Time, the Deputy Premier, Minister for State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning and Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympic and Paralympic Games Infrastructure referred to me by name.

The imputation made by the Deputy Premier in his statement about me has been the subject of defamation proceedings in the Federal Court of Australia which found in my favour.

The matter related to an incident on 27 March 2021, when the Nine Network broadcast a segment about me which the Court determined on 14 September 2022 to be defamatory. The Nine Network was required to withdraw, apologise and settle on confidential terms in relation to that matter.

ACTING SPEAKER'S STATEMENT

School Group Tours



Mr ACTING SPEAKER: I am sure honourable members will join me in welcoming those members of the public who have come to witness parliament today. I would particularly like to acknowledge all of the students. It is particularly pleasing to see young people with an interest in democracy and we hope many of you will be inspired to come back here and run the joint one day. Of course, all members will be on their best behaviour today.

TABLED PAPERS

PAPERS TABLED DURING THE RECESS (SO 31)

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

21 April 2023—

- [532](#) Overseas Travel Report: Report on official visit to India by the Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment (Hon. Dick), 16—22 March 2023
- [533](#) Economics and Governance Committee: Report No. 43, 57th Parliament—Subordinate legislation tabled between 30 November 2022 and 21 February 2023
- [534](#) Ethics Committee: Report No. 213, 57th Parliament, April 2023—Report on a Right of Reply No. 42
- [535](#) Community Support and Services Committee: Report No. 31, 57th Parliament—Subordinate legislation tabled between 29 November 2022 and 1 February 2023
- [536](#) Economics and Governance Committee: Report No. 44, 57th Parliament—Examination of Auditor-General reports
- [537](#) Queensland University of Technology—Annual Report 2022
- [538](#) Community Support and Services Committee: Report No. 30, 57th Parliament—Path to Treaty Bill 2023
- [539](#) Legal Affairs and Safety Committee: Report No. 44, 57th Parliament—Subordinate legislation tabled between 21 February 2023 and 13 March 2023

24 April 2023—

- [540](#) Queensland Law Reform Commission: Report No. 80—A decriminalised sex-work industry for Queensland, Report Volume 1, March 2023
- [541](#) Queensland Law Reform Commission: Report No. 80—A decriminalised sex-work industry for Queensland, Report Volume 2: Table of drafting instructions, March 2023
- [542](#) Queensland Law Reform Commission: Report No. 80—A decriminalised sex-work industry for Queensland, Report summary, March 2023
- [543](#) Queensland Law Reform Commission: Report No. 80—A decriminalised sex-work industry for Queensland, Report overview, March 2023
- [544](#) Queensland Law Reform Commission: Report No. 80—A decriminalised sex-work industry for Queensland, Our recommended framework diagram
- [545](#) Queensland Law Reform Commission: Report No. 80—A decriminalised sex-work industry for Queensland, Legal framework for a decriminalised sex-work industry based on safety, health and fairness diagram

26 April 2023—

- [546](#) State Development and Regional Industries Committee: Report No. 41, 57th Parliament—Subordinate legislation tabled between 30 November 2022 and 14 March 2023

27 April 2023—

- [547](#) Rules for media access to parliamentary precinct and the Legislative Assembly chamber for the regional sitting of Parliament in Cairns from 9—11 May 2023
- [548](#) Response from the Minister for Children and Youth Justice and Minister for Multicultural Affairs (Hon. Linard), to an ePetition (3837-22) sponsored by the member for Theodore, Mr Boothman, from 4,755 petitioners, requesting the House to ensure juveniles who commit crimes, as part of their punishment, participate in programmes or boot camps which address their antisocial behaviours
- [549](#) Response from the Minister for Transport and Main Roads (Hon. Bailey), to an ePetition (3867-23) sponsored by the member for Burdekin, Mr Last, from 369 petitioners, requesting the House to revise the upgrade of the Bruce Highway at Merinda project to incorporate flood immunity prior to the recommencement of work

28 April 2023—

- [550](#) Response from the Deputy Premier and Minister for State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning and Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympic and Paralympic Games Infrastructure (Hon. Dr Miles), to an ePetition (3864-23) sponsored by the Clerk under provisions of Standing Order 119(4), from 392 petitioners, requesting the House to urge the Southern Downs Regional Council to halt plans for the cementing of the natural river crossings through the Cambanoora (Condamine) Gorge and assist the community to instead create an economically and environmentally sustainable future for the gorge
- [551](#) Response from the Minister for Energy, Renewables and Hydrogen and Minister for Public Works and Procurement (Hon. de Brenni), to an ePetition (3817-22) sponsored by the Clerk under provisions of Standing Order 119(4), from 657 petitioners, requesting the House to ensure solar panels are used in all homes and businesses by 2040
- [552](#) Response from the Minister for Energy, Renewables and Hydrogen and Minister for Public Works and Procurement (Hon. de Brenni), to a paper petition (3883-23) presented by the member for Nanango, Mrs Frecklington, and an ePetition (3863-23) sponsored by the member for Nanango, Mrs Frecklington, from 148 and 668 petitioners respectively, requesting the House to ensure that the transmission infrastructure required for the proposed Borumba Hydro Project to the Tarong/Halys substation is built on existing state-owned land corridors and to minimise the impact on private landowners, the environment and on traditional owners
- [553](#) Community Support and Services Committee: Report No. 23, 57th Parliament—Towards a healthier, safer, more just and compassionate Queensland: decriminalising the offences affecting those most vulnerable, government response

- [554](#) Response from the Minister for Transport and Main Roads (Hon. Bailey), to an ePetition (3803-22) sponsored by the member for Surfers Paradise, Mr Langbroek, from 393 petitioners, requesting the House to reduce the speed limit from 60 to 40 km/hr along Waterways Drive, Seaworld Drive and Macarthur Parade at Main Beach and to install speed cameras to enforce the reduced speed limit

2 May 2023—

- [555](#) Queensland Music Festival—Financial report for the year ended 31 December 2022

3 May 2023—

- [556](#) Legal Affairs and Safety Committee: Report No. 47, 57th Parliament—Subordinate legislation tabled between 14 March 2023 and 28 March 2023
- [557](#) Community Support and Services Committee: Report No. 25, 57th Parliament—Child Protection (Offender Reporting and Offender Prohibition Order) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022, government response

5 May 2023—

- [558](#) Transport and Resources Committee: Report No. 34, 57th Parliament—Subordinate legislation tabled between 21 February 2023 and 27 March 2023
- [559](#) Education, Employment and Training Committee: Report No. 31, 57th Parliament—Corrective Services (Emerging Technologies and Security) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022, government response
- [560](#) Health and Environment Committee: Report No. 32, 57th Parliament—Tobacco and Other Smoking Products Amendment Bill 2023
- [561](#) Health and Environment Committee: Report No. 33, 57th Parliament—Subordinate legislation tabled between 30 November 2022 and 21 February 2023
- [562](#) Health and Environment Committee: Report No. 34, 57th Parliament—Subordinate legislation tabled between 22 February 2023 and 14 March 2023

8 May 2023—

- [563](#) Community Support and Services Committee: Report No. 31, 57th Parliament—Subordinate legislation tabled between 29 November 2022 and 1 February 2023: Erratum

TABLING OF DOCUMENTS (SO 32)

STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

The following statutory instruments were tabled by the Clerk—

Casino Control and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2022:

- [564](#) Proclamation commencing certain provisions, No. 29
- [565](#) Proclamation commencing certain provisions, No. 29, explanatory notes
- [566](#) Proclamation commencing certain provisions, No. 29, human rights certificate

Collections Act 1966:

- [567](#) Collections (Deemed Registration) Amendment Regulation 2023, No. 30
- [568](#) Collections (Deemed Registration) Amendment Regulation 2023, No. 30, explanatory notes
- [569](#) Collections (Deemed Registration) Amendment Regulation 2023, No. 30, human rights certificate

Public Trustee Act 1978:

- [570](#) Public Trustee (Interest Rate) Amendment Regulation (No. 4) 2023, No. 31
- [571](#) Public Trustee (Interest Rate) Amendment Regulation (No. 4) 2023, No. 31, explanatory notes
- [572](#) Public Trustee (Interest Rate) Amendment Regulation (No. 4) 2023, No. 31, human rights certificate

Land and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2023:

- [573](#) Proclamation commencing certain provisions, No. 32
- [574](#) Proclamation commencing certain provisions, No. 32, explanatory notes
- [575](#) Proclamation commencing certain provisions, No. 32, human rights certificate

Nature Conservation Act 1992, Stock Route Management Act 2002:

- [576](#) Stock Route Management Regulation 2023, No. 33
- [577](#) Stock Route Management Regulation 2023, No. 33, explanatory notes
- [578](#) Stock Route Management Regulation 2023, No. 33, human rights certificate

Legal Profession Act 2007:

- [579](#) Legal Profession (Society Rules) Amendment Notice 2023, No. 34
- [580](#) Legal Profession (Society Rules) Amendment Notice 2023, No. 34, explanatory notes
- [581](#) Legal Profession (Society Rules) Amendment Notice 2023, No. 34, human rights certificate

Rural and Regional Adjustment Act 1994:

- [582](#) Rural and Regional Adjustment (Boosting Accessible Tourism Experiences Grants Scheme) Amendment Regulation 2023, No. 35

- [583](#) Rural and Regional Adjustment (Boosting Accessible Tourism Experiences Grants Scheme) Amendment Regulation 2023, No. 35, explanatory notes
- [584](#) Rural and Regional Adjustment (Boosting Accessible Tourism Experiences Grants Scheme) Amendment Regulation 2023, No. 35, human rights certificate

REPORT BY THE CLERK

The following report was tabled by the Clerk—

- [585](#) 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—

Police Powers and Responsibilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022

Amendments made to Bill

Short title and consequential references to short title—

Omit—

'Police Powers and Responsibilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022'

Insert—

'Police Powers and Responsibilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 1) 2023'

Police Powers and Responsibilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023

Amendments made to Bill

Short title and consequential references to short title—

Omit—

'Police Powers and Responsibilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023'

Insert—

'Police Powers and Responsibilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 2) 2023'

MEMBER'S PAPERS

The following member's papers were tabled by the Clerk—

Member for Greenslopes (Mr Kelly)—

- [586](#) Overseas Travel Report: Report on visit to the United Kingdom by the Deputy Speaker of the Legislative Assembly (Mr Kelly) to attend the CPA UK Westminster Conference on Effective Parliaments
- [587](#) Commonwealth Parliamentary Association UK—Official Programme: 71st Westminster Seminar on Effective Parliaments, 13—17 March 2023

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Far North Queensland



Hon. A PALASZCZUK (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Olympic and Paralympic Games) (9.38 am): This week regional parliament is in Cairns, delivering on a commitment I made to bring the people's parliament to the people of Cairns and the Far North. This week Parliament will debate the Path to Treaty Bill.

Outside of Parliament, I know many of my ministers and caucus colleagues have an action-packed week of community events and activities. Yesterday regional cabinet met at Cairns TAFE. After, I joined the Deputy Premier, Treasurer, Minister for Transport and Main Roads, Minister for Training and local MPs to visit TAFE's Great Barrier Reef International Marine College to announce a \$16 million expansion. From next year it will be delivering internationally recognised qualifications for maritime workers to support more good jobs in the industry, making the college one of only three places in Australia to deliver this training. It means workers can be trained here, instead of travelling to Tasmania or Perth and that is a good thing.


Cairns is full of activity. There is an investment of \$1.2 billion in infrastructure projects that are already underway. We are expanding the Cairns Hospital and emergency department, building a brand new mental health unit and the \$86 million upgrade to Atherton Hospital will soon be ready to open. Since 2015 in Cairns we have hired 1,153 extra frontline staff. For the benefit of the students sitting in the audience, that means 243 more doctors, 695 more nurses and midwives, 61 more ambulance officers and 154 more allied health professionals are now working.

In education, this year our government is investing \$66.5 million in infrastructure at schools, including at Trinity Bay State High School, Woree State School, Redlynch State College and Cairns State High School. A new police station in Cairns West opened earlier this year. We are expanding the Woree police station and stage 3 of the \$17.4 million Cairns police facility upgrade will be completed at

the end of this year. We are also investing more than \$1 billion in direct action to protect the Great Barrier Reef and the 65,000 jobs that it supports. With the Queensland Energy and Jobs Plan, we are committing to 70 per cent renewable energy by 2032.

I look forward to meeting as many people as I can, including the 2,500 students and teachers who are due to attend parliament throughout this week.

Youth Crime, Reforms

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Olympic and Paralympic Games) (9.40 am): Community safety is paramount. That is why our government introduced the Strengthening Community Safety Bill that was passed with the support of the opposition and became law in March of this year. It is part of the ongoing action that we are taking to target serious repeat offenders, tackle the complex causes of youth crime and support community safety and the victims of crime.

Part of that response has been Operation Victor Unison, which has rolled out high-visibility police patrols across Queensland. That police operation has heralded strong results in holding to account young people and adults who commit crime. Across Queensland police have charged 600 young people with 1,200 offences. More than 70 offenders have been charged with breach of bail. Since it started, our blitz on bail has seen almost 8,500 decisions reviewed by police prosecutors. I am advised that 81 per cent of reviews have been successful on appeal or resulted in a withdrawal of an application for bail. Our youth co-responder teams were initially trialled in Rockhampton, Cairns and Townsville. Youth justice workers ride with police and have engaged with 106,000 people including more than 50,000 young people. Police say the response from the community has been overwhelmingly positive.


Here is what Operation Victor Unison looks like on the ground in Cairns since it started in only March of this year: more than 2,000 police actions have been taken, including 864 patrols in crime hotspots; 300 business and shopping centre walk-throughs; and over 600 service station drops-ins. I am advised that in the Far North 43 young offenders have been charged with 65 offences and 76 adults have been charged with 85 offences.

We are also investing in a range of youth justice programs. This year alone, millions of dollars have been invested in Cairns youth programs such as the co-responder model, Transition 2 Success, Cairns Safer Streets, midnight basketball—which I am hoping to attend with the member for Cairns, Michael Healy, later this week—Project Booyah and the On Country program. As part of our new reforms, an extra funding boost of \$16 million is flowing through to continue established initiatives and fund new ones such as the vehicle immobilisers with industry engagement, which started this week, Cairns Safer Streets and fast-track sentencing.

While parents must have ultimate responsibility for their children, the state works with non-government organisations to provide additional support. In early 2022, in Cairns the co-responder team began having contact with a 10-year-old boy who frequently left home. He was spending minimal time in school and had begun associating with older high-risk young people. Initially, he was verbally abusive towards police and youth justice officers. However, co-responders maintained regular contact to build rapport and to understand his situation and needs. It emerged that the boy had a diagnosed disability. Now he is receiving support from the NDIS. He has been referred to the PCYC boxing program where he is an eager participant. He is now in high school, no longer spends time in the city engaging with high-risk behaviours and has not been street checked since mid-2022.

This is not an area where we can ever rest. We will always look for ways to improve our response and to ensure we are targeting serious repeat offenders, tackling complex causes of youth crime and supporting community safety and victims of crime.

Police Resources

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Olympic and Paralympic Games) (9.44 am): Our government has a strong record of building police numbers across Queensland. I am advised by the Queensland Police Service that between 1 March 2015 and 30 April 2023, approved police officer strength has increased by 1,179 positions from 11,430 to 12,609. At the election we committed to employing 2,025 police personnel over the five years to 2025.

A government member: At least we didn't sack them.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I take that interjection: at least we did not sack police officers.

Honourable members interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Do not worry, we will have more to say about Campbell Newman a little bit later.


Opposition members interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: We will have more to say about you.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Order! Premier, I remind you of the Speaker's previous guidance around ministerial statements, that they are to be delivered without provocation.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I am pleased to announce an additional \$90 million package to attract new police recruits and trained officers from other states will be announced today by the police minister. Officers trained in other jurisdictions, internationally and within Australia who come to work in Queensland will receive up to \$20,000 in staged payments. Students studying in targeted university courses in Queensland will also be able to claim up to \$20,000 in staged payments. Our government is committed to meeting demand for frontline services in our communities and this investment proves it.

Federal Budget

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Olympic and Paralympic Games) (9.45 am): I am looking forward to this evening and the federal budget that will deliver welcome cost-of-living support for Queensland families. Our government is funding half the electricity rebates for Queensland households and small businesses in partnership with the federal government. As I have advised the House previously, our government will be delivering further cost-of-living relief in the upcoming Queensland state budget so not long to go now until we hear about that. We acknowledge that the cost of living is a challenge and we are listening.


Another issue Queenslanders are raising is the lack of access to general practitioners, which is placing enormous pressure on public hospitals across the nation. That is why we backed the recommendation of the Strengthening Medicare Taskforce and would like to see initiatives funding to improve access to GPs and primary health care. I have also called for more action to support patients in our public hospital beds to be able to access aged care and the National Disability Insurance Scheme. It is important that reforms to deliver a sustainable NDIS do not impact on Queenslanders with the highest need for support.

We call on the federal government to fund key transport infrastructure including upgrades to the Bruce Highway, Logan and Gold Coast faster rail, the Beerburrum to Nambour rail upgrade, the M1 Pacific Motorway and long-term planning for Gold Coast Light Rail stage 4. Queensland is the fastest growing state in the nation and that is why we are calling on the federal government to back Queensland projects so that existing transport infrastructure projects can continue without delay.


I also expect to see funding from the Housing Australia Future Fund and Queensland has been advocating for the restoration of funding cuts by the LNP government for First Nations housing. Our government continues to raise issues about the National Rental Affordability Scheme that will impact on 7,400 Queensland households over the next three years.

We also know that we need skills across Queensland. A lot of industries are approaching our government to talk about how we need more employment opportunities and we are working with the federal government in relation to that. We will continue to work with the federal government, as we have done, to secure a \$150 million commitment for the Cairns Marine Precinct and funding for the 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

Nash, Ms I


 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Olympic and Paralympic Games) (9.48 am): Tragically, last week, first-class firefighter Izabella Nash lost her life on the front line in a factory fire at Slacks Creek. Senior firefighter Lia Drew was also seriously injured. Last week we honoured Izzy's life on International Firefighters Day when all fire stations across the state fell silent for a minute. My thoughts and sympathies continue to be with Izzy's family, friends and her firefighting family. Her passing is terribly sad and a reminder of the dangers that our frontline staff face on a daily basis.

Coronation of King Charles III and Queen Camilla

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Olympic and Paralympic Games) (9.48 am): Over the weekend, at Westminster Abbey in London the coronation of His Majesty King Charles III took place alongside that of Her Majesty Queen Camilla. At Government House here


in Brisbane it was wonderful to see the crowd celebrate and enjoy the festivities, and our landmarks were lit in purple. As many would know, King Charles has an enduring relationship with Queensland. As Prince of Wales he visited Queensland at least seven times and came to Cairns on multiple occasions. Crowds of wellwishers always turned out to line the streets and enjoy a visit by then Prince Charles. We look forward to receiving the now King and Queen to our wonderful state of Queensland. On behalf of this House, I congratulate the King and the Queen.

Youth Justice

 **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) (9.49 am): The Palaszczuk government is committed to tackling crime and the complex causes of crime. We introduced tough new laws and increased investment—a raft of measures based on evidence and feedback from the community, police and other stakeholders. We are doing more to assist Queenslanders with crime prevention and to support victims including funding vehicle immobilisers and funding to provide better support and counselling for victims of crime. We are investing an additional \$100 million to expand programs proven to make a difference at breaking the cycle.

In line with community expectations, we have also announced we will build two new youth detention centres—one in South-East Queensland and one in Cairns. Design and planning is underway for both facilities. Both new centres will include therapeutic design elements which aim to support rehabilitation for young offenders and improve community safety. Therapeutic approaches to youth detention have been in operation across many jurisdictions, with evidence showing positive outcomes for young people including reduced recidivism and higher rates of successful reintegration into communities. These facilities will support the government's goal to provide more regional detention services closer to where young people live, closer to family and community connections.


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) (9.51 am): The Palaszczuk Labor government is a government for all of Queensland. We are committed to ensuring every Queenslander has a place to call home. To that end, we have convened two round tables and a summit to hear from industry leaders, from local government and from our community housing sector to get the best advice on how to get more Queenslanders into homes. We are investing \$3.9 billion in social and affordable housing—the largest concentrated investment in Queensland's history. My department is working with councils to help them to bring more housing to market sooner.

I recently announced we would invest around \$25 million to purchase more than 60 homes across Queensland, including in the Far North suburbs of Gordonvale and Smithfield. In Mount Peter, up to \$15 million in co-funding via the Palaszczuk government's Building Acceleration Fund will enable construction of essential water infrastructure which will, in turn, unlock more than 445 lots in the suburb.

We have completed an audit of underutilised government owned land, with more detailed investigations now underway to determine how we can best use the assets we have, including across the Far North, and we have asked local councils to do the same. We owe it to Queenslanders to do everything we can to grow housing supply. We work best when we work together and we will continue to work with local governments to deliver more housing for Queenslanders.

First Nations Peoples

 **Hon. CD CRAWFORD** (Barron River—ALP) (Minister for Seniors and Disability Services and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships) (9.52 am): I can confirm that Mr Speaker has given me permission to hold a prop for this ministerial statement—and, Mr Clerk, I will not be tabling it.

Yesterday Guugu Yimithirr elder Fred Deeral flew from Cape York to Cairns to exchange with me this gift of a broken-tipped spear. Joined by local traditional owner Gudju Gudju Fourmile, we met for a small ceremony on the banks of the Trinity Inlet, just a few hundred metres from where we sit here in Regional Parliament today.

Fred Deeral, a Waymburr Warra clan leader, who I acknowledge is in the public gallery today, is the son of the first Aboriginal person in Australia to be elected to a state parliament and the former member for Cook—Eric Deeral. Fred is also a direct descendant of the Cape York Aboriginal leader, known simply as the Little Old Man.

In a little known story that I believe marks the true birthplace of the Australian nation, the Little Old Man was the first and only Aboriginal leader to broker peace with then Lieutenant James Cook on his fateful journey of discovery in 1770. On the banks of the Endeavour River, 330 kilometres north of here, the Little Old Man—an elder chosen from the 32 clans of the Kuku Yalanji tribal nation—walked forward with a broken-tipped spear to end a bloody skirmish 253 years ago.

As he did so he performed a ritual, known as ngaala ngundaamay—just as Fred did yesterday, passing his fingers through his armpits, blowing his sweat into the air, calling for protection and peace. Fred said this act ‘gives you a pure heart and mind’. He says, ‘It gives you a safe feeling of being here. It makes anyone’s heart clear.’ It is hard to explain how, but it is true. I found the gesture of that ceremony profoundly moving—it touched my soul.

Yesterday Fred, too, was deeply emotional. His eyes brimming with tears, his chest bursting with pride—proud to represent his ancestor; proud to represent his dad; proud to represent his people; proud to stand for the hopes and dreams, the culture and connection, of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in our great state. To hear about that Little Old Man, it struck me how we all stand at a significant intersection of time—and how important our task—as we prepare for the week ahead.

Mr Acting Speaker, this broken-tipped spear is a potent symbol of Australia’s first recorded act of reconciliation. Today, on behalf of the Guugu Yimithirr people, Premier Anastacia Palaszczuk and the Queensland government, I present this gift to the parliament as we navigate this week’s sitting. We may encounter rocky shoals ahead, but if we do so with a pure heart and mind we will meet the arc of our destiny and find the touchstone of true reconciliation.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: There will be no applause from the gallery, thank you.

Economy



Hon. CR DICK (Woodridge—ALP) (Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment) (9.56 am): The Queensland economy is strong. The Queensland economy is resilient.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr DICK: Don’t they like it on the other side how strong the Queensland economy is, Acting Speaker! The Queensland economy has stared down the global and national challenges we faced following COVID-19. It was right here in Cairns, in the marina behind us, that fishing and tourist boats first bore the brunt of Lunar New Year’s cancellations early in 2020. It was here in Cairns that our government announced the first package of support measures for those fishing and tourism operators at the start of what would become billions of dollars of support—Queensland government support—for Queensland businesses.

Those support measures, and Queensland’s strong health response, are the envy of the nation. Yesterday, the NAB released its Monthly Business Survey for April. Business conditions in Queensland remain stronger than the national average and ahead of those in New South Wales and Victoria. Queensland’s domestic economy and our employment growth had both outperformed the rest of Australia since before COVID. Unemployment, which hit a high of 8.9 per cent in Cairns under the LNP, has fallen to 4.2 per cent—a drop of more than 50 per cent. Youth unemployment has dropped by more than 10 per cent in this city over the past eight years.

Internet job advertisements in Far North Queensland in March 2023 were 85 per cent higher than the pre-COVID level of March 2020. As many of the businesses at last night’s Taste of Tropical North Queensland made clear, exporters are benefiting from a substantial rise in prices for much of the Far North’s highly sought after clean and green produce. We wanted a good time, member for Kawana. That is why you were not there!

Mr Bleijie interjected.


Mr DICK: No. You wanted to be there. You could have brought the Elvis suit! The latest ABS trade data shows Queensland’s monthly export values remain significantly above historical levels, totalling \$135.5 billion for over the year to March 2023. Mr Acting Speaker, can you believe it? That is 39 per cent higher than in the same period a year ago.

While we are acutely aware of the challenges posed by the rising cost of living, Queensland consumers remain confident. ABS data shows Queensland retail turnover rebounded in March, growing 1.2 per cent compared with the previous month. Across the first 13 weeks of 2023, consumer spending in Cairns was 15.8 per cent higher than the corresponding period in 2022. While the rise in consumer prices is easing, it remains a source of concern for families across Queensland. Make no mistake: it is a source of concern for our government as well—one we will devote significant attention to in next month's Queensland budget.

We look forward to seeing what measures to address cost-of-living pressures federal Treasurer Jim Chalmers will announce in tonight's second budget by the Albanese federal Labor government. We want to see more investment in health, particularly Medicare, and we want to see more federal support for Queensland's nation-building infrastructure projects like CopperString 2032.

The outlook for the Far North is so much stronger than it was three years ago at the start of the pandemic, as we entered the worst of that terrible time. The strong winds that carry us forward now do so with some risks of their own. However, the Palaszczuk government will stand by the people of Cairns and the Far North and deliver them the good jobs, the better services and the great lifestyle that they deserve.

Far North Queensland, Education


 **Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for Education, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing) (10.00 am): Good morning to the students and teachers in the gallery. The Palaszczuk government is committed to providing a world-class education for all Queensland students no matter where they live. We know that our schools in regional, remote and rural locations provide a rich, rewarding and well-rounded education for students. We also know that state schools are often the heart of our regional communities.

Since 2015 the Palaszczuk government has invested around \$500 million—that is half a billion dollars—in education infrastructure in the Cairns region, which includes the Mareeba, Tablelands, Cassowary Coast, Douglas and Yarrabah local government areas, with over \$87 million alone planned in these areas in the current budget. We have invested \$36 million to deliver a new special school in Cairns as well as additional classrooms as it continues to grow. There has also been an investment of over \$30 million in new halls at Smithfield State High School, Cairns State High School and Caravonica State School, and there are three new halls to come at Trinity Bay State High School, Woree State School and Redlynch State College—an investment of \$45 million supporting around 28 jobs during construction.

In the classroom we continue to employ new frontline teachers, with 85 commencing this year in the Cairns LGA alone and a vacancy rate of just one per cent. We have five Turn to Teaching interns at schools across the region—people with backgrounds ranging from marketing and research to veterinary nursing—who are now our next generation of skilled teachers. Our \$190 million partnership with Telstra to upgrade internet speeds is benefiting schools and students, with 25 out of 30 schools in Cairns already receiving their first upgrade, increasing bandwidth by 40 times or more on their previous allocation. One of the main benefits we are hearing from schools is that they are now able to incorporate more interactive technologies and digital learning into their lessons.

Across the Far North four schools are participating in the GP in Schools program: Trinity Bay State High School, Gordonvale State High School, Ravenshoe State High School and Western Cape College. A further 32 schools have access to a health and wellbeing professional employed under our \$100 million Student Wellbeing Package; fifteen schools have a Dignity Vending Machine installed with more to come; and eight schools have homework centres. Across Cairns and the Far North our education initiatives are being rolled out, especially our new Equity and Excellence Education Strategy. The Palaszczuk government is delivering the jobs for educational infrastructure and services that make a real difference to students and communities throughout this great state.

Far North Queensland, Health; Coronavirus

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Minister for Health and Ambulance Services) (10.03 am): When it comes to health in the Far North, the Palaszczuk government is delivering. The 2022-23 health budget invested \$1.5 billion in Far North Queensland. Indeed, since 2015 we have increased the Cairns and Hinterland Hospital and Health Service budget by 77 per cent and the Torres and Cape Hospital and Health Service budget by 61 per cent. Since 2015 we have delivered 1,315 frontline health workers

for the Far North. That includes 271 new doctors, 798 new nurses and midwives, 65 new ambulance officers and 181 new allied health professionals. Not only are we delivering world-class health staff; we have also invested in the facilities to match. The Palaszczuk government is currently undertaking the largest health capital expansion program in the nation. For Far North Queensland that includes a hospital expansion, redevelopments, a new mental health facility and primary health centres.

We should not forget what we have already achieved as a government for the Far North since 2015. It is a long list, so bear with me. The Palaszczuk government has delivered: the \$17 million Torres Strait Primary Health Care Centre redevelopment; \$10 million Mossman Hospital ED upgrade; \$6.5 million Aurukun Primary Health Care Centre redevelopment; \$14.9 million Cairns South Health Precinct; \$10 million Cairns Hospital Improvement Project; \$4.5 million Cairns Hospital Hybrid Theatre; \$10 million Cairns Hospital endoscopy suite; \$1.45 million Cairns Hospital cardiac catheter lab; \$1.5 million Cairns Hospital pre-admission clinic; a new Mareeba CT scanner; and new Bamaga and Kowanyama staff accommodation facilities. That is just to name a few! We will continue to make record investments in the health of the Far North because delivering on health is in the Palaszczuk government's DNA.

I also want to update the parliament. On 5 May the World Health Organisation declared that COVID-19 is now an established and ongoing health issue and no longer a public health emergency of international concern. More than three years from when the pandemic was declared this is a significant milestone in the fight against COVID-19. I want to thank Queenslanders for following the health advice to support the state's response and keep our COVID-19 case numbers low. I offer my condolences to all those who have lost loved ones to this terrible virus. I know that nothing will mitigate the heartache they feel. I would like to conclude by paying tribute to all of the health workers, both on the front line and those behind the scenes, who made our COVID response the world-leading example it is clearly known as. All of them are truly heroes.

Far North Queensland, Maritime Industry



Hon. MC BAILEY (Miller—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads) (10.06 am): The Palaszczuk government has a strong record of creating jobs, better services and a great lifestyle. That is clearly evident here in Cairns and Far North Queensland. As outlined by the Treasurer, unemployment has been halved under this government. Yesterday I joined the Premier, Deputy Premier, Treasurer, Minister for Training and Skills Development and the member for Cairns to announce another job-creating and skills development initiative which will support workers here on Queensland shores.

For the first time ever, as part of the Palaszczuk government's \$21 million Backing Queensland Maritime Jobs program a Certificate III in Maritime Operations (Integrated Rating) will be offered in Queensland—right here in Cairns! Queensland has the most ports in the nation, and we need locally trained mariners to bolster our supply chains. Mariners need the right qualifications and training to work on domestic or international vessels, and this course is a fundamental requirement to entering the maritime industry, ensuring that workers are properly trained to work on Australian and international vessels. Until now, new mariners entering the sector had to travel to Tasmania or Perth to undertake their training. This came at a significant cost to workers and maritime business operators. Now, thanks to the Australian Navy and the Australian maritime union, Queensland has its own lifeboat and supporting davit, both essential pieces of equipment to deliver that training. I thank them both for their contributions in that regard. QBuild will install the davit at the Maritime Safety Queensland base at Cairns wharf, and a certificate III training module will also be developed and delivered here in Cairns at the Great Barrier Reef International Marine College. This is a great collaboration between TAFE Queensland and Transport and Main Roads' Maritime Safety Queensland division.

I am pleased to report to the House that a total of 32 training packages under the Maritime Training Grant program have already been approved statewide, seven within the Cairns maritime region. This funding provides support for young mariners to enhance their skills by undertaking specific maritime training where skills gaps and shortages have been identified in the industry. I would like to thank the Queensland branch of the Maritime Union of Australia, industry members and the department on working collaboratively to identify the skills that are needed to support our maritime industry. This job-creating, skills-boosting initiative will be a \$21 million investment to create 40 new sustainable maritime jobs and bolster our maritime industry and supply chain here in Cairns and Far North Queensland.

Nash, Ms I; Police Resources



Hon. MT RYAN (Morayfield—ALP) (Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services) (10.09 am): Before talking about other matters, I would like to take a moment to reflect on a very sad and tragic event last week. Last week Queensland lost one of its devoted servants. We lost firefighter Izabella Nash. Izzy, as everyone called her, was simply doing her job, supporting her fellow Queenslanders, fighting a fire, when she suffered injuries that would claim her life. We all wish to send our condolences to Izzy's partner Bec, her parents Philip and Maggie, and all of those who worked so closely with her. We also send our best wishes for a full and speedy recovery to firefighter Lia Drew. Lia was with Izzy in that fateful fire and suffered significant burns and is now in the burns unit undergoing treatment. To Izzy's family, friends and colleagues, we promise you we will never forget Izzy. She is a hero, a firefighter and forever always ready.

Supporting our frontline staff is critical. That is why the Palaszczuk government is making the biggest investment in policing in more than three decades. That investment will fund more than 2,000 extra police personnel positions. For the commissioner it will mean funding for a minimum of 150 extra police officers for every police region across the state. It also means the police academies are very busy. Right now, there are more than 300 police recruits in training across both police academies in Townsville and Brisbane. Next week, nearly 100 more recruits will begin their training at the Brisbane academy. After that, the Queensland Police Service has scheduled another six recruit intakes for the remainder of this year at both the Oxley and Townsville academies, with capacity for nearly 500 new recruits. Nearly 100 recruits are due to graduate next week, with further graduations in June, August and October. There are currently nearly 1,000 new applicants in the recruitment pipeline. Police continue to ramp up their efforts to boost even further their recruit numbers.

As the Premier has announced in parliament today, the Queensland Police Service will now offer \$20,000 towards the relocation costs for a number of interstate and overseas applicants who are currently serving or recently served police officers for them to join the Queensland Police Service. In addition, the Queensland Police Service will contribute \$20,000 towards the HECS debt of a number of eligible tertiary graduate applicants who join the Queensland Police Service. Recruits at our police academies will also receive a cost-of-living training allowance which will significantly boost their pay while at the academy. This is in addition to the Queensland Police Service subsidising the application costs for cognitive and physical testing.

I can also tell the parliament that the Police Commissioner is introducing a scheme where existing non-sworn current members of the Queensland Police Service who are successful in gaining entry to the sworn officer recruit training will continue to be paid at their existing pay scale or the first year constable rate, whichever is the lesser, while in training. This supports those unsworn members having a career change and becoming sworn members of the Queensland Police Service.

Furthermore, the Queensland Police Union, under the leadership of president Ian Leavers, has formed a recruitment partnership with the Queensland Police Service that has resulted in the development of a series of innovative television advertisements to attract even more recruits. Beyond that, the campaign to attract serving officers from across the globe is also generating significant interest. Thanks to a new federal labour agreement, the Queensland Police Service can recruit up to 500 international applicants each year for five years. Since the public launch on 1 February this year, more than 11,000 email inquiries have been received from serving and recently serving international police officers. Following successful initial testing, so far more than 200 formal applications have been received, and it is anticipated that the first recruits to join under this agreement will commence training at the Oxley academy in October.

New and upgraded police facilities in the Far North and the rest of Queensland and more police in the Far North and the rest of Queensland—that is what the Palaszczuk government does. We deliver jobs and infrastructure to make Queensland a better, more prosperous and safer place.

ABSENCE OF MINISTER




Hon. YM D'ATH (Redcliffe—ALP) (Leader of the House) (10.14 am): I advise that the Minister for the Environment and the Great Barrier Reef and Minister for Science and Youth Affairs will be absent from the House today due to illness. I therefore advise the House that the Deputy Premier will answer questions on Minister Scanlon's behalf during question time today.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Mr SPEAKER: Honourable members, question time will conclude today at 11.15 am.

Youth Crime

 **Mr CRISAFULLI** (10.15 am): My question is to the Premier. Residents across Queensland, including here in Cairns, are demanding real reform on youth crime. Given the government adopted the LNP's breach of bail policy word for word, when will the government allow the judiciary to do their job and remove detention as a last resort?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the Leader of the Opposition for the question. As we know, this House voted on substantial law reform when it came to tackling the serious youth crime issues in our state. It was voted on by the government and the LNP. As I said earlier, I made it very clear that progress is being made when it comes to those diversionary programs. We have already invested more than \$500 million into tackling those complex causes of early intervention and prevention. In my ministerial statement, I spoke about the success of some of those programs.

I acknowledge that youth crime is an issue across our state. I acknowledge that youth crime is an issue across the nation. The laws that were passed just a few months ago were voted on by this parliament, including by the Leader of the Opposition. The Leader of the Opposition knows very clearly that the issue he is talking about now is part of a UN convention and there is not a jurisdiction in Australia that has that. If the opposition wants to go and talk to the UN about it, feel free. When it comes to early intervention and prevention programs, you only have to go back to see the cuts that were made. The cuts to the courts—

Mrs Frecklington interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I take the member for Nanango's interjection because those cuts that happened back then have had a dramatic impact on this state. You cut youth justice conferencing, and you cut the Murri Court. You talk about unshackling the courts, but you cut the courts. You cut them. You cut the Murri Court, you cut the Special Circumstances Court, you cut the Drug Court. You slashed \$10 million from youth justice.

Mr POWELL: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The Premier is not directing her comments through the chair as is required.

Mr SPEAKER: Let us be clear, members. There is actually a longstanding convention that the Speaker will be the person that comments are directed towards, but the Premier is also directing her comments generally as a 'you' to perhaps the member for Nanango, but broadly towards the opposition. There is a difference. I did do English at school. I understand the difference. There is no point of order. Premier, you have five seconds remaining.

Ms PALASZCZUK: You cut these courts and we have had to re-establish them.

Mr SPEAKER: Before calling the Leader of the Opposition, I say to members to my left that you are fortunate that the acoustics in this place are not the same as the parliament, so you may get away with more interjections than usual, but I will not tolerate it in my home town.

Youth Crime

Mr CRISAFULLI: My question is to the Premier. Will the Premier categorically rule out raising the minimum age of criminal responsibility in Queensland?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the Leader of the Opposition for the question. The Leader of the Opposition is well aware that attorneys-general from across the nation are looking at this issue. They are working through this issue, including the federal attorney-general. We look forward to hearing the results of that. There is no change to that minimum age in Queensland. There is no change.

Mr Nicholls: The ACT is doing it. The Northern Territory—

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

Ms PALASZCZUK: The Attorney-General will update the House on the progress of those discussions.

Far North Queensland, Jobs

Mr HEALY: My question is of the Premier and Minister for the Olympic and Paralympic Games. Will the Premier please update the House on how the Palaszczuk government is supporting good jobs in Far North Queensland, and is she aware of any alternatives?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the member for Cairns for the question. What a great job the member for Cairns has done for his community. He is the most eager member I have met. He says hello to everybody; it does not matter if they are a tourist or a local. He is out there and he is passionate about the community he represents.

Everyone will have heard in the chamber—I will give the students a wave as well—the Treasurer talk about how the unemployment rate in Cairns has come down from 7.9 per cent when we were first elected—that is right; that is where the LNP left it, at 7.9 per cent—to 4.2 per cent. That means there are more people in jobs, and that is great news. There is a bright future for all of these young students who are coming in here today. Thank you for coming in to the people's parliament. You have a bright future here in Cairns. We have created more than 33,000 jobs since 2015, and that is absolutely incredible.

We also know we want to have the skills. That is why we are looking at our training centres and our TAFE to make sure that young people have the opportunity. Our cabinet met at the TAFE yesterday, which was absolutely excellent. We know the tourism industry is going from strength to strength. We did the dredging of the port and now the big cruise ships can come in. Wasn't it lovely on Sunday night to be here to see the cruise ship going? Those people had come to Cairns and spent money in the Cairns local community.

We also have great news in agriculture. We saw last night the Taste of Tropical North. There are so many opportunities and so many of those companies are exporting now around the world. There were over 80 buyers there, looking at buying the best produce that Cairns and the Tropical North have to export across to other parts of the state.

We are also committed to the Cairns Marine Precinct with \$150 million allocated, and we have contributed to transport infrastructure in this state as well. We know that, unfortunately, the LNP do not support jobs in this area and in this region.

Opposition members interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: The proof is in the pudding, members. We have seen from the LNP massive cuts to the health service in this area. There were cuts to the police. It is true—the investment in our frontline services—and let it never be forgotten that we support frontline services, the men and women in this state, unlike those opposite.

Youth Justice

Mr NICHOLLS: My question is to Attorney-General. Raising the minimum age of criminal responsibility means young criminals responsible for a host of serious crimes, including car thefts leading to deaths, torture and violent home invasions, would not be held responsible for their actions. Has the Attorney agreed with other Australian attorneys-general to progress raising the minimum age of criminal responsibility?

Ms FENTIMAN: I thank the member for the question. The Premier has been very clear: we have no plans here in Queensland to raise the minimum age of criminal responsibility. What is happening nationally, led by the Commonwealth and WA, is there is a working party to look at how we can better deal with 10- and 11-year-olds who are starting to exhibit behaviours which will lead them to ending up in the criminal justice system. Currently, there are no 10- and 11-year-olds in detention here in Queensland, but there is a working group that is looking at how we can better intervene early to support 10- and 11-year-olds as opposed to them ending up in the criminal justice system.

As Bob Atkinson said in his review, we should look at how we can better support 10- and 11-year-olds as part of a national approach. That is the work that is underway and that is the work that we will wait and see for the working party of attorneys-general to present.

Whilst the community expects strong consequences—and that is why we have the strongest laws in the nation—they also expect us to do everything we can to prevent youth crime from happening. How you do that is significant investment such as our \$100 million package for early intervention and prevention, the programs like the Premier has mentioned here today. You want to talk about outcomes, it is starting to work. Intensive case management—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order, members!

Ms FENTIMAN: Those opposite talk about wanting rolled-gold solutions, yet will not actually hear the evidence about the programs. Intensive case management—

Mr Crisafulli interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock! Leader of the Opposition, the set-up at this regional parliament means you are in more close quarters than usual. I ask you to cease your interjections and deliberate attacks across the chamber. You will cease those or you will be warned under the standing orders.

Ms FENTIMAN: Intensive case management, where you work with young people and their families so that parents are also involved and have to take responsibility, has seen a 50 per cent reduction in reoffending and a 70 per cent reduction in violent reoffending. These are the programs that the community expect us to do to prevent these young people ending up in the system. Strong consequences for action equals tough, strong laws, but investing in early intervention and prevention—

Mr NICHOLLS: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order in relation to relevance and standing order 118. The question was: has the Attorney agreed with other Australian attorneys-general to progress raising the age of—

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you, member for Clayfield, there is no point of order. I will ask members to ensure they are not making frivolous points of order. The Attorney-General is making her statement in response to the question asked, and I believe that she is being relevant to the question.

Ms FENTIMAN: The community quite rightly deserves to feel safe. That is why not only do we have the toughest laws in the country but also we have the programs designed to prevent young people from ending up in the criminal justice system. That is how we keep the community safe.

As the Premier has said, of course there is always more to do, of course we need to constantly redouble our efforts to keep the community safe, but we have the toughest laws, we have \$100 million in early intervention and prevention, and the outcomes are showing good signs. Thank you, Premier, for leading Queensland.

Cost of Living

Ms LUI: My question is of the Premier and Minister for the Olympics and Paralympic Games. Will the Premier please update the House on how the Palaszczuk government is helping Queensland households facing national cost-of-living pressures?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the member for Cook for the question. Of course, I am very delighted to be here in the Far North, and what a great role model and a great member she is for her local community.

As we know, families are really feeling the impact of cost-of-living pressures. The RBA continuing to announce rate rise after rate rise is having a big impact on families and their ability to pay their mortgage. Also, across the board renters are finding it harder to make ends meet and families are absolutely finding it harder to make ends meet.

I note that earlier this year we convened that cost-of-living summit following on from our cabinet meeting in the Torres Strait where we were able to put a package of measures together to address those inequalities in the cost of food prices from Cairns to the Torres Strait. Through direct action and intervention of our government, those subsidies will now ease those cost-of-living pressures in some of the most remote parts of our state.

The federal budget will be handed down tonight. Of course, as I said in my ministerial statement, there will be that joint subsidy that we will be giving in terms of electricity rebates which will have a big impact on people's household bills. Let me make it very clear to Queenslanders that next month the budget that will be handed down by the Treasurer in Queensland will have very firm cost-of-living relief measures in it. We understand that we need to pull more levers to assist people in need. Already there are over \$6 billion in concessions available, but it is our job and it is the responsibility of everyone in this House to make sure that people in their community know where to access those concessions.

We also know that the electricity rebate is possible in this state because we kept our energy assets in public hands. We own our energy assets. That is why we are able to give that money back directly to Queensland families to put downward pressure on their electricity bills. That is unlike those opposite when they were in power; the prices went up and they wanted to sell the electricity assets. That is right; they wanted to sell the electricity assets, and we still have not heard them rule it out. We just hear crickets from the Leader of the Opposition. We hear a lot of whingeing. Even Campbell Newman says there are no policies.

(Time expired)

Youth Justice

Mr BLEIJIE: My question is to the Attorney-General. I table an attorneys-general communique from August 2022 showing the Attorney has signed Queensland up to raising the minimum age of criminal responsibility. It stated—

Participants agreed the Age of Criminal Responsibility Working Group would continue to develop a proposal to increase the minimum age of criminal responsibility ...

Will the Attorney put Queensland victims first and reverse the decision committing Queensland to raising the minimum age of criminal responsibility?

Tabled paper: Meeting of Attorneys-General: Communique dated 12 August 2022 [600].

Government members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Before the Attorney comes to the lectern, I will ask members to my right to cease any interjections. I have asked consistently for questions to be heard in silence. They will be heard in silence.

Ms FENTIMAN: Just when Queenslanders might have forgotten why the member for Kawana was the worst attorney-general in Queensland's history he talks about the communique from 2022 that says attorneys-general would consider the development of a proposal. I do not know about you, Mr Speaker, and I do not know about the high school students in the audience, but that is not agreeing to anything.

What we know from those opposite is they have absolutely no plans when it comes to tackling the very complex issue of youth justice. We saw Campbell Newman on the front page of the paper saying, 'Come on guys, you can do it. Come up with a plan. Come up with something.' They talk about how they need a rolled-gold policy on early intervention and prevention. Where is it? We have \$100 million on the table and I can run members opposite through the programs. The Premier has already mentioned some of them. There is midnight basketball in Cairns, which the Premier is hoping to visit. Maybe they could come along and take some notes. They should come up with their own policies, rolled-gold policies that do not say anything. Even when asked repeatedly—

Mr Bleijie interjected.

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

Ms FENTIMAN:—for just one or two ideas, can they name anything? They cannot name anything. The reality is—

Mr Bleijie interjected.

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

Ms FENTIMAN: Queenslanders deserve to feel safe and they expect consequences. As I said, that is why we have the toughest laws in the country. That is also why we are working with vulnerable families to make sure these young people do not end up in our system. We have to do everything we can to prevent young people committing these crimes, which is creating fear in the community, and that is what we have committed to doing.

That is why we will continue with our plans to ensure we are investing in this range of programs to prevent young people ending up in the youth justice system. It is things like Transition 2 Success, where young people actually get the skills they need to get a job. We heard from the Treasurer that we have halved youth unemployment. The best thing we can do for these young people is to get them out of the youth justice system and get them a job, get them contributing to our community. That is what this government stands for. We stand for supporting those vulnerable families earlier, getting them the supports they need, getting the training they need so they can get meaningful employment and contribute to our Queensland society.

It is tough laws, it is early intervention and prevention investment; and I am so proud our government is delivering that.

Far North Queensland, Housing

Mr HARPER: My question is of the Deputy Premier, Minister for State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning and Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympic and Paralympic Games Infrastructure. Can the Deputy Premier advise the House how the Palaszczuk government is delivering more housing for the Far North, and is he aware of any other approaches?

Dr MILES: I thank the member for Thuringowa for his question. Queensland is indeed the best place in the world to live. We have a fantastic lifestyle, a booming economy, as the Treasurer has outlined this morning, and world-class services. It is little wonder that people are flocking here. As the

member for Thuringowa knows, it is not just here to Cairns and the Far North but also, of course, Townsville and the region that he is proud to represent. That population boom along with constraints in the construction sector is putting pressure on our housing supply.

The Palaszczuk government is working with local government to help them unlock additional housing supply. Here in the Far North we are reviewing, along with local governments, the Far North Queensland Regional Plan and I have been pleased to chair those meetings of the Far North Queensland regional planning committee. That is where we will develop a long-term plan to deliver the housing, the infrastructure and the services that all of these growing communities need. We have purchased properties for the state's social housing stock in Gordonvale and Smithfield. We have announced that QBuild will build a rapid accommodation and apprenticeship centre right here in Cairns, creating jobs here in Cairns. That will ease the pressure by getting trained builders here in Cairns training young people up through apprenticeships and building prefabricated homes that can be deployed throughout the cape and Torres Strait.

While lot approvals are primarily the responsibility of local government, the state can step in to assist, for example, with funding infrastructure. That is why we announced we have invested \$15 million of the Building Acceleration Fund to help Cairns Regional Council unlock land at Mount Peter that will deliver an eight-megalitre reservoir and the trunk water infrastructure needed to unlock 500 lots there and deliver that community a brand new primary school.

While those opposite have come all this way to talk Cairns down, to bag our health workers who they say are duds and to whinge and to whine, the Palaszczuk government will work proudly with the Cairns and the Far North Queensland communities. We will not bag them. We will support them to deliver the homes that will be needed for all of those people who are flocking here for its fantastic lifestyle, for all of those jobs that we have created and for the services and the infrastructure we are delivering.

(Time expired)

Youth Crime

Mrs GERBER: My question is to the Premier. I refer to the Premier's comment that the government's youth justice changes need time to be effective. By what month will Queensland no longer be the car theft capital of the country, as reported by the RACQ?

Ms GRACE: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. That is an imputation, in line with standing order 115.

Mr SPEAKER: There is no imputation. Please resume your seat.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order, members! I ask members to ensure they direct their comments through the chair or they will be warned under the standing orders.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Since 2017 we have put over a billion dollars into tackling the issue of youth justice. As I have said previously, we have put \$500 million into early intervention and prevention programs. We hear those opposite talk a lot about early intervention and prevention, but we are yet to see one single policy. The tough laws that this parliament passed were only voted on—

Mrs Frecklington interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Member for Nanango, you are warned under the standing orders. You have had a good go this morning. You have been given multiple opportunities to cease your interjections.

Ms PALASZCZUK: As we have said, there has been a strong increase in police visibility across the state. We have given police money for high-visibility patrols. We are rolling out the engine immobiliser plan. The minister has been very up-front in talking about that. We have talked about the blitz on bail. There have been 8,493 bail decisions reviewed by police prosecutors. In terms of the youth co-responder teams, 106,000 people have been engaged—50,000 directly with young people. We are expanding them. In fact, the youth co-responder team will be rolled out in Toowoomba next week, in Mount Isa later this month and in Ipswich in July. They are expanding to 13 locations. The Stronger Communities model that was started in Townsville is working. I have sat down and spoken directly with them. Never before have all of the agencies in a region come together to curb the incidence of youth crime in that region. We take this issue very seriously and we are throwing everything at it—\$500 million.

Opposition members interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: You can make your silly little noises over there, but this is a serious issue.

Mr Mickelberg interjected.

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

Ms PALASZCZUK: The member for Buderim voted on the laws in this House.

Mr Nicholls interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: The member for Clayfield is warned under the standing orders for not directing his comments through the chair.

Ms PALASZCZUK: A whole lot of non-government organisations out there are doing their best in working with the families and working with these young people. The police will not tolerate—

(Time expired)

Health Infrastructure

Mr WALKER: My question is of the Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment. Will the Treasurer provide an update on how the Palaszczuk government is delivering the health infrastructure that regional Queenslanders deserve, particularly in North and Far North Queensland?

Mr DICK: I thank the member for Mundingburra for his question, because he knows how important a strong healthcare system is to the people of North and Far North Queensland. He also understands how much the people of North and Far North Queensland contribute to the economic prosperity of the state. The point is: the mineral wealth of this state belongs to one group and one group alone—that is, the people of Queensland. The mineral wealth of this state is extracted from the earth by the people of regional Queensland, and it is only fair that the people of regional Queensland get their fair share of that wealth. That is why in last year's budget I was pleased to announce a significant upgrade, as the member for Mundingburra knows, of the Townsville Hospital. It is also why I was proud to announce a 141-bed expansion of the Cairns Hospital in the budget last year. These upgrades, which the people of North and Far North Queensland deserve, are only possible because of the royalties that Queenslanders receive from the minerals they own.

Our new progressive royalties are under threat, and they are under threat from the LNP. Just last month Industry Queensland reported that Senator Susan McDonald, who is based in Townsville and is the LNP spokesperson for Northern Australia, had 'unsheathed the cannon to deliver a broadside against those royalties'. She follows in the footsteps of the shadow minister for resources, the member for Condamine, who spoke earnestly when he said that the LNP did not support the royalties. Other LNP MPs have said that the new royalties are not sustainable, that they will cost jobs and that they would sit down with the mining lobby to review—which means 'cut'—those progressive coal royalties. The Leader of the Opposition said it is a shoddy policy. The people of Cairns know that a 141-bed expansion of their hospital is not a shoddy policy; it is what they deserve. Not content with calling regional health workers 'duds'—that is what the LNP said—they now want to cut the expansion to Cairns Hospital.

We will deliver the upgrade to the Cairns Hospital because we are delivering progressive coal royalties to the people of Queensland. We will not take a backward step. We will not take a backward step under the threat of the LNP to cut them, because the communities of the members for Mundingburra, Cairns, Barron River and Cook—and you, Mr Speaker, as the member for Mulgrave—all deserve their fair share, and the people of this community deserve a better hospital. We will not take a backward step under the threat of the Leader of the Opposition, who will cut these royalties so he can put money into the pockets of his mates in the mining lobby, because that is all he stands for.

Youth Justice

Mr JANETZKI: My question is to the Premier. Cairns locals Caroline and Luke have been broken into four times. In March, a scuffle ensued in their home and Luke was hit over the head with a tool while Caroline kept their four children safe. On an earlier occasion Luke's work ute was stolen, leaving him struggling to earn a living for months. His ute has just been stolen again. How many more times will Luke's ute be stolen before the Premier's youth justice law changes start working?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the member for the question. As we know, the member voted on the strong laws. I think the member needs to be absolutely clear that this House voted on the laws. Those opposite should not go out there and peddle the notion that they were not part of the decision-making when they were.

Let's come back to Luke and Caroline, because their story is not unlike other stories that have been told to me. Victims of crime need to be listened to, because crime has a devastating impact on them personally. I have sat down with people and heard stories of the impact it has on their families.

An opposition member interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: To your rude interjection, I have sat down with numerous families in Toowoomba and heard them firsthand. I have met people in the street. I have listened to their stories firsthand. There is not a day that goes by that I am not touched by the impacts that crime is having on people. We set up the parliamentary inquiry so that victims of crime can have their voices heard.

Mrs Gerber interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Currumbin.

Ms PALASZCZUK: If you could let me finish, Mr Speaker, and if the member could be as courteous to listen as the schoolchildren have been—

A government member interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: That is right. It is an opportunity for people to tell their stories to the committee in private or to put in a public submission.

We have already increased support in terms of \$9 million. Of course there is more we can do. I think everybody knows someone who has been touched by that. That is why we are giving the police the resources they need to do their job.

Ms Simpson interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I have already said no to that, member for Maroochydore. She should stop trying to verbal on the issue in this House. We take this issue incredibly seriously. We need to make sure that these strong laws take effect and that victims of crime are—

Mr Bleijie: The government needs to unshackle the judiciary.

Ms PALASZCZUK: You unshackled the judiciary by sacking them. That was your response.

An opposition member interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: You were not here when Campbell Newman was here. He is the former premier whom half of your front bench sat around the cabinet table with.

Mr SPEAKER: The Premier will direct her comments through the chair.

(Time expired)

State Schools

Mrs GILBERT: My question is of the Minister for Education, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing. Can the minister update the House on how the Palaszczuk government is investing in and supporting schools in Cairns and the Far North, and is she aware of any alternative approaches?

Ms GRACE: I thank the member for Mackay for the question. As a former teacher, she knows how important education is. She knows that we need to deliver not only in her electorate but also right across Queensland. There are 1,262 schools in Queensland—across Cairns and the Far North and in all the great parts of Queensland. Across the state we have a number of initiatives being rolled out for the benefit of students and communities.

We want to attract and retain teachers. Obviously there is a worldwide shortage. Having just returned from overseas, I can say that there is not one country that is not experiencing a shortage in teaching. Unfortunately, Australia is not immune to that. We have around 150 Turn to Teaching interns now kicking goals. It is fantastic to see that these teachers are already in our classrooms. For example, Natasha Saul is now in a teaching role at Gordonvale State High School—I say to the member for Mermaid Beach that the Gordonvale races on the weekend were very good; I backed three winners out of four, beat that!—as she completes her second year of study at the University of Queensland. She was previously a veterinary nurse, and her teaching areas of specialty are science and agricultural science.

In another initiative, we are having positive impacts on wellbeing. These are the early intervention strategies. A student at Redlynch State College said—

Having a psychologist at school has helped me learn how to communicate better ... so that I can express my feelings. I am not getting into trouble as much now, which is awesome.

Gordonvale State High School has a GP, and students are visiting their GP and getting early intervention, which is absolutely marvellous. We have had feedback from Cardwell State School and Mareeba State High School on the value of our homework centres in engaging students. We have a new model for allocating staff for students with a disability and 17 full-time-equivalent teachers and teacher aides for Cairns state schools to increase support for around 3,300 students with disability. That is an additional investment of nearly \$2 million in this area.

When it comes to alternative policies, there is not much I have ever agreed on with Campbell Newman, but I can agree on one thing: there is nothing coming from those opposite—absolutely nothing. The opposition is an absolute policy vacuum. That comment comes not from me but from their former leader. He sees it. He is calling it. It is the Leader of the Opposition's mentor saying this. This is the best resourced opposition in the country, and they just sit there—lazy, whingeing, whining and offering not one policy alternative. My shadow minister was asked three times for details and could not answer once. Those opposite are a policy vacuum—no doubt.

(Time expired)

Mr SPEAKER: The Minister for Racing did mention the Gordonvale races. I thank her for that. It is a wonderful event. I wish to clear something up for the House. I did wear a jacket on the weekend that some people have talked about. I have not joined the jacket club with the members for Thuringowa and Maryborough. I am not a part of that club. I wish to make that very clear.

Police Resources

Mr LAST: My question is to the Minister for Police. I refer to the minister's interchange of the words 'approved' and 'actual' when commenting on police numbers. Are there more or less actual frontline full-time-equivalent police on the beat now than two years ago?

Mr RYAN: I acknowledge the question. Obviously the member for Burdekin is taking a little advice from Campbell Newman—you can do better—because he is catching up with the number of questions the member for Maryborough asks me. He is getting there. There will be a few more questions on the way.

The commissioner made very clear to the member for Burdekin and to the estimates committee last year the measures the Queensland Police Service uses to account for police numbers. There is the approved strength, which is the commitment of government to provide funding and positions to the Queensland Police Service. That is a record number. That commitment of an additional 2,000 personnel will see the Queensland Police Service grow to its biggest in history. It is a record \$3 billion budget.

It was made very clear by the commissioner last year the measures the Queensland Police Service uses. The commitment of government is the commitment of approved strength, which is for funding and the positions. It is then up to the Queensland Police Service to recruit against that commitment of government. The Queensland Police Service has been very up-front that it, like every single other employer in the nation, is experiencing a tight labour market, but it is working very hard. We heard just this morning in my ministerial statement—

Mr Mickelberg interjected.

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

Mr RYAN:—how the recruitment pipeline is the strongest it has been in a number of years. There are more than a thousand people in the recruitment pipeline. There are over 300 recruits at the academy right now, with almost 100 graduating next week and another 100 starting.

Mr POWELL: I rise to a point of order on relevance under standing order 118(b). The question is: are there more or less?

Mr SPEAKER: We did not need the question repeated. The minister is, as I am hearing his answer, being relevant to the question as asked.

Mr RYAN: As I mentioned in my ministerial statement, the government is also providing additional assistance to the Queensland Police Service to recruit against the government's commitment—almost \$90 million in additional assistance to help with incentives to help recruit police officers from overseas and interstate, to help those with university degrees to make the decision to serve in the Police Service, to assist the commissioner with encouraging those already in her organisation to come over to the Queensland Police Service.

The commitment of the Queensland government to the Queensland Police Service is manifest. If those opposite were in government, there would be a thousand fewer police in Queensland. That is their—

(Time expired)

Mr SPEAKER: Leader of the Opposition, I have given you some guidance already. I will ask you to cease your close-quarters interjections or you will be warned under the standing orders.

Health System

Ms LAUGA: My question is of the Minister for Health and Ambulance Services. Can the minister advise the House how the Palaszczuk government is working to improve the health outcomes of Queenslanders and is she aware of any other approaches?

Mrs D'ATH: I thank the member for Keppel for her question. I know she is passionate about the investment of the Palaszczuk government in our health system. We support our health workers, we support our communities by investing in our health facilities and we are investing in mental health in this state, and we are doing so through our Queensland Health and Hospitals Plan. As Queenslanders know, we have a \$9.785 billion investment to deliver three brand new hospitals, 11 expansions, seven satellite hospitals and a new cancer centre, and this includes 150 new beds for the Cairns hospital and health service. The Queensland Health and Hospitals Plan also delivers unprecedented investment in additional staff, mental health expenditure and innovative new hospital services.

We need to acknowledge the scale of the challenges that are confronting our health system. Since 2015 we have had a 100 per cent increase in the very sickest patients who require more acute care and longer time in hospital, and that means that we have to find innovative ways to deliver care. That is why we are focusing on the wellness of people in the community as opposed to just the illness in our hospitals, and that is about early intervention and prevention in health care. Last week I was very pleased to announce our 10-year vision with HEALTHQ32, which underpins the Health and Hospitals Plan. We have the biggest investment in infrastructure in this state and we are backing that in with a vision, a strategy and investment and innovation in our workforce with a strong focus on First Nations, a strong focus on our workforce and reform, and that means allowing our staff to work to full scope.

I welcome the budget coming down tonight by the federal government. We know it has already stepped up to the plate. It is already acknowledging the challenges of the healthcare system. It is looking at primary care and GPs. It has a plan, just like the Palaszczuk government has a plan. Those opposite have no plans. While we are supporting infrastructure and we are supporting our health workforce, I tried to find out what the LNP supports. I went on to its website and I hit on the state team and I looked for the word 'support'. I found it everywhere: under every name it was 'support David', 'support Jarrod'. They were all donation links—'Give us money'. It is all about supporting them and their party and not about supporting the community, not about supporting those who need mental health care, not about supporting new health infrastructure and not about increasing the health workforce. In fact, we know that those opposite have already flagged that—

Mr Watts interjected.

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

Mrs D'ATH:—they are going to cut billions of dollars. We have already seen the hit list. We know that if those opposite had been elected in 2020 there would be 5,000 fewer health workers in the system in this term of parliament alone, let alone the number that they sacked—

(Time expired)

Mr SPEAKER: Given that the health minister was just on her feet, I wish to acknowledge the care at the Cairns Hospital of my mum, who is in hospital at the moment. Thank you to all of those hardworking nurses and doctors who are doing what they do on a daily basis.

North Queensland, Self-Determination

Mr KATTER: My question is to the Premier and Minister for the Olympic and Paralympic Games. Whether it is on crime, crocs or coal, there is a growing economic, social and political divide between the north and south of the state. Given the grossly asymmetrical government spending occurring to help Brisbane stage the 2032 Olympic Games and the ongoing focus on government in the south-east corner, will the Premier support the north's calls for self-determination?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the member for Traeger for the question and I would like to make a couple of comments. First of all, Queensland is best when we are united and we are one. Queensland is a great state. We are the fastest growing economy in the nation and the last thing I would want to see is a state divided. We acknowledge that Queensland is such a decentralised state. It is a big state and it has so much opportunity. I firmly believe that our best days are ahead of us, but we all have to work together in that spirit of cooperation. That is one of the main reasons that I said that we would be bringing the parliament to Cairns and to the Far North so we can engage directly. Our cabinet meetings

also travel across the state to make sure that our cabinet is in touch with what Queenslanders have to say. The strength of our economy and the strength of our people is that we come together as one in many formats, whether that is through facing natural disasters together where we look after people and make sure that they get the supports that they need.

Ms Leahy interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Warrego.

Ms PALASZCZUK: We will continue to provide a government that governs for all of Queensland no matter where people live and the continual investment that we are making.

Ms Leahy interjected.

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

Ms PALASZCZUK: The member knows full well about the CopperString investment going from Townsville all the way out to Mount Isa. I know that he has been a firm supporter of that, transforming our energy system in this state and taking us to 70 per cent renewable energy by 2032.

I also want to acknowledge the great workforces that we have—our frontline services personnel right across our state. When it came to COVID, our state all worked together as one to defeat the pandemic. I am very pleased to see that the World Health Organization has declared the end of that pandemic, but Queensland's results were testament to the people of this state banding together. We asked them to stay at home and to get vaccinated, and they did that.

When it comes to the Olympic and Paralympic Games, all of Queensland will share in that. That will transform our state. One only has to see the tourists who are walking around in Cairns going out to the reef and going up to the Far North and out west. The operators out west have told me that they have never seen such tourism numbers as they have seen in the last year or two, so tourism is coming back. We have so many strengths. Whether it is our agricultural industry, our resources industry or our tourism industry, the future of this state is bright and the world will know Queensland's name following the Olympic and Paralympic Games.

Maritime Industry

Mr O'ROURKE: My question is of the Minister for Transport and Main Roads. Can the minister update the House on the government's investment in maritime jobs and infrastructure and is there any alternative approach?

Mr BAILEY: I thank the honourable member for the question. He is a passionate advocate for regional Queensland with a very strong record. What we saw particularly in the last few years with the pandemic and its impact on supply chains was the vulnerability of our supply chains. On an island nation and as the state with the most ports of anywhere in this country, it was very clear that what we needed was to invest in our maritime infrastructure and keep it in public hands, which this Premier and this government has a proud record of doing. It is not just about keeping our ports in public hands; it is also about investing in the skills and the workforces needed to ensure that we have stronger supply chains and that we have a stronger economy, and that is what the announcement by the Premier yesterday and the Minister for Training was all about—that is, investing in the skill base of our workforce to have mariners from our own country who are trained with the essential training that they need here in Queensland and here in Cairns.

That is a very strong commitment that we have made. We have invested in this port. We did not try to sell it off like the Leader of the Opposition and former member for Mundingburra. He tried to sell off his own port when he was the member for Mundingburra. What an extraordinary record to try to privatise a port in your own home town and Ergon Energy from your own home town! That is an extraordinary record from the Leader of the Opposition. People know that this government will keep it in public hands, but we will also invest in the skills and the workers that are required. That is absolutely essential.

At the Cairns port we have expanded the ability of the turning circle. We have put over \$120 million into this port. We have a very strong record. We can bet that the Cairns port would have been next on the chopping block if the Crisafulli-Newman government had been elected. We can absolutely bet on it.

Mr Crisafulli interjected.

Mr BAILEY: I hear squeaking from the little Newman over there. He has been squeaking all through question time. His style is to try to say things below the current that the gallery cannot hear. That is his style.

Mr NICHOLLS: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. That is clearly unparliamentary language. It does not refer to the member correctly and I would ask you to bring the minister back and to give him some instruction.

Mr SPEAKER: A couple of points: Leader of the Opposition, it is a unique sitting arrangement but equally I understand provocation. Minister, you will refer to governments, including current governments, by correct titles, as we do in this place.

Mr BAILEY: I certainly accept your guidance.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Members to my left, I have made a ruling. I do not need guidance from anyone. You will cease those interjections.

Mr BAILEY: You can trust this government to keep our ports in public hands. You cannot trust the opposition. We saw Campbell Newman offering advice to the Leader of the Opposition.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Members to my left, this is not an opportunity for more interjections.

Mr BAILEY: The person that the Leader of the Opposition called special in Gavin King's biography. We know the Leader of the Opposition thinks Campbell Newman is special. One cannot trust the Leader of the Opposition to keep our ports in public hands. We know he will sack and he will sell.

Mr Head interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Callide, you have had a good run this morning. You are warned under the standing orders.

Land Taxes

Mr ANDREW: My question is to the Treasurer. Will the Treasurer advise why land tax thresholds have not changed for 16 years, despite land valuations in Queensland having skyrocketed since 2007, and why these thresholds are not being adjusted each year for inflation as government fees and charges are and the same as in other states?

Mr DICK: I want to thank the member for Mirani for his question because it allows me to inform the House that Queensland has the most generous land tax threshold of any state in the Commonwealth other than New South Wales. Given the overwhelming debt and deficit position of other states, there is no prospect of other states becoming competitive to Queensland at any time.

I hear the opposition laughing about this. They have a position on land tax. Recently on 4BC radio I heard the Leader of the Opposition outlining his plan that land tax thresholds should be indexed. I can inform the House that I asked Queensland Treasury to assess the Leader of the Opposition's proposal to index land tax thresholds. I can inform the member for Mirani, being a regional member looking for more investment in his community, that Queensland Treasury has advised that the cost to the state in terms of foregone revenue would be expected to be \$600 million across the four years to 2026-27—\$150 million a year—and increasing rapidly across the forward estimates period to reach more than \$200 million.

The LNP thinks reducing revenue in this state by \$200 million a year is a laughing matter. I tell members it is not. The only way that you fill a hole of \$200 million a year, which is the express policy of the Leader of the Opposition—

Mr Powell interjected.

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

Mr DICK:—is to prune, is to cut, is to sack and is to sell. If you layer on that the reduction in coal royalties, that means significant reductions in communities like Mirani, to people who live in Sarina where the Labor government built a hospital.

The Leader of the Opposition yawns at the idea of reducing investment in regional Queensland. I will tell members this: we will not do that. We will not do that, Leader of the Opposition. This is like a Zoolander stare-off, looking at you. He has been doing it all morning. It is true, is it not? A bit of blue steel from the Leader of the Opposition. Even the member for Burdekin is laughing.

Mr Crisafulli interjected.

Mr DICK: I say to the member for Mirani, only 35,000 Queenslanders pay land tax—that is, seven-tenths of one per cent of Queenslanders who pay land tax. That is all it is. We have a generous land tax threshold. That will remain. We will not change that like the Leader of the Opposition because

we will not cut funding to Queenslanders, particularly Queenslanders in regional Queensland. This will be another point of contest in the election. Who will support regional Queensland or who will cut, sack and sell. We know from the last time they were in government it is regional Queenslanders who feel it the most.

Mr SPEAKER: To your question, Leader of the Opposition, I understand provocation, but there is a standing order which relates to the fact that the member on their feet has the call and they will say what they say unabated in this place. There is no question around that.

Police Resources

Mr SMITH: It is very nice to be in Cairns. What a great city! My question is of the Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services. Will the minister please update the House on the investments and strategies the government is putting in place to support community safety and is he aware of any alternative approaches?

Mr SPEAKER: The minister has one minute to respond.

Mr RYAN: Again, thank you for your generosity. I wanted to start off by correcting the Treasurer. It is not a bit of blue steel, I think it is a bit of glass jaw. I only need a minute to quote the president of the Queensland Police Union when it comes to the difference between those opposite and the government in supporting the Queensland Police Service. This is what Ian Leavers says—

I try to get the best deal regardless of which government will form. That is my job. I am not sided with one side or the other. What I did get out of the LNP was a commitment of nearly 400 new police across the state of Queensland. I got a commitment from Minister Ryan and Annastacia Palaszczuk of 1,450 new police officers over the same period of time.

If those opposite had been elected there would be 1,000 less police in Queensland, including 90 less here in Cairns in the Far North. This government supports the police. We support community safety.

Mr SPEAKER: The period for question time has expired.

MOTION

Business Program



Hon. YM D'ATH (Redcliffe—ALP) (Leader of the House) (11.16 am): In accordance with sessional order 4, I move—

1. That the Path to Treaty Bill will be considered this sitting week and is to complete all stages by 12.55 pm on Thursday, 11 May 2023.
2. If the bill has not been completed by 12.55 pm on Thursday, 11 May 2023, Mr Speaker:
 - (a) shall call on the minister to table any explanatory notes to their circulated amendments, any statement of compatibility with human rights or any statement of exceptional circumstances;
 - (b) shall put all remaining questions necessary to either pass that stage or pass the bill without further debate;
 - (c) may interrupt non-specified business or debate on a bill or motion to complete the requirements of the motion; and
 - (d) will complete all stages required by this motion notwithstanding anything contained in standing and sessional orders.

It is wonderful to be here in Far North Queensland. In particular I thank the member for Cairns and all of our wonderful Far North Queensland members of parliament, including yourself, Mr Speaker, for hosting the people's house, the Queensland parliament, in Tropical North Queensland this week.

As members will know, this historic sitting of the Queensland parliament is the sixth of its kind and the second time that it has occurred in Cairns. What do all of these sittings have in common? I am very proud to say they have all occurred under Labor governments. Labor and the Palaszczuk government believe in our democratic system and there is no more important democratic institution than the Queensland parliament, a parliament which has been serving the people of Queensland for over 160 years.


During this week's sitting, Queenslanders in Far North Queensland will have the unique opportunity to come and see their House live in action and get up close and personal with their democratic system. They will see their government getting on with the job of delivering good jobs, better services and a great lifestyle for them. They will see legislation being introduced and debated that will support them directly and indirectly. Importantly, they will have the opportunity to watch the debate of historic legislation during this very historic sitting, as this week we will be debating the Path to Treaty

Bill, a bill introduced by our Premier and one which will enable many positive next steps. Members will see that we have allocated the whole week for this important bill and I encourage all members to support this motion.

In addition to debating this legislation, the people of Far North Queensland will be able to witness question time, with an evening question time on Wednesday at 6 pm. I would encourage everyone who is available to fill the public gallery. We will also have legislation being introduced and the usual matters of public interest, private members' statements, the opposition motion—colloquially called 'the scream', which I am sure anyone visiting will soon witness—and, of course, the adjournment statements. There will also be a motion moved to recognise the coronation of the King which I am sure that certain members, the member for Kawana of course, will be delighted to participate in.

There is so much more occurring this week outside of the chamber. Regional sittings allow members of parliament, in particular government members and ministers, the ability to engage firsthand with Queenslanders to hear the matters and issues that are important to them and hear their ideas. Throughout the week ministers and government members will be attending many events and hold many stakeholders meetings and I look forward to participating in those. I am also advised that over 2,600 school children and staff will be attending from all over Far North Queensland to witness their parliament in action and participate in the parliament's educational program. I did get to meet some of those yesterday, including some students from Weipa, and it was lovely to meet them. Welcome to all of the students in the gallery now.

I am sure all members will demonstrate what it means to be a parliamentarian during this sitting week and during the debate on this legislation. This is a significant sitting, not only for where we are but also the legislation that we are debating. I ask for the support of all members for this motion to recognise the significance of the week ahead. I commend the motion to the House.

 **Mr POWELL** (Glass House—LNP) (11.19 am): I too want to acknowledge the people of Cairns and Far North Queensland in welcoming us and I convey our thanks on behalf of the LNP opposition. We have certainly been very warmly welcomed since arriving, some of us late last week and many of us on Sunday. As the Leader of the House said, we have looked forward to bringing parliament to Far North Queensland to give residents of this part of the world a taste of what parliament looks like.

What they will not get to see this week is the usual argy-bargy over the business program motion. I do not want the Leader of the House to get used to this idea. I know today the member for Miller will be devastated that he will not have the opportunity to have a chop back, potentially. However, I do not want this to be seen as reflective of the fact that we are in a beautiful tropical climate or that it is indicative of anyone's efforts to ensure that this House has robust debate. It is more reflective of the fact that, as has been outlined by the Leader of the House, there is only one bill to be debated within the time frame allocated this week. From looking at the speaking list, it appears that there will be substantial time for everyone who wants to speak on the Path to Treaty Bill to have that opportunity.

As the Leader of the House said, a short motion will be moved to acknowledge the coronation of the King. The member for Kawana has kindly offered to deputise for anyone who wants to forgo their five minutes, as he is more than happy to fill in for anyone who does not want to speak to the motion. With those few words, the opposition will not be opposing the motion before the House today.

Ms Grace: It is a miracle.


Mr POWELL: Do not expect it to happen again.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

GAS SUPPLY AND OTHER LEGISLATION (HYDROGEN INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT) AMENDMENT BILL

Introduction

 **Hon. MC de BRENNI** (Springwood—ALP) (Minister for Energy, Renewables and Hydrogen and Minister for Public Works and Procurement) (11.21 am): I present a bill for an act to amend the Gas Supply Act 2003 and the Petroleum and Gas (Production and Safety) Act 2004 for particular purposes. I table the bill, the explanatory notes and a statement of compatibility with human rights. I nominate the Transport and Resources Committee to consider the bill.

Tabled paper: Gas Supply and Other Legislation (Hydrogen Industry Development) Amendment Bill 2023 [\[601\]](#).

Tabled paper: Gas Supply and Other Legislation (Hydrogen Industry Development) Amendment Bill 2023, explanatory notes [602].

Tabled paper: Gas Supply and Other Legislation (Hydrogen Industry Development) Amendment Bill 2023, statement of compatibility with human rights [603].

The Great Barrier Reef and the Wet Tropics rainforests are two of the most stunning and significant natural wonders of our nation. The beauty of those ecosystems is globally unparalleled. From the Great Barrier Reef's clear turquoise waters and colourful coral formations to the Wet Tropics rainforests' lush greenery and diverse wildlife, their beauty and their importance are undeniable. As I visited both this weekend, I was inspired by them and reminded of the profound value and fragility of our planet's biodiversity. I met local businesses that count on both of them and I met with conservationists who work hard to protect them.

One of the businesses that count on them is run by Perry, Taryn and their crew aboard the vessel *Ocean Freedom*. You would be hard pressed to find a better reason to get behind Queensland's clean energy transformation than ensuring that the Great Barrier Reef is going to be there for generations to come. On the weekend, when I travelled to the reef, the *Ocean Freedom* crew briefed me on what they are doing to convert to a low emissions reef fleet. They told me about their efforts to manage destructive species such as the Drupella snail and the crown-of-thorns starfish. Before I went down with a dive master to see it for myself, they explained to me how important it was for everyone to acknowledge the importance of the reef remaining vibrant, that it is beautiful and that it is really one of the great wonders of the world. They also expect government to match their efforts, to match their contributions, in taking real action to protect the reef.

Therefore, it was a great honour to be able to share with them the Palaszczuk government's Queensland Energy and Jobs Plan, a plan that commits our government to transforming our energy system to avoid dangerous climate change that threatens our natural wonders and the future that we shape for generations to come. It is the responsibility of this House—of all of us here—to preserve and protect these ecosystems for future generations to enjoy and cherish, because the world in which we live is facing a series of existential crises in climate change, in the shape of international trade and, of course, in the race to renewable energy.

Rising global temperatures are already having a significant impact on many parts of the planet's natural environment. Seasonal continental weather patterns are escalating to record levels. We are seeing floods, storms and bushfires like we have never seen in living memory. Since 2011, there have been more than 100 natural disasters in Queensland, causing more than \$16 billion worth of damage. Those include the 2022 South-East Queensland floods and the black summer fires of 2019. Globally, over the past year or two, severe heatwaves in nations such as India have affected millions of people.

Wildfires have shrouded the North Pole in smoke and monsoons in Pakistan have displaced tens of millions of people and taken over 1,000 precious lives. Rising sea levels are threatening the displacement of millions more, many of whom live below the poverty line. By the end of this century it is predicted that over 410 million people will be at risk from rising sea levels. China, Bangladesh, India, Egypt, the Netherlands, the United States, Brazil, Australia, New Zealand and Pacific islands such as Tonga and Fiji are amongst the countries that are most at risk. We are experiencing increasing endangerment and extinction of the wildlife and the biodiversity of the world's lands, seas and sky.

Nation states are also arming themselves with huge arsenals of economic weaponry in the global fight for national energy security. The inherent scarcity of fossil fuels is driving despots to desperation, which is something that we all know is very real right now. We are seeing it in the illegal war that Putin is waging in Ukraine. I am advised that it has led to a reduction in the gas energy available to European nations greater than 22 times the annual energy consumption of the state of Queensland. Wealthy countries such as the United States of America are writing big cheques to assert their global dominance in the race to energy security. We are talking about half a trillion dollars to stand up a sector that will save the planet, which puts Scott Morrison's and the LNP coalition's feeble gaslit recovery in the dumpster fire along with their failed energy policies. Carbon intensive trade relationships and supply chains are being disrupted. We are seeing that every day with the collision of domestic nationalism and geopolitics. This means that our trading partners are somewhat ahead of us because of a decade of LNP-led delay, denial and division.

Finally, while some fumble over how carbon intensive their hydrogen will be, in Queensland we have picked our lane. We are going green with true zero emissions energy for the future. To get there will take a huge effort to build vast amounts of new renewable energy, to develop an advanced manufacturing sector that uses our natural resources to build our local capacity and put tens of thousands of Queenslanders into decent secure jobs as part of a global hub of excellence in skills and training for the future.

While I am proud to lead these efforts as Australia's and the world's first Minister for Hydrogen, I am also grateful for the capable support of my colleagues: Australia's first Assistant Minister for Hydrogen Development, the member for Bundamba, Lance McCallum; and Queensland's three hydrogen champions, Kim Richards, the member for Redlands; Les Walker, the member for Mundingburra; and Barry O'Rourke, the member for Rockhampton. I also acknowledge the Minister for Resources, the member for Townsville, for his support for this bill.

These exceptional members of this parliament are focused on delivering the opportunities this new renewable technology presents to their communities and spreading that benefit across the state of Queensland, delivering real action on climate change, cheaper energy and thousands of good jobs for Queenslanders. That is our vision. That is what Labor governments deliver. This bill will open the door to this opportunity, writing a critical and historical chapter in our state's history.

While the world grapples with these global challenges, Queensland is uniquely placed at the intersection of the solutions. We have vast natural renewable resources in wind, solar and water. We have a series of publicly owned ports with huge export capability including Abbot Point south of Townsville at Bowen, Hay Point in Mackay, along with Gladstone in Central Queensland and many others. We have the ultimate competitive edge in Queensland: we have five million Queenslanders who can stand up new industries better than anyone anywhere in the world. They also back ambition and bold ideas. Queensland has evolved. We are no longer the state that is behind others, a place where the Liberals and Nationals have held us for many years.

Queensland's green hydrogen industry is not a pipedream; it is in the pipeline—a pipeline of skilled workers, building their careers in new industries in our regional centres; a pipeline of generational clean exports, funding new schools, hospitals, roads and essential services; a pipeline of real action on climate change, slashing emissions in global heavy haulage, shipping, aviation and manufacturing. Queensland's green hydrogen industry is the greatest jobs, climate and export opportunity in a generation. It is a very real opportunity. The legislation that we seek to make helps deliver it.

We are ready to go, led by the biggest hydrogen production project in the nation: the publicly owned CQH2 between Gladstone and Rockhampton, delivered by a government owned corporation, an entity acting for Queenslanders—Stanwell Corporation. With investment from right across the globe, it is expected to deliver almost 9,000 jobs and over \$17.2 billion in exports. In the Townsville region there is the team behind the biggest employer in North Queensland, Ark Energy. They have revealed the next big jobs opportunity for their region with their flagship Han-Ho H2 Hub. They understand the huge opportunity that green hydrogen represents, because the ports of Townsville and Abbot Point could fulfil the total targeted demand of South Korea's imports in 2030. That is huge for industry, it is huge for jobs for now and into the future, and it is huge for climate action for Far North Queensland.

Then there is our publicly owned clean energy hubs, starting with Kogan Creek. Under the Queensland Energy and Jobs Plan, we are investing in a new 200-megawatt hydrogen-ready gas peaking power station at Kogan Creek. This is an important insurance policy for our state to make sure that Queensland can always meet our electricity demand during peak times in the future delivered with 100 per cent green gas.

Finally, in one of the most important sectors in the nation, Australia cannot meet its international climate targets without decarbonising its heavy haulage transport fleet. Battery powered trucks up and down the Bruce are just not feasible. If they are powered by our east coast hydrogen superhighway, not only are they eliminating their tailpipe emissions but we are taking control away from those rich oil countries and bringing it back home to Queenslanders, to Australians—all of this powered by Queensland's mighty sun, wind and water. To achieve these ambitions we need to take real action.

The Gas Supply and Other Legislation (Hydrogen Industry Development) Amendment Bill 2023 will ensure Queensland has the proper policy settings for the construction, for the operation and for the safe management of hydrogen and other renewable gas pipelines. The bill I am introducing today proposes changes to the Gas Supply Act 2003 and the Petroleum and Gas (Production and Safety) Act 2004. A key issue we have heard when we sit down with industry is that pipeline licensing is a critical area of reform that government needs to prioritise—and we are. To decarbonise the world, it is essential that renewable hydrogen can be transported safely and properly from the production sites in regional Queensland to the export terminals to the world. Ensuring the regulatory settings are right to enable a world-leading industry will also require a considered and phased approach. This bill represents the first phase of that commitment.

In Queensland, the Gas Supply Act 2003 and the Petroleum and Gas (Production and Safety) Act 2004 provide the regulatory frameworks for proponents seeking to transport petroleum and gas through pipelines. This bill creates a clear regulatory pathway for transportation and the use of hydrogen

and associated hydrogen carriers—such as ammonia, methanol, methylcyclohexane, dimethyl ether and toluene—all by providing consistency with broader national reforms. Here is what it means: first, I will turn to the Gas Supply Act amendments.

The Gas Supply Act covers the licensing of gas distributors, as well as the regulation of infrastructure for distribution pipelines, including customer connection services, meters and gas infrastructure works on public places. It also includes provisions concerning the regulation and supply of gas, including on-supply and pricing, to maintain supply to essential services and priority customers even in the event of a shortage.

The bill extends the remit of the Gas Supply Act 2003 from 'processed natural gas' to hydrogen and other 'covered gases'. This will be achieved by introducing a new defined term of 'covered gases', which is defined in the bill as a primary gas, processed natural gas, hydrogen, biomethane, synthetic methane or a gas blend. A regulation-making power is also added to the definition of 'covered gases' to allow for new renewable gases to be captured in the act. This power is envisaged to be engaged in the event of new scientific or technological advances that warrant further gases added to the definition.

The bill includes a range of consequential amendments to extend provisions from 'processed natural gas' to 'covered gases'. This is intended to ensure that all existing regulatory requirements under the act will apply to distribution authorities and pipelines for hydrogen and other covered gases. These changes to the Gas Supply Act will enable the distribution of hydrogen and other renewable gases to consumers in Queensland through our distribution pipelines.

It will also give proponents the ability to transport covered gases and connect customer services to covered gases in addition to processed natural gas. Transitional provisions will minimise red tape by ensuring existing distribution authority holders are authorised to transport and connect customers to renewable gases, such as biomethane and synthetic methane, provided that the substance is suitable for use by consumers.

I will turn to the amendments to the Petroleum and Gas (Production and Safety) Act 2004. This act provides a regulatory framework for petroleum and gas and pipeline industries in Queensland, including a licensing regime for the construction and operation of transmission pipelines. It also addresses safety and technical issues related to the production, transport and use of petroleum, coal seam gas and fuel gas. Currently, hydrogen is not regulated under the act, except to the extent that it is used or intended to be used as a fuel gas.

The bill proposes to amend the act to provide a clear and effective regulatory pathway for a proponent to apply for a pipeline licence for the transmission of hydrogen and other hydrogen carriers. To enable this, the bill will insert a new definition of 'regulated hydrogen' into the act—one which includes hydrogen, a hydrogen gas blend or another substance prescribed under a regulation.

It also clarifies other definitions within the act to make it clear how hydrogen pipelines will be licensed. This will make it clear that pipelines for 'regulated hydrogen' can be licensed under the act, providing that all-important certainty to investors and providing that all-important certainty to industry and workforce that there is a framework in place to facilitate and regulate hydrogen pipelines in a way that is safe, effective and efficient.

The existing requirements for a pipeline licence under the act will apply to hydrogen pipelines. This means that an environmental authority must be issued by the Department of Environment and Science before a pipeline licence can be granted by the Minister for Resources. In addition, existing land access and native title requirements will also apply. The bill also provides for appropriate safety considerations to be undertaken through the pipeline licensing framework. These considerations will ensure the safe and competent management of the location, design, construction and operation of the pipeline. The bill also includes a range of minor and consequential amendments that are necessary to allow hydrogen and hydrogen carriers to be transported under a Petroleum and Gas (Production and Safety) Act pipeline licence.

We are at the dawn of the most significant transformation of our economy since the industrial revolution. By 2040 our green hydrogen industry could support 10,000 jobs and generate over \$33 billion in economic activity—that is comparable to Queensland's LNG industry—and contribute nearly as much as mining did to this state in 2019-20—all unlocked by the Queensland Energy and Jobs Plan, delivering on our steadfast commitment to deliver 70 per cent renewable energy by 2032 and 80 per cent by 2035.

Through this bill the Palaszczuk government also sends a clear message to the global community that we are not just a global player for reliable, affordable and clean energy; we will be a global leader in delivering cleaner, cheaper and more secure power for generations of global citizens. This bill will

modify the regulatory space that enabled our LNG industry to become the world's largest. Royalties from that industry now support today's state schools, hospitals, roads and essential services from Far North Queensland, to Western Queensland, to South-East Queensland and everywhere in between.

Green hydrogen is the next resource frontier for a world hungry for renewables, and this bill is a crucial step towards an exciting new chapter. Queensland is at the epicentre of not only Australia's energy transformation but also enabling our trade partners to deliver on their net zero energy ambitions. Proactive government policy has positioned this state as the ideal place to invest in green hydrogen. Our abundant natural resources and ownership of energy systems allow us to capitalise on that, but we cannot stop because other countries are quickly recognising the opportunities that hydrogen presents.

Let me close by saying that we have all of the key ingredients to be the world's global green hydrogen giant: the land, water, world-class port infrastructure and vast resources potential within our identified Renewable Energy Zones. Global partners recognise this. They are coming to Queensland for help, and they are coming to Queensland to help us create opportunities because we are getting the settings from investors and industry right. Together, we will take our world-leading sunshine and wind resources and convert them to green hydrogen. While we are helping to decarbonise the world we are protecting awe-inspiring natural wonders like the Great Barrier Reef and our World Heritage rainforests that have captivated and inspired generations. When it comes to green hydrogen, it really is Queensland's time to shine.

First Reading

Hon. MC de BRENNI (Springwood—ALP) (Minister for Energy, Renewables and Hydrogen and Minister for Public Works and Procurement) (11.44 am): I move—

That the bill be now read a first time.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

Referral to Transport and Resources Committee

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

Portfolio Committee, Reporting Date

Hon. MC de BRENNI (Springwood—ALP) (Minister for Energy, Renewables and Hydrogen and Minister for Public Works and Procurement) (11.44 am), by leave, without notice: I move—

That under the provisions of standing order 136 the Transport and Resources Committee report to the House on the Gas Supply and Other Legislation (Hydrogen Industry Development) Amendment Bill by Friday, 14 July 2023.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

PATH TO TREATY BILL

Resumed from 22 February (see p. 135).

Second Reading



Hon. CD CRAWFORD (Barron River—ALP) (Minister for Seniors and Disability Services and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships) (11.45 am): I move—

That the bill be now read a second time.

We meet here today for this historic regional parliament in Cairns on the lands of Gimuy Walubara Yidinji people, to the north the Yirrgandji people and to the west the Djabugay people. It is a little known and conveniently forgotten footnote in the annals of history that in 1872 this place where we meet was known by the British as Battle Camp. This followed a violent confrontation between fishermen and local Gimuy people over a large freshwater well on the foreshore. Battle Camp was renamed Cairns in late 1876 after the then governor of Queensland, William Cairns. Today if you walk along The Esplanade you will see signage erected by the Cairns Regional Council and the history section of their website also refers to a local treaty. It states—

In 1898, a treaty between the Yidinji people and King's Counsel agreed that attacks would stop by both parties and that the governor of the day issued free food and blankets to the Yidinji people for as long as the people of the Commonwealth were to stay in their country.

My department has investigated reports of a treaty but has been unable to find any further details of the form of such treaty. According to our research, it appears that the 1898 treaty was focused on a ceasefire agreement whereby attacks would be ceased by both parties, meaning that this treaty was not as comprehensive nor did it contain the longevity treaties are anticipated to have. It is exactly these sorts of matters that will form part of the Truth-telling and Healing Inquiry as it progresses. History will inform future treaty negotiations.

As I earlier told the House, yesterday Guugu Yimithirr elder Fred Deeral flew from Cape York to Cairns to exchange with me the gift of a broken-tipped spear. Joined by local traditional owner Gudju Gudju Fourmile, we met for a small ceremony on the site of Battle Camp on the banks of Trinity Inlet just a few hundred metres from where we are today. As I stated in my ministerial statement, Fred, a Waymbuurr Warra clan leader, is the son of the first Aboriginal person in Australia to be elected to a state parliament: the former member for Cook, Eric Deeral. Fred is also a descendant of the Cape York Aboriginal leader known simply as the 'Little Old Man'.

In 1770 when Lieutenant James Cook sailed up the east coast of Australia he struck a reef off what is now known as Cape Tribulation, named by Cook's crew for that experience. After the *Endeavour* got off the reef it had to make land to conduct urgent repairs. The area where they landed is what we now know as the town of Cooktown in Far North Queensland. The Endeavour River, as we know, was logically named. It is a little known fact that when they sailed the *Endeavour* up the Endeavour River they turned to the left, or port in their language. That section of Guugu Yimithirr land was neutral territory; there was no war there. It was a meeting place and no blood was allowed to be spilled there. As a result, Cook's crew was allowed to land there for a number of days before they had any conversations or interactions with Guugu Yimithirr people. One wonders what the story would have been had they turned to the starboard side and landed on the other side of the Endeavour River, which would not have been a peaceful place. We may well be speaking a different language.

For about 46 days the *Endeavour* lay on that riverbank, and the moment of reconciliation has been fantastically told and recreated by the Cook Shire Council—and I want to acknowledge Mayor Peter Scott for his leadership in this—on the 251st anniversary of the Cook landing. An issue evolved up there where the Cook crew had taken on board turtles. Green sea turtles at the time were out of season and it was of great shame and a great annoyance to the Guugu Yimithirr people that turtles had been taken without permission. They found the turtles on board the ship and they quickly went back to their elders, who then came down to the vessel. Some very strong and stern conversations escalated into some fighting, including some gunfire and bloodshed, that occurred on that land—and we have learnt this through Cook's journal that he wrote—and, as you can imagine, that intensified the situation even more.

One morning a few days later, after Cook's crew had confiscated all of the available weapons they could find from the Guugu Yimithirr people, Cook and some of his men were walking with a large collection of weapons along the foreshore a couple of hundred metres from the vessel, when out of the bush came a little old man who gestured to Cook with a broken spear. Cook recognised that sign which he had seen in the South Pacific as a sign of peace. A broken conversation commenced, and at the end of that conversation it was agreed by both parties that the Cook crew could take the turtles but the Guugu Yimithirr people wanted their weapons back because the weapons were not only for defence but also for hunting, and without hunting they could not eat. If you travel to Cooktown, that area is fantastically marked up there as Reconciliation Rocks. It is right next to the main street, and the Cooktown landing area is probably only about 300 metres from there. That is what we know to be the first occasion of reconciliation in this entire nation that has been recorded. As I said before, it was recorded in Cook's journals. Here we are now 253 years later and barely 330 kilometres away in Cairns talking about this incredibly important bill that is before us.

Today on behalf of the Guugu Yimithirr people I presented the gift of a broken spear to the Queensland parliament as we commence the debate on the Queensland Path to Treaty. I want to acknowledge the courage and commitment of our Premier, our cabinet and our government for supporting me in this process and getting us to the point where we are today. I want to thank the Community Support and Services Committee for its examination of the Path to Treaty Bill and for its report that it tabled on 21 April. I want to make certain mention of the member for Mansfield, Corrine McMillan, who cannot be here through illness. I know she will be absolutely devastated that she is unable to be here today and speak on a bill which is very important to her. She led the committee

through some excellent community engagements as well as two international trips—one with the committee and one with me to New Zealand to better understand the Treaty of Waitangi and the process that the New Zealand government goes through. I think I join with all members in the House in hoping that she recovers quickly and gets back.

The committee made 18 recommendations. The first one was that the bill be passed. I appreciate the committee's bipartisan support of the bill and I will speak to the committee's recommendations in more detail shortly. I want to thank all the committee members and organisations who provided written submissions to the committee inquiry. I also thank the community members who appeared at committee hearings in Cairns, Weipa, Thursday Island, Palm Island, Townsville, Longreach, Woorabinda, Rockhampton, Inala and Brisbane. I note the significant support expressed from submitters for the passage of the bill.

I want to expressly acknowledge the Interim Truth and Treaty Body led by two amazing women co-chairs, Cheryl Buchanan and Sallyanne Atkinson, and the team they have led. It was a true partnership in co-designing this bill, with their dedication, their generosity in sharing their knowledge, their patience and their resilience. This bill honours the legacy of the Treaty Working Group, the Eminent Panel, the Treaty Advancement Committee and now the Interim Truth and Treaty Body. These bodies committed to developing and progressing Queensland's treaty journey. I acknowledge the work of all of them and what they have done which has been so pivotal in getting us to where we are today.

The Path to Treaty Bill 2023 is a landmark bill that demonstrates the government's commitment to reframing the relationship between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and the Queensland government. Under the bill, a First Nations Treaty Institute will be established to develop a framework for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to prepare for and then commence treaty negotiations with the Queensland government. It will also establish a Truth-telling and Healing Inquiry to inquire into and report on the effects of colonisation on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. The bill will also amend certain provisions in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities (Justice, Land and Other Matters) Act 1984 to better align with Path to Treaty objectives and repeal provisions that do not support the commitment to a reframed relationship.

Turning to the committee's report and recommendations on the bill, I acknowledge the work of the committee and thank the secretariat and stakeholders. I table a response to the 18 recommendations contained in the committee report.

Tabled paper: Community Support and Services Committee: Report No. 30, 57th Parliament—Path to Treaty Bill 2023, government response [\[604\]](#).

The committee recommended in recommendation 1 that the bill be passed, and I appreciate their support for the bill. Recommendation 2 of the committee report recommends that the responsible minister consider including a reference to the Masig Statement, the Voice from the Deep, in the preamble of the bill. This recommendation has been considered. However, in consultation with the Interim Truth and Treaty Body, our partners in design of the bill, it was considered not appropriate to add in specific reference to the statement at this advanced stage of the process, given the extensive consultation that informed the wording of the preamble. The current wording of the bill's preamble reflects the sentiments expressed through extensive community consultations across 2019 to 2021. However, as minister, I commit to work closely with Torres Strait Islander peoples to formalise a set of words that best reflects their views, and I will bring these words back to the government and back to the parliament.

Recommendation 3 recommends that those responsible develop information materials for the community to ensure there is clear understanding of the Path to Treaty process and its relationship with the Uluru Statement from the Heart and the progress towards a Voice to Parliament. This recommendation is of operational nature. It will be considered after passage of the bill. The department will continue to work with the Interim Truth and Treaty Body and other co-design partners to develop information materials for the community that address this recommendation.

Recommendation 4 recommends that the Queensland government continues to support the resolution of native title matters that will assist to facilitate the making of treaties. I note that the Queensland government has a record of resolving native title matters by agreement so that Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples receive the recognition of their native title rights and interests. The government will continue to seek resolution of native title matters by agreement and is committed to supporting native title claims processes and supports the goals and aspirations of Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Recommendation 5 recommends that the Queensland government articulate a clear and transparent framework when negotiating treaties where there may be established native title prescribed body corporates, traditional owners, cross-border communities, as in around state borders, local community interests and displaced First Nations peoples. This recommendation is operational in nature and will be actioned after passage of the bill as part of the development of the treaty-making framework by the First Nations Treaty Institute and the Queensland government.

Recommendation 6 notes the strong advocacy by a number of submitters and recommends amending clause 64(2) of the Path to Treaty Bill to state that the Truth-telling and Healing Inquiry must be established for a term of not more than five years. The committee recommended an amendment to clause 88 of the bill to include a requirement that the inquiry report to the minister before the expiration of three years to allow for a further two-year period of operation. This recommendation is noted but not supported, as the bill already allows for the term of the inquiry to be extended. Clause 64 allows the minister to extend the term of the inquiry, either on their own initiative or if the inquiry gives the minister a notice asking for the minister to extend the term and stating the proposed period of extension and reasons for the extension. This can occur at any time during the three years of the inquiry, and the period of extension is also not specifically limited to provide sufficient flexibility. As we all know, there is a lot of hidden truth to be uncovered from Queensland's shared history. Though the inquiry has been established for three years initially, we know that the truth-telling and healing will be an ongoing practice for many years to come.

Recommendation 7 recommends those responsible consider the New Zealand Waitangi treaty framework and principles among other jurisdictions as models to inform the Queensland treaty process. This material has already been considered to date to inform the planning and will be further actioned as part of the development of the treaty-making framework by the First Nations Treaty Institute and the Queensland government. I can confirm to the House that I have had five meetings thus far with New Zealand government ministers around their treaty process and the Treaty of Waitangi. As I mentioned before, I travelled to New Zealand with the committee chair only a couple of weeks ago for some of those meetings.

Recommendation 8 recommends those responsible establish the Queensland treaty framework from a positive position of equity, opportunity and self-determination to recognise the value of aspirations, knowledge and skills of First Nations people for the betterment of Queensland and the broader Queensland community. This recommendation will be actioned as part of the development of the treaty-making framework by the First Nations Treaty Institute and the government.

Recommendation 9 recommends that the responsible minister reconsider the use of the word 'institute' in the First Nations Treaty Institute and Treaty Institute Council, and consider renaming the First Nations Treaty Institute and the Treaty Institute Council. This recommendation has been considered. After consideration and consultation with the Interim Truth and Treaty Body, the preference is to retain the current terminology in the bill.

Recommendation 10 recommends that clause 55(1)(d) of the bill be omitted and that a new provision be included providing that a person's criminal history be taken into account in making appointments to the Treaty Institute Council and senior executive. The government supports this recommendation and I intend to move amendments during consideration in detail to provide that a person's criminal history be taken into account in making appointments to both council and senior executive.

Recommendation 11 recommends that clause 49 of the bill be amended to include a provision that the responsible minister table a copy of the annual report of the Treaty Institute in the Legislative Assembly within 14 sitting days after receiving the annual report. I acknowledge this recommendation and note this requirement already exists under section 63 of the Financial Accountability Act 2009.

Recommendation 12 recommends that the terms of reference of the Truth-telling and Healing Inquiry should explicitly recognise the relationship between truth-telling and treaty. This recommendation is operational in nature and will be considered during the course of the development of the terms of reference for the inquiry, including seeking advice from the Interim Truth and Treaty Body who are leading the co-design process with government.

Recommendation 13 recommends that the Queensland school curriculum reflects the shared history of the state of Queensland. This is supported and will be achieved through delivery from 2024 of the updated Version 9.0 Australian Curriculum and relevant senior secondary curriculum.

Recommendation 14 recommends that the recording of evidence throughout the Truth-telling and Healing Inquiry be managed appropriately, reflecting trauma informed approaches, cultural sensitivities and protection of intellectual property and with respect for personal requests for anonymity.

The intent of this recommendation is already reflected in current planning and will be further considered in consultation with the Interim Truth and Treaty Body during the development of the implementation requirements for the Truth-telling and Healing Inquiry.

Recommendation 15 recommends that the responsible minister consider amending clause 87 of the bill to include a provision for a review 12 months after the commencement of the inquiry to ensure the powers of the inquiry continue to support the effective gathering of information that reveals the full impact of colonisation on First Nations people in Queensland. This recommendation is supported, and I intend to move amendments during consideration in detail to provide for this review at 12 months. A consistent message we heard from the Treaty Working Group, Eminent Panel, Treaty Advancement Committee and the Interim Truth and Treaty Body was not to make the truth-telling inquiry into a royal commission. We wanted to provide the opportunity for non-state government organisations such as churches and local government to come to the table and join us on this journey to reconciliation. This 12-month review allows the government to do a systems check at that point.


Recommendation 16 recommends that the Treaty Institute be organised accordingly to represent geographic regions. This recommendation is operational in nature and will be considered as part of the development of the implementation requirements for the First Nations Treaty Institute.

Recommendation 17 recommends that the Queensland government conduct a broad and far-reaching public awareness information campaign about the importance of treaty, the roles of the Truth-telling and Healing Inquiry and the First Nations Treaty Institute, and how the community can engage with the treaty process. This recommendation is operational in nature and will be actioned by the department in consultation with the Interim Truth and Treaty Body.

Recommendation 18 recommends the responsible minister consider amending the bill to include a parliamentary oversight provision. In consultation with the Interim Truth and Treaty Body, the recommendation is not supported so that the independence of the Treaty Institute can be preserved.

In conclusion, I again want to acknowledge and thank the tireless work and advocacy of the Interim Truth and Treaty Body in developing the bill with the department. I will come to individual thank-yous in my closing speech for a large number of department people who have really gone over and above.

This bill marks an historic and significant milestone in the negotiation process undertaken by the Queensland government and Queensland's First Nations people and non-Indigenous Queenslanders towards a treaty or treaties. This will strengthen the reframing of the relationship between Queensland's First Nations people and the wider community, as well as recognising the process of colonisation and its ongoing effects on marginalisation and disempowerment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. I also recognise that the Path to Treaty process is built on the enormous resilience of Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples and the strength drawn from their rich history, their culture and their knowledge. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr LANGBROEK** (Surfers Paradise—LNP) (12.07 pm): It is very nice to be here in Cairns to speak to the Path to Treaty Bill. I want to say it is my fifth regional parliament in my time in the parliament, and it is a pleasure to be in Cairns for a second time. I want to recognise the traditional custodians of the land on which we stand, the Gimuy Walubara people and the over 16,000 residents here in Cairns and surrounds who identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islanders.

As shadow minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander partnerships, I recognise the importance of this legislation to the nearly 240,000 Queenslanders who identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islanders. In 2019, the Queensland government made a commitment to reframe its relationship with Indigenous Queenslanders with the aim of creating a more honourable future between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Queenslanders. The LNP will not oppose the Path to Treaty Bill and see the bill as an important step forward in a better future for all Queenslanders and our relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

I want to thank the Community Support and Services Committee. The minister has already mentioned that the chair, Corrine McMillan, the member for Mansfield, is unable to be here, but I know that she was ably supported by the deputy chair and member for Burnett, Stephen Bennett, and other members—Michael Berkman, member for Maiwar; Cynthia Lui, member for Cook; Dr Mark Robinson, the member for Oodgeroo; and Robert Skelton, the member for Nicklin. I want to thank all of them from the Community Support and Services Committee for their contribution. It is an extensive committee report and it certainly took a lot of work, as we note with the number of recommendations that the minister has referred to today with the government's response to those recommendations, and we will be speaking more about those amendments later.

Path to Treaty, whilst complex, is an important step towards recognising and acknowledging the historical and ongoing impact of colonisation on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in Queensland. A formal agreement or treaty would recognise the sovereignty, rights and ongoing cultural practices of Indigenous peoples and provide a framework for addressing past injustices and creating a more equitable future.

Through the Path to Treaty process, all parties involved can work together to develop a shared understanding of Queensland's history, culture and traditions. This will help to create more inclusive and respectful communities where Indigenous peoples are recognised as equal partners and their contributions are valued.

Path to Treaty provides a road map for addressing a range of issues including land rights, language preservation, cultural heritage protection and economic development. It would also provide a mechanism for ensuring that Indigenous peoples have a greater say in decisions that affect them and that their voices are heard and respected. Path to Treaty is an opportunity for all Queenslanders to come together and build a more inclusive, respectful and reconciled state. By working towards a formal agreement or treaty, we can create a brighter future for all, built on a foundation of mutual respect, understanding and collaboration.

The Queensland government's Path to Treaty journey is advancing through five phases to enable treaty negotiations to begin. Phase 1 was completed with the appointment of the Eminent Panel and the Treaty Working Group in 2019, which made recommendations to the government in 2020. Phase 2 was completed in 2021 with the appointment of the Treaty Advancement Committee and the acceptance of its 22 recommendations by the government. Phase 3 was completed with the introduction of the Path to Treaty Bill 2023, which established the First Nations Treaty Institute and Truth-telling and Healing Inquiry as well as the Interim Truth and Treaty Body.

Phase 4 is the current phase, subject to the passage and commencement of the Path to Treaty Act, which involves the establishment of the Treaty Institute and inquiry with the help of the Interim Truth and Treaty Body, ITTB. The Path to Treaty office continues to work with the government to prepare for truth-telling and treaty negotiations. Phase 5 will see the development of the treaty-making framework by the Treaty Institute with the establishment of supporting structures such as a mechanism to deal with disputes, and treaty negotiations will begin subject to community and government readiness.

Community consultation was conducted in 2019 on the question of whether the state should seek a treaty or treaties with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and, if so, how the treaty process could be most effectively progressed. The consultation involved 24 locations around the state, including rural and regional areas as well as online surveys and written submissions. Consultation showed broad support for Queensland to continue the Path to Treaty with discussions including dealing with the impact of colonisation on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, providing empowerment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, advancing reconciliation and justice, and providing the foundation for a path forward.

Following the work of the Eminent Panel and Treaty Working Group, whom I also want to thank for their efforts, the Treaty Advancement Committee, TAC, undertook further targeted consultation with various groups and individuals including government departments, peak bodies, local and state governments, and experts in different fields. The TAC also considered the implications of national developments since the 2020 treaty statement of commitment and response to the Eminent Panel recommendations.

The Path to Treaty Bill was developed in partnership between the ITTB and the Department of Seniors, Disability Services and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships with the legislation subcommittee established to focus on the bill's development. A series of workshops were held to examine, consider and prosecute each clause of the draft of the bill to ensure that it accurately reflected the intent of the Treaty Advancement Committee report and the views of the ITTB. The key outcome of this partnership approach was that the ITTB confirmed they were satisfied for the bill to be introduced.

The Truth-telling and Healing Inquiry will be established as a statutory inquiry under the Inquiries Act 2013. The inquiry will be conducted by an appointed commissioner who will be independent and have expertise in the areas of human rights, history and social justice. The commissioner will have the power to compel witnesses to attend and give evidence and to require the production of documents.

The scope of the inquiry will include: the impacts of colonisation on Aboriginal peoples, Torres Strait Islander peoples and their communities including the ongoing intergenerational impacts; the history of Queensland from an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspective including pre-contact history, colonial history and contemporary history; the policies and practices of the Queensland

government that have impacted Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples; the effects of the stolen generations policies and practices on individuals, families and communities; the ongoing impact of institutionalised racism on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities; and any other matters related to the above that the commissioner considers appropriate.

The commissioner is to provide an interim report to the minister within two years of the commencement of the inquiry and a final report within three years of the commencement of the inquiry. The reports must include findings and recommendations, including recommendations on measures to address the impacts of colonisation and promote truth-telling, healing and reconciliation.

The Path to Treaty Bill aims to establish a treaty institute to develop a framework for treaty negotiations and support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to participate in treaty negotiations. It also aims to establish a Truth-telling and Healing Inquiry to investigate and report on the impacts of colonisation on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in Queensland. The bill is guided by principles of self-determination, free prior and informed consent, respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander laws and traditions, and equality and non-discrimination.

The Treaty Institute is independent and will be governed by a council consisting of appropriately qualified Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples with the support of advisory committees, whilst the inquiry will be conducted by an independent commissioner with expertise in human rights history and social justice.

The establishment of the Truth-telling and Healing Inquiry is to investigate and document the impacts and effects of colonisation on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, promote community awareness and understanding of these effects, and provide advice and recommendations to the minister. The inquiry will be non-adversarial and non-legalistic in approach, encouraging voluntary participation and sharing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' histories, stories, experiences and truths.

The inquiry will consist of five members, including a chairperson, who must be an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person. The members will reflect gender diversity, have a majority of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander persons and include at least one lawyer with relevant experience. The minister will recommend suitable persons for appointment as members, with their terms of appointment aligning with the term of the inquiry.

The inquiry will observe the rules of natural justice but will not be bound by rules of evidence. It will conduct truth-telling sessions or hearings in a culturally appropriate manner, taking into account Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander tradition and customary law. Guidelines will be established for recognising and supporting individuals who may experience stress or psychological trauma associated with giving testimony or making a submission.

The truth-telling sessions will be voluntary and by invitation, and anyone can provide a document, submission or other thing that may assist the inquiry in performing its functions. If a government entity fails to provide materials requested by the inquiry, the inquiry can issue a production notice requiring the CEO of the entity to provide the materials.

The proposed legislation aims to address outdated and discriminatory provisions in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities (Justice, Land and Other Matters) Act 1984 in order to fulfil the reframed relationship agenda and ensure compatibility with the Human Rights Act 2019. The legislation includes penalty provisions for CEOs of government entities who fail to attend truth-telling hearings or provide requested documents or submissions. Implementation of the legislation will be the responsibility of the department, and I understand work is being done to establish the Treaty Institute and inquiry as well as to prepare government agencies for treaty negotiations.

Closing the health gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians is a critical issue, and improving access to health services is an essential part of achieving this goal. Early diagnosis and intervention by primary healthcare services can help detect and treat health issues in Indigenous and Torres Strait Islander peoples, including those related to cardiovascular disease, cancers, diabetes, respiratory disease and other chronic conditions.

Labor state governments in Queensland have dominated policy affecting Indigenous Australians over the last 25 years yet the gap remains wide in many areas, including in health and education. I want to table some releases from the Queensland cabinet ministerial directory from our time in government including when I was education minister. One is related to the multimillion dollar Indigenous training strategy. I table that.

Tabled paper: Media statement, dated 18 February 2014, by the former Minister for Education, Training and Employment, Hon. John-Paul Langbroek, and the former Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Multicultural Affairs and Minister Assisting the Premier, Hon. Glen Elmes, titled 'Multi-million dollar Indigenous training strategy' [605].

I was proud to lead that from the department. There were new partnerships to drive Indigenous opportunity—we launched Solid partners Solid futures, a four-year plan to improve the education, training and employment outcomes for Indigenous students in Queensland. We did commit to Closing the Gap as far back as 2007-08. It is really important that we keep working on these issues across our state.

Tabled paper: Media statement, dated 1 September 2014, by the former Minister for Education, Training and Employment, Hon. John-Paul Langbroek, titled 'New partnerships to drive Indigenous opportunity' [606].

Tabled paper: Media statement, dated 8 July 2013, by the former Minister for Education, Training and Employment, Hon. John-Paul Langbroek, and the former Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Multicultural Affairs and Minister Assisting the Premier, Hon. Glen Elmes, titled 'Newman Government launches plan for solid future' [607].

The final one I want to table is one where we were supporting Indigenous students. That was from the then minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders and multicultural affairs and minister assisting the Premier, a good friend, Glen Elmes, who was the minister in that government. I table that.

Tabled paper: Media statement, dated 28 June 2013, by the former Minister for Education, Training and Employment, Hon. John-Paul Langbroek, and the former Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Multicultural Affairs and Minister Assisting the Premier, Hon. Glen Elmes, titled 'Newman government takes action to support indigenous students' [608].

Across the parliament, it is clear that we are all committed to closing the gap. We have been disappointed over the last number of years to see annual reports showing that in a number of different areas the gap is not closing and that more needs to be done. I am confident that the process today will assist in that, but there are practical measures that I know ministers from the government are constantly trying to implement. There is a focus in every department on making sure we acknowledge the gaps that are there. As Queenslanders we want to see that no-one misses out, including in the areas of health and education.

Flexible treatment options can help improve health outcomes, as different individuals and communities may have different health needs and preferences. Yesterday we were pleased to meet with the Mayor of Yarrabah, Ross Andrews, who reminisced with us that in the time Lawrence Springborg was the health minister he enabled that community in Yarrabah to set up their own community health service, which I have been pleased to visit with the local member for Mulgrave, Speaker Curtis Pitt. He was full of praise for the fact that local community was, under an LNP government, able to set up their own health service. That is the type of flexibility we need to see. Local communities know what they need. They need professional services and assistance, but it is important to make sure we do not have the centralisation of those services, because different communities have their own specific needs.

Overcoming negative perceptions of mainstream services and addressing systemic racism in the healthcare system is crucial to ensuring Indigenous populations receive culturally safe care and achieve better health outcomes. That is something Mayor Andrews took great pains to mention was significant in Yarrabah.

It is clear that there are significant gaps in health, education and water and sewerage infrastructure for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in Queensland. Addressing these gaps is crucial to closing the gap and achieving better outcomes for Indigenous communities. In terms of health, better access to health services, early diagnosis and intervention and flexible treatment options are important steps to improving health outcomes; however, it is also necessary to address inequities and to ensure culturally safe processes and practices for Indigenous populations to ensure health outcomes are achieved.

Addressing the significant failures in reaching learning outcome targets and improving student engagement and retention is an important step in closing the gap. Efforts should be made to reduce disciplinary absences amongst Indigenous students and to ensure they have access to quality education. On the issue of water and sewerage, the funding from the Indigenous Councils Critical Infrastructure Program, ICCIP, has been crucial to addressing critical infrastructure needs, but more needs to be done to ensure drinking water and sanitation are not issues in Indigenous communities. Addressing these gaps requires a sustained commitment from the government and other stakeholders to work collaboratively with Indigenous communities to ensure their needs are met and they are empowered to achieve better outcomes.


The issue of housing in Indigenous communities—something else Mayor Andrews raised with us yesterday—particularly in remote areas of Queensland, is a significant challenge. Overcrowding can

exacerbate social issues and family breakdown, leading to a range of negative outcomes for individuals and communities. The federal Labor government's promise to invest \$200 million in repairing and maintaining existing homes and building 20,000 new social housing properties is a positive step in addressing this issue. However, it is not clear how many of these new properties will be built in Indigenous communities, including those in Queensland. This was the subject of a recent question on notice I asked of the housing minister. Similarly, the Queensland government's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Housing Action Plan 2019-2023 is a positive initiative, but it is important to ensure that the target number of planned social housing dwellings is clearly outlined and that these plans are implemented effectively.

As I mentioned, the Closing the Gap annual report 2022—and for years before—highlights that several Closing the Gap targets are not on track. These targets include: closing the gap in life expectancy within a generation by 2031; increasing the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children assessed as developmentally on track in all five domains of the Australian Early Development Census; reducing the rate of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander adults held in incarceration by at least 15 per cent by 2031; and achieving a significant and sustained reduction in suicide of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people towards zero. As a former education minister, I was proud to achieve improvements during our time in government with ensuring access to early childhood education for Indigenous four-year-olds in remote communities, raising it from the low 20 per cent when we came to government, as well as improving year 12 Indigenous attainment rates in our time in government.

The Council of Australian Governments identified healthy homes and safe communities as building blocks to help achieve Closing the Gap targets. It is concerning that the federal Labor government in Jim Chalmers's first budget in October 2022 cut \$50 million from round 7 of the Safer Communities Fund which would have funded early intervention and infrastructure commitments by supporting locally-driven crime prevention initiatives, including Indigenous youth initiatives. Whilst progress has been made in some areas, the Queensland Closing the Gap annual report highlights the need for continued effort and investment to achieve the Closing the Gap targets and to improve the health and wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Queensland and across Australia.

It is important to acknowledge that the journey towards treaty will not be easy and that there will be challenges along the way; however, by committing to this process we are acknowledging the past injustices that Indigenous peoples have faced and taking steps towards a more just and equitable future. I urge all members of this House to work towards a future where Indigenous peoples in Queensland are recognised as equal partners, their voices are heard and their rights are respected. Let us take this important step towards reconciliation and build a brighter future for all Queenslanders.

 **Ms LUI** (Cook—ALP) (12.27 pm): Before I begin my contribution, I acknowledge my parents, Getano and Lizzie, in the gallery today. It is wonderful to have them here for such a historic moment in our state's history. 'Trying to heal, while trying to grieve, while trying to live, while trying to dream, while trying to smile, while trying to give love, while trying to be love.' The author of this quote is unknown. I randomly came across this quote this morning. I think it perfectly sums up the journey that was and the journey that we are about to embark upon on our path to treaty. The road ahead is not going to be easy, but together we will get there.

It is an absolute honour and great privilege to rise today to give my contribution to the Path to Treaty Bill 2023. There are no words to describe how proud I am to be part of the government, under the strong leadership of our Premier, Hon. Anastacia Palaszczuk, to deliver this bill in the best interests of Queensland's First Nations peoples. Today is a clear turning point in our state's history. I am humbled to take part in this very important journey—a journey that will have a long-lasting impact, for many generations to come. I want to again acknowledge our Premier for her support for this very important piece of legislation and for advancing the needs and interests of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander affairs through Path to Treaty. This bill was introduced to parliament by our Premier on 22 February 2023 and referred to the Community Support and Services Committee, a committee I am proud to be part of, for examination and report.

The purpose of the bill is significant in that it establishes foundational legislation on the Path to Treaty. The bill's objectives are: to establish a First Nations Treaty Institute to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to develop a framework and prepare for treaty negotiations with the Queensland government; and to establish a Truth-telling and Healing Inquiry to inquire into and report on the effects of colonisation on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

During the course of the committee's engagement process on the bill it became clear that, while the bill's purpose and objectives are straightforward, the importance of the bill to many in the Queensland community cannot be overstated. The committee heard that for First Nations people the bill represents the commencement of the Path to Treaty process—a recognition of First Nations people, self-determination and human rights, lore and law, culture, history, language and traditional lands and waters. In short, the committee heard that the bill represents hope for many Queenslanders.

I speak today not only as a proud member of the Palaszczuk Labor government but also as a proud lamalaig person from the Torres Strait and one of three First Nations members ever elected to the Queensland parliament. This bill is truly one of a kind, so the reflections the committee got to hear from the community about what the bill represents were not surprising—words such as 'it is a positive step in the right direction', 'it is only the beginning of meaningful change' and 'it is about righting the wrongs of the past'. It has also been described as writing a new chapter in our state's history, and it is going to change the narrative of our state. I see this bill as a pillar of hope—one that will carry our hopes, dreams and aspirations into the future.

I want to acknowledge the Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, Hon. Craig Crawford, for his strong support and commitment not only to this bill but also to all First Nations peoples and communities across Queensland. I especially want to acknowledge my good friend and colleague Corrine McMillan MP, the chair of the Community Support and Services Committee and member for Mansfield. The member for Mansfield has been an incredible champion and has been incredibly supportive in the deliberations on the bill, and I want to personally thank her for her efforts and hard work. I know how much the member for Mansfield was looking forward to today. Unfortunately, she is unable to join us. I want to let the member for Mansfield know that I am thinking of her.

I want to thank the committee members—Mr Stephen Bennett MP, member for Burnett; Mr Rob Skeleton MP, member for Nicklin; Mr Michael Berkman MP, member for Maiwar; and Dr Mark Robinson MP, member for Oodgeroo—our committee secretary, Lynda Pretty, and Hansard for the important role they played in the committee process.

As a First Nations woman, this bill speaks to my past, present and future. It gives recognition to our state's painful past—and, can I say, it is pain that exists to this very day. One of the hardest things throughout the committee process was listening to families tell stories of pain and suffering—stories accompanied by immense emotions—that have been told and passed down over many generations. At our public hearing in Rockhampton we heard a story of mass genocide—a traumatic event in our state's history that was probably told, but I do not think it was ever recognised in the way that it deserved to be. The emotions that were shared on that particular day and right throughout the committee process highlighted the true effects of intergenerational trauma. There are many more stories to be told, and this bill certainly opens the door for deeper meaningful conversations. The establishment of the Truth-telling and Healing Inquiry will certainly give more First Nations people the opportunity to come forward and tell their story. Path to Treaty will allow for the stories of my ancestors, our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ancestors, to be told and be given the true and genuine acknowledgement, recognition and respect they deserve.

It is important for all of us as Queenslanders to acknowledge our past to enable us to embrace our present. Today Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are challenged in every aspect of society—socially, economically, culturally, environmentally and politically. Path to Treaty opens the door for better relationships to be forged, allowing government to begin the process of deep listening to better understand issues from a First Nations perspective, and to work in strong partnership towards achieving meaningful outcomes and give First Nations peoples a louder voice to speak on matters that are important to them.

I want to quote Cheryl Buchanan, the co-chair of the Interim Truth and Treaty Body, during a public hearing in Brisbane on 13 March 2023. Cheryl stated—

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are still here; our sovereignty was never ceded. Recognising this truth and making the more than 200 years of wrongs right is what this treaty process is all about. We believe the Path to Treaty Bill represents one of Queensland's greatest opportunities to reconcile our challenging past with a hopeful future ... that ensures First Nations people's right to self-determination and to have a real and meaningful say in the decisions that affect our people, our communities, our culture and our country.

We have come a long way and the path in front of us is long. Our journey towards a more unified, inclusive and brighter future starts here with us today. I wholeheartedly commend the bill to the House.



Mr BENNETT (Burnett—LNP) (12.35 pm): That is very hard to follow, Cynthia. Well said. Congratulations. Path to Treaty should always foster reconciliation with Indigenous Queenslanders to each other and to the wider Queensland community. For treaties to work, this is essential. The path to treaty is going to be complex as it is not going to be a single treaty. It may involve hundreds of treaties between various First Nations peoples and between First Nations peoples and the state government. It will likely take some time and it may continue to require funding for it to achieve the successes that we all hope and pray for.

The Truth-telling and Healing Inquiry should encourage non-government organisations that were funded by government to provide medical, education and other services to cooperate with the process so that the whole story—negative and positive—of our shared history is told. Path to Treaty must be open and transparent so that all Queenslanders have an awareness of the implications for them. All Queenslanders must be treated with respect and, as such, provided details so they are informed about any changes that may have impacts on them. Queenslanders, I believe, will not tolerate secrecy or lack of transparency in the process.

Path to Treaty must operate with bipartisan agreement to ensure the best outcomes for Queenslanders. As has been said, over a long time policy has been dictated to First Nations people, and it is time we stopped telling First Nations people what is good for them and started to engage in self-determination conversations about the way forward. A better way forward is needed than the current political approaches we have seen over many decades. Path to Treaty must focus on practical measures that close the gap and deliver real outcomes for Indigenous Queenslanders and Queenslanders.

The committee heard overwhelming feedback that there are serious concerns about the naming of the proposed entity, and I note the minister's comments about not accepting that recommendation. It was pretty powerful to hear what First Nations people think about institutionalisation and the effects that had on them over a long period of time. I acknowledge the minister's feedback on that, but the institute naming issue was a very serious issue raised.

It was a unique privilege to work closely with the Interim Truth and Treaty Body over the eight weeks of the Path to Treaty Bill inquiry deliberations across the state. The committee was able to reflect on the work undertaken since 2019 on the pathway of the Tracks to Treaty commitments. The opposition members of the committee welcomed the attendance of the board at most of the 10 public forums that were held across the state. Their knowledge and their commitment to Path to Treaty and to First Nations people were of valuable assistance to the committee's inquiry, and we acknowledge them in the gallery today.

At all of the public hearings the community expressed a level of confusion. I think this is important to remember when we read the bill and the committee's report. We certainly heard of the ongoing work of the ITTB and ongoing references to the federal Voice to Parliament debate. Further adding to the confusion at our particular committee's inquiry were the regional community forums, which also had a Path to Treaty element. We did hear that there is a lot of confusion about what the treaty is all about.

I talked about the time frame for consideration of the bill—that something so historic and so important to all Queenslanders would be considered in an eight-week time frame. The submissions of the Foundation for Aboriginal and Islander Research Action, the Local Government Association, the Mental Health Commission, YFS Legal, the Queensland University of Technology, the Indigenous Family Violence Legal Service, and ANTAR and the Lawyers Alliance all expressed frustration about the time frame. This said to me that they wanted to be more involved in making sure we get this right. It was somewhat of a double-edged sword: while criticising the process, they showed a deep commitment to being engaged.

It has to be said that at the public forums frustration was expressed at the lack of notification about our committee's inquiry and the committee experienced poor attendance in Weipa, Longreach, Woorabinda and Inala. I think we did a lot of injustice to those communities by not having better communication. I also want to talk about the scepticism that I witnessed at the community forums. As a politician in the government system, the lack of knowledge about the bill certainly came through loud and clear. As I said, the federal Voice to Parliament was very topical and on a lot of people's minds. The confusion about how Queensland's treaty will interact with the federal Voice to Parliament, the lack of clear communication around these elements and the lack of consultation has resulted in many communities not knowing about the treaty unless explicitly involved in the process. It is important as we go forward that we have to take the whole of Queensland along on this issue.

I want to come back to the native title issue that was raised by the minister in his contribution. I want to reiterate that my observations of the public forums were that native title is a big issue for First Nations people. A lot of people feel disengaged and a lot of people feel aggrieved by the process of native title and I welcome the minister's comments about getting that right and taking it on as a real issue.

The committee received many comments and questions about the time frame for the bill. To be fair, we have been on this path since 2019—that is important—but we must ensure that this historic piece of legislation is very much respected as we continue on the process. At the committee hearings the committee heard from many different submitters around the future and effective inclusion of consultation. The issue will remain around the decentralised nature and geographical size of Queensland and ensuring that First Nations voices will be heard, including those who were displaced or are going to be displaced by this Path to Treaty process—that is, that people not necessarily living on country but living in other jurisdictions need to be consulted out of respect for the process.

I note that the recommendation has not been acknowledged, but it has been strongly recommended that the future institute consider how to effectively engage all over Queensland. There is merit in considering some sort of geographical representation, and this was talked about at length in our committee. It would build trust and effectiveness in those communities and there is merit for subcommittees to ensure that we consider North Queensland as a unique group of individuals as well as Western Queensland, Central Queensland and South-East Queensland. That is a strong recommendation and I hope that the institute can consider how we can effectively engage right across the state.

The report talks about the preamble and the Masig Statement. That is a strong recommendation and many Torres Strait Islanders felt quite strongly about this issue. Again I take on board the minister's comments in terms of the reflective nature of the Masig Statement at this late stage. There has been a lot of talk about the membership of the committee and the institute. I note that the minister is initially going to be involved strongly in that process and I am sure that as time goes on we will see strong First Nations people representing the whole state in the process and we look forward to that. I also welcome the recommendation that First Nations people with a criminal history be included and not excluded. All we ever wanted was the same rights for all Queenslanders such as there are for public servants. The bill initially set out to discriminate, in my opinion, in terms of people's incarceration issues being taken into consideration in order to be considered for this very important representation.

In closing I want to take the opportunity to thank all those who were involved with the committee's deliberations, in particular staff, the committee secretariat and Hansard. We all became quite efficient in helping to set up and pack up the Hansard recording equipment to make sure that we made our tight time frames getting on to planes, buses and trains all over the state. That is how we work together as a team. The Hansard reporters were very good and I thank everyone involved. It is important to acknowledge the progress of the First Nations Treaty Institute and the truth-telling inquiry and we look forward to their development during the deliberations of this bill and, more importantly, once it passes so we can get on with the job.

This bill is an important step forward for a better future for all Queenslanders and improved relationships with Indigenous Australians. I acknowledge the feedback on the amendments. I hope that over time the institute can and will consider those amendments that were very well thought out and presented. I also pass on my best to the member for Mansfield and acknowledge those committee members who gave so much of their time and effort. It was quite a rushed inquiry but very important. Again, as a member of the opposition, I am very proud to be part of this historic moment today as we discuss a path to treaty.



Mr SKELTON (Nicklin—ALP) (12.44 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Path to Treaty Bill 2023. I acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land on which we gather as well as First Nations people from other country who are here. I pay my respects to elders past, present and emerging. I also want to acknowledge the warm welcome we received from the traditional owners and others from the surrounds of Cairns this morning, and I thank them for that.

The purpose of the bill is to establish the First Nations Treaty Institute to prepare a framework for treaty negotiations with Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples and to support Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples to participate in treaty negotiations, to provide for the establishment of a Truth-telling and Healing Inquiry about the continuing impacts of colonisation on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and to amend the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

Communities (Justice, Land and Other Matters) Act 1984 and the Fire and Emergency Services Act 1990 for particular purposes.


I firstly want to thank all of the people who submitted and, more importantly, the people who came to the hearings and spoke their truth and stories during the process. It was obvious to me how difficult this was for many of the submitters. I want to thank the Interim Truth and Treaty Body for its assistance and guidance; the parliamentary staff and Hansard which, as already covered by my good friend the member for Burnett, operated with some degree of difficulty in the areas that we covered; my committee colleagues for all supporting each other in a very emotionally challenging environment on a very important piece of legislation; my good friend the chair, the member for Mansfield, who cannot be with us but has invested so much hard work in drafting the report; and, finally, I want to acknowledge my good friend the member for Cook, who at every hearing had to reconcile with her own history. Cynthia, you are a giant of a person and I am so grateful to know you, as you always inspire me.

I think everyone understands the significance of being on this path. I have thought long and hard as to how I could add any more gravitas in speaking to it. I have certainly learnt more about the history of our state in the last few months than at any other time in the past. I am very fortunate and felt that I indeed lived in a lucky country. It is why my life has taken a path of service, as I have always been a believer in our community. I long suspected that there were some serious gaps in my knowledge in relation to our shared history and I have tried to read more to gain an understanding. I now realise that First Nations people have not been so lucky in our lucky country and I could have never guessed at their experiences.

I was going to relay to the House some of what I heard during the hearings, just to add context to the path we have undertaken, but I think that is not my place and I have it already in my memory. It is up to all of us to share our histories and listen to each other. I cannot hope to replicate or do justice to the many people who spoke. In my heart I hope that it is a weight off their back and that they continue to speak up. I hope everyone does this with respect in the coming years of inquiry.

From the moment that the Premier handed down this bill I realised how important it was to us as a state and as a nation. For too many years we have got things wrong and not listened. This is our chance to make change: change for good; change that is fair and just; importantly, change that First Nations people get to determine for themselves. I encourage all Queenslanders to participate without fear or prejudice. There are many speakers to come who have much to contribute to this debate. I look forward to hearing from our First Nations members, the member for Algeester and the member for Bundamba, who are to follow me. I also want to thank them for giving advice as we interrogated the bill.

In closing, I thank the Premier and her department for introducing this bill and the member for Barron River and his department for all their efforts in helping us logistically in relation to this bill. Even though this is long overdue, it will probably be my greatest privilege and honour in this House. I commend this bill to the House.

 **Mr BERKMAN** (Maiwar—Grn) (12.50 pm): I rise to make my contribution on this historic bill. I want to put on the record at the outset that I feel incredibly privileged to have been part of the parliamentary inquiry into the bill. The Path to Treaty Bill lays the groundwork for what is a long overdue process of truth-telling about the darkest parts of our state's history and to further progress towards treaty making. The Greens and I wholeheartedly support the bill and the parallel processes it establishes. I anticipate it will be a far more complex process than most, perhaps any of us, can anticipate at this early stage. We have only just begun on the path to treaty. It will be a long and difficult path, but one that we all—First Nations people and settlers alike—must walk together with honesty, compassion and in good faith.

I will use my contribution to focus on some of the issues that remain of concern to me and to seek clarification from the minister on others, but this should not be taken as anything other than full-throated support for the intent of the bill and the processes it sets in train. To start with I will address some concerns about the time frames for both the committee inquiry and the Truth-telling and Healing Inquiry that have been touched on already. I accept, broadly speaking, the sense of urgency about this reform. It is true that we are literally hundreds of years off the pace for treaty making and we need to get on with it, but I think it was unwise for the government to leave so little time for the committee's inquiry on this bill just so it could be debated during this regional sittings of parliament.

A bill of this significance deserves more time than the two months the committee was allowed for its inquiry. The consequence has been that stakeholders were not given enough time to scrutinise the

bill thoroughly and prepare submissions and, perhaps more importantly, the committee simply did not have time to conduct the inquiry in a thorough and culturally respectful way. None of the Cape communities, other than Weipa, were consulted. We visited none of the Torres Strait islands other than Thursday Island. Countless other First Nations communities were simply not consulted by the Community Support and Services Committee despite the secretariat's best efforts, and I do want to thank them for their extraordinary effort in putting the inquiry together. If the government hopes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to engage in these processes in the spirit of bipartisanship and good faith, the least we could have done at this point was to allow sufficient time for meaningful consultation on the bill before it passed.

So many of Queensland's First Nations people and communities have a well-founded mistrust of government and of the parliament. I say it is well founded because these are the very same institutions that have historically legislated for and overseen the commission of some unspeakable atrocities against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. So many of these atrocities were authorised by legislation that was notionally passed in this parliament with the best of intentions but with devastating outcomes for those people it purported to protect.

It is worth noting that the government and the parliament's colonial disposition and violence against First Nations people is not a relic confined to Queensland's deep history. It is ongoing. It is evident in the over-representation of First Nations people, and especially children, in our prisons. It is evident in the worst outcomes in health, life expectancy, education, housing and homelessness, to name a few. It is true that there is much work left to be done once this bill is passed, and there will be much more engagement along the way, but this was the one and only opportunity this parliament had to engage about the processes proposed in the bill.

At this stage, beyond expressing my regret at how short the committee consultation was, I can only hope that the rushed parliamentary processes have not exacerbated existing mistrust or deterred engagement with the processes that will follow. People had a right to be heard on not only the proposals included in the bill but also the things that are deferred for future consideration are left in the minister's hands. The bill does not answer vitally important questions like what will be included in the terms of reference for the Truth-telling and Healing Inquiry. There should have been more opportunity through our consultation for people to inform how the minister might decide the membership of both the inquiry and the institute in a way that ensures these bodies are appropriately qualified, truly independent and representative of the diversity of First Nations communities.

Similar concerns were repeatedly raised by submitters about the proposed length of the Truth-telling and Healing Inquiry. It was clear from submissions to the committee that many considered three years was simply not long enough to conduct this inquiry. The committee's recommendation that the period be extended to five years was intended to ensure the best possible engagement with the inquiry. It was an explicit recommendation of the ITTB in its supplementary submission and one that the ITTB considered was necessary to allow time to build trust with the truth-telling and healing processes. I do feel some disappointment that the bill will not be amended to extend this time frame and I am concerned that it may deter First Nations people from engaging with the inquiry and diminish the process overall.

I think we should not be surprised if or when some First Nations communities are reluctant to engage with the processes established by the bill. Our more recent history has seen newly established colonial legal processes like native title and cultural heritage protection frameworks lead to long and bitter legal disputes within and between families and groups and cause conflict and division. The experience of our colleagues in New Zealand suggests that disputes around treaty making and settlement discussions are inevitable, yet this bill entirely defers the question of what any dispute resolution process will look like.

The explanatory note and the Treaty Advancement Committee recognise that a dispute resolution body will be necessary and it is explicit that supporting structures like this will be established from next year, but it also indicates that this is the same period of time when treaty negotiations will begin. It seems clear that the negotiating framework will need to account for dispute resolution on any number of issues, for example, who can negotiate on behalf of whom or in respect of what land; who is entitled to any land or funds or other outcomes of treaty negotiation and settlement; how do negotiating parties differ from or engage with native title claimants; and how will disputes be resolved as to whether a particular group has a mandate to enter negotiations with the Crown. Whether or not disputes arise over these or other issues, it seems a tribunal or similar dispute resolution body must be established and functioning before treaty negotiations can meaningfully commence. If the minister can, I would ask

him to clarify what progress has been made on developing a dispute resolution body, what it will look like and when we can expect to see legislation to establish such a body.

The independence of both the inquiry and the institute is of fundamental importance, but while the institute is established as an independent statutory body, the Truth-telling and Healing Inquiry is not. The bill provides that members of the inquiry will be appointed under the bill, but the inquiry itself will otherwise rely on the department for staff, resources and facilities. I do have some concerns that this potentially risks the independence of the inquiry, especially in circumstances where the department and its predecessors will be the subject of much of the inquiry's work. Funding for the inquiry appears quite separate from the funding allocated for the institute, namely the returns on the \$300 million Path to Treaty Fund. I would ask the minister again if he can confirm that this is the case and, additionally, to provide any other detail about the funding security for the inquiry. I think it is important for us to understand how the government will ensure the independence of an inquiry that is reliant on the department, as I understand it, for essentially all its staffing and resourcing. Questions that remain are things like how many staff will be budgeted for and allocated to support the inquiry, where it will be accommodated, and what other budget will be available for the conduct of the inquiry, including hearings, travel and other expenses.

The bill also appears to fall just short of accepting that First Nations sovereignty over this country has never been ceded. The preamble accepts that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people assert that they have never ceded their sovereignty and continue to assert their sovereignty. One important question I have for the minister is does the government accept the assertion referred to in the preamble: does the government accept that First Nation sovereignty was never ceded and persists today despite the Crown's conflicting claims to sovereignty? The answer to this question seems fundamental to me as a starting point for negotiation of treaties and to the ultimate shape of any treaties entered. It informs whether the state is only willing to contemplate treaties that effectively cede sovereignty to the Crown, or whether it will pursue treaties designed to facilitate genuine self-determination, self-governance and more fulsome expression of First Nations sovereignty.

The aim of this bill should be to develop agreements between the state and First Nations people that acknowledges the latter's sovereignty, protects their rights and sets the terms for future engagement and negotiations. Treaty making should be independent, transparent, genuinely consultative and properly resourced. It must acknowledge historical and ongoing colonial violence. I am hopeful that in supporting this legislation we will take a step closer to what First Nations people have been asking for for decades, for centuries, and to what generations of justice fighters have marched for, been imprisoned for and died for, and that is a better future for all Queenslanders together.

Debate, on motion of Mr Berkman, adjourned.

Sitting suspended from 1.00 pm to 2.30 pm.

MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST

Nash, Ms I; Youth Crime; Palaszczyk Labor Government, Performance



Mr CRISAFULLI (Broadwater—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (2.30 pm): Heroes run into danger when others run way and Izabella Nash was a hero. The thoughts of this parliament are with her work colleagues, her friends, her partner, her family and her injured colleague, Lia Drew. I join the minister in the comments that he made this morning.

I also place on the record an acknowledgement of the hurt currently being felt following another tragedy. The Wide Bay is suffering following the loss of innocent lives: 17-year-old Kelsey Davies, 29-year-old Michale Chandler, and 52-year-old Sheree Robertson, a brave nurse who was returning home following a shift. Kaylah Behrens remains in hospital. I visited Maryborough following that tragedy because I wanted to listen to and feel what that community is feeling. Time and time again the call for real reform rang true. Queenslanders want to know that something will change. There was another question being asked and it is one that I have heard across this state: where is the Premier?

The other day, brave victims put aside their emotions and their pain to sit on a panel for the *Today* show and tell their stories. That was the Premier's chance to listen to people who have lost loved ones and others who have had the most incredibly difficult experiences in their homes and in their cars. The people in that room were asking: where is the Premier?

There is a helplessness seeping into Queenslanders buckling under the crime crisis and I want to offer them hope. I want them to know that it does not have to be like this. I urge members in this place to leave this precinct and go and listen to people in small and family businesses and to people in

their homes. I urge them to listen to people who have had their cars stolen. Let them talk about the impact of that emotionally, the disruption when trying to get to work and the financial implications. I urge members to listen to people who have experienced violent assaults in the street and are afraid to go out. I urge them to listen to people who are debating where to leave their keys: should they put them under their pillow in the hope that an offender does not find them, or should they leave them at the front door so that if someone breaks into their home that offender does not go past their kid's bedroom before they get to theirs? Those are not debates that Queenslanders should have to have.

This morning, the comments from the government were out of touch. The Attorney-General said the outcome is showing good signs. The Deputy Premier spruiked that the laws were working. I urge them to go and listen to Queenslanders because Queenslanders are not saying those things. The RACQ called it out: we are the crime capital of the country. We have seen images of young offenders ramming police cars. There was a time in this state when young offenders ran from the police; now they run at them. How have we got to this stage? We have seen offenders hanging out of a car attempting to hit golf balls at police engaging in a low-speed pursuit. How did we get to this point in Queensland?

Today the real embarrassment was the Minister for Police. He would not answer this simple question: in Queensland are there more or less full-time-equivalent frontline police today than there were two years ago? If the workforce data had been released then the minister would not have to duck and dive because it would show it in black and white. The government is walking away from a commitment to add 450 personnel, that is, actual people on the ground. If you need to dial triple 0, you will not be allocated an approved officer or be given the time when that approved officer might be able to get to you. That does not work. It only works if there are available full-time-equivalent frontline officers.

That has been the metric this government has always used but, as opposed to delivering on their commitment, the government is now rewriting history. Queenslanders are not going to cop the Palaszczuk government's spin when it comes to police numbers. For the government to now be walking away is a deadset cop-out. It is a cop-out. The commitment was made, but the government is so far from meeting that commitment that it is going backwards at a time when Queenslanders have never needed frontline officers more. The government is not listening, and when governments stop listening to Queenslanders then Queenslanders stop listening to governments.

We have put our solutions on the table and we will continue to do so. It starts with consequences for actions and putting victims ahead of young criminals. It looks like unshackling the judiciary and removing the nonsense of detention as a last resort. It looks like gold-standard early intervention with proper funding and resourcing to turn kids around before they are holding a knife at someone's throat or ramming police cars as officers try to do their job.

The Premier continues to say that the parliament voted on the laws. The Premier had a chance to unshackle the judiciary but she chose to back the UN over Queenslanders. Queenslanders living in fear will not forget that. The government has blamed everyone but themselves: the police, the magistrates, the parents. When young offenders are under the care of the state it is very difficult to blame the parents.

The government is unwilling to accept responsibility for any of the crises that are unfolding in this state because of a failure of frontline service delivery. Last week in Gladstone we gathered in a park because, for over 300 days, local women have not been able to have their babies where, when and how they choose. That is happening in a city of 60,000 people. We listened to the mothers. I attended that meeting as did the shadow health minister and the neighbouring member of parliament. We did not dismiss it as a stunt. We listened. Where was the Premier? Where was the health minister? Where was the local member? Again, more Queenslanders were asking: where is the Premier?

So it is with housing. In the middle of one of the greatest cost-of-living crises that this state has experienced, the government called a summit and admitted that this is their responsibility, but then failed to deliver on their signature policy. That policy was meant to ensure that dwellings—dwellings that were already built and already had trees surrounding them—could come online to deliver homes for the most vulnerable. However, after six months, \$2 million and many committees, still there are Queenslanders who are living in their cars because the government simply cannot plan and deliver things.

Whether it is health, whether it is housing, whether it is the management of national parks, whether it is asbestos in our schools or whether it is law and order, Queenslanders are suffering from a crisis in the delivery of frontline services because of a government that, after nearly a decade in power, has lost the right to govern because it has stopped listening to Queenslanders. This government is in chaos. This government is governing from crisis to crisis. Queenslanders are demanding solutions

to the cost-of-living pressures they are facing. They are demanding solutions to the health crisis that is seeing ambulances ramped and people stuck at the end of a waiting list just to get on a waiting list. This is a crisis that means that young mums are unable to have their babies where they live. Queenslanders are being stuck at the end of a queue for social housing and they are being stuck in their homes as they wait for reform to law and order and more police numbers, as was promised. Overall, Queenslanders are asking: where is the Premier?

Police Resources



Hon. MT RYAN (Morayfield—ALP) (Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services) (2.40 pm): It was only hours ago that Ian Leavers said—

Prior to the last election, what I negotiated was 2,025 personnel over five years—1,450 sworn—150 to each police region and the Commissioner as she should has discretion to place those police around the state as she sees fit.

That was the best commitment at the time. The other commitment I got was nearly 400 police over the four to five year time period.

This is what he said: '1,450 is better than 400.'

Mr Crisafulli interjected.

Mr RYAN: Just wait.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Order, Leader of the Opposition! The Speaker gave you some guidance this morning.

Mr RYAN: It was at that same time, only a few hours ago, that the Police Commissioner confirmed that the Queensland Police Service is now on track to recruit the additional 1,450 sworn police officers over and above attrition. She said—

Certainly, into the future I am confident we will meet those figures.

The governmental allocates the positions, so they're there. It's up to us as an organisation to fill them.

The gall of those opposite, the hide of those opposite, who when in government oversaw the sacking of 110 senior police, oversaw the sacking of 300 police personnel, oversaw the establishment of the Public Safety Business Agency which ripped hundreds of FTEs out of the Police Service.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, members!

Mr RYAN: What did that mean for the Police Service? Again, we will come back to criticism by third parties who said, 'As a result of the cuts, what did we see? We saw admin staff stripped away from the Police Service which meant frontline police had to perform those functions.' Taking frontline police off the beat to do paperwork—that was their policy.

The other thing is that, if they had been elected at the last election, there would be 1,000 less police in Queensland. What would that mean for Cairns and the Far North? There would be 90 police less on the beat.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, members!

Mr RYAN: What would that mean for Townsville? There would be 90 less police on the beat. There would be a thousand less police right across the state. What has this government done to back the Queensland Police Service?

Opposition members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Members, the level of interjections is far too high. I have been attempting to bring you all to order. Member for Bonney, you are the last one I saw. You can go on a warning.

Mr RYAN: We continue to back the Police Service with the record budget, the record funding and the commitment to support them in their gross numbers. I am not sure where the opposition were this morning, but we have announced one of the biggest recruitment campaigns in the nation's history when it comes to recruiting police officers.

Mr Mander interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Member for Everton, you are warned.

Mr RYAN: They have glass jaws and blocked ears over there, I think, Mr Deputy Speaker. They do not even listen to the announcements that we are making around supporting the Police Service with recruiting the numbers that we need to support community safety—\$90 million in incentives and additional support for the Police Service. It is one of the biggest recruitment campaigns in the nation's history. Already, as a result of the efforts that the commissioner has put in place in partnership with the Queensland Police Service over the last few months, we now have the strongest recruitment pipeline in years. A thousand people in the recruitment—

Mrs Gerber interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, member for Currumbin!

Mr RYAN: When it comes to actual numbers, a hundred are graduating next week. There are a hundred extra police officers hitting the beat next week. There are another hundred recruits joining the academy next week, bringing the numbers to over 300 at the academy. We continue to support the Queensland Police Service.

Our commitment, of course, also extends to ensuring that those police officers have the equipment that they need. In contrast to those opposite, who of course cut the equipment spend—

Mr Nicholls interjected.

Mr RYAN: I take the interjection from the member for Clayfield, who signed off on the cut to the police equipment budget—the lowest on record.

Mr Nicholls interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Clayfield, you are warned.

Mr RYAN: We have boosted those resources. Now those officers have the equipment that they need—the additional police vehicles, the support for aerial assets. They have the additional equipment they need to keep them safe and the community safe.

Our record is clear. Our record of commitment to the Police Service is clear. Those opposite have a record as well, and it is one of cuts to the Police Service and cuts to community safety. We will always back in the Queensland Police Service.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): The House will come to order.


Mr Bleijie: Mr Deputy Speaker—give me a bit of room, Opposition Leader. I need a bit of room here.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Kawana, I had not even given you the call and already you are engaging in disorderly behaviour. You are warned.

Mr Bleijie: Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I have not given you the call yet. You can have the call.

Police Resources; Youth Justice

 **Mr BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (2.45 pm): Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. I say this to the Minister for Police: announcements mean nothing if you are not delivering them. They can announce this, reannounce it and keep announcing it. He can talk about police numbers—he can talk about approved numbers—until the cows come home. As the opposition leader said, when someone is breaking into their home and they ring triple zero, an approved officer is not going to answer the phone call—an actual officer will.

The police minister keeps hiding behind the Police Commissioner and now the Police Union. He has to be honest with the people of Queensland and tell the people of Queensland that under his ministerial watch actual police numbers have gone down and crime has gone up. Is it any wonder that the people of Far North Queensland are feeling unsafe to live in their own homes! Announcements are one thing; deliverables are another.

I say to the Leader of the Opposition, who asked the question before, Queenslanders are wondering: where is the Premier? I have the answer for that. If I were a betting man like my colleague the member for Mermaid Beach, I would bet that at the Gladstone rally that was organised for the mothers in Gladstone last week, if the opposition leader had turned up and rolled out the red carpet and brought a bottle of Chandon, the Premier would have attended. If it had been a red carpet event, Premier Palaszczuk would have been there.

If the *Today* show had said to the Premier, 'Straight after the youth crime forum, we're going to do an interview about the Logies. Will you now attend the youth crime forum?' she would have been there—absolutely—because when has this Premier ever denied an opportunity to go on the *Today* show, or whatever program, to talk about the fun aspects of the job like the Logies? She did an exclusive interview on the red carpet at the Logies last year, but she will not turn up and go on the *Today* show with the police minister and the Attorney-General and the youth justice minister—look at the three of them caucusing over there at the moment. None of them turned up to the youth justice forum and listened to the Queenslanders who have had family members killed by people and juveniles in this state! They did not have the fortitude, the courage, to turn up and listen to the victims of crime in this state. Shame on them!

If you want to see the arrogance of this government look no further than Treasurer Dick when he stood up this morning. We talked about a function they had last night, and what did he say? 'We had fun at the function last night.' Well, good. Good on him. I am glad he had fun. I am glad the Labor members, sipping on champagne and beer, had fun at the function last night, when people in Cairns were wondering whether their homes were going to get broken into, whether they had locked the door. So they got out of bed to check that they had locked the door, whether their utes were stolen, whether their families were going to be protected in the night. That is what the opposition leader and the LNP are talking to people in Far North Queensland about. We are not just here for the fun times and all the events that the government are organising. The Labor Party are absolutely drunk on power. It is shameful that the parliament comes to regional Queensland and the Treasurer gets up and talks about the fun times. Of course he would because that is all the Premier is interested in—the fun times of this job—not rolling her sleeves up and fixing the issues such as the housing crisis in Cairns, the homelessness issue and the youth crime crisis.

This job is not all fun, members, Premier, Treasurer Dick. It is not all about fun; this job is about responsibility and protecting Queenslanders. I am talking about the chaos of this government and their wrong priorities. Last year we had the Chief Whip attacking his local health board. The health minister then said no, there was nothing wrong with the health board she appointed. Then we had Minister Butcher say he was going to resign if the Gladstone maternity service was not put back on, but 300 days later he is still sitting there collecting his \$400,000 salary. He has not resigned and services have not been fully restored. Now we have the member for Maryborough calling for an investigation into his own government's youth justice policies. What do those three members have in common? They are all in the left faction. They are coming for the Premier. They are absolutely deliberately undermining the Premier. Look at the Attorney-General—the deputy in charge of the left faction—laughing. It is the Attorney-General who is putting these members up to do the dirty work of the Attorney-General. She is like, 'Pick me! Pick me!' instead of Steven Miles the Deputy Premier and Mark Bailey. This government is in chaos. Queenslanders deserve, and can do, so much better.

Cairns Electorate, Palaszczuk Labor Government



Mr HEALY (Cairns—ALP) (2.51 pm): It is with great pleasure that I rise as the member for Cairns to talk about some of the significant achievements of the Palaszczuk Labor government since I was lucky enough to be elected in 2017. We only have to look around where we are today to see projects such as the \$176 million expansion of the Cairns Convention Centre, which obviously honourable members are enjoying this week. Once it is completed the Cairns Convention Centre will boast an additional 10,500 square metres that will include a large undercover tropically planted drop-off entry forecourt and expanded main entry lobby, a 410-seat plenary lecture space, three 120-seat meeting rooms, a new exhibition space for up to 30 displays, and a 500-seat sky terrace with spectacular views over Trinity Inlet.

One of the key things those on the other side do not recognise is what a key economic driver this facility is. This was built by a Labor government and it is being refurbished by a Labor government. In its early days it generated around \$80 million a year. Upon completion this will generate around \$120 million a year, which is a significant investment. I was talking to the people who run this fantastic event. If you have a look at the numbers, that is 11,500 room nights just next month. That is people going to the reef, people hiring cars, people staying in hotels and going to restaurants, bars, pubs and clubs. This is one of the key economic drivers. It is fantastic.

There is no denying that, when we talk about juvenile crime, Cairns has faced some serious challenges. The police minister was trying to talk through the rabble and notify people who have made an effort to come and listen to a few facts as opposed to turmoil and speculative emotion. Our plan is to put on 2,025 extra police by 30 June 2025. That is 150 extra police here in Cairns which are desperately needed. We also know that in January of this year we opened up a new police facility in


West Cairns where eight uniformed officers are stationed. We have also delivered new mobile beat vans in the Far North. These vans can get out into communities and interact with people, which is fundamental. In addition, there was a \$10 million refurbishment of the Cairns police station and \$4 million for the McLeod Street police facility. We continue to invest.

I want to talk about the schools we are investing in. Since I was elected in 2017, \$93.4 million has been invested in school infrastructure in my electorate alone. Those of you who turned up this morning to the Clontarf event at Cairns State High School would have seen that hall. It is spectacular. We are investing in our children's future. Trinity Bay received a new two-storey secondary learning centre with 12 new learning spaces, two design studios and two robotic laboratories. This is essential. This is what we need to provide for our children as we move into the future. The Cairns School of Distance Education also has six new classrooms and Cairns West State School has six new general learning areas. Edge Hill State School is getting a new admin block, the school is being repainted and we put in extra car parking facilities. I regularly meet with principals around not just high schools but also primary schools. They have been a very strong focus of mine.

We have invested significantly in the tourism industry ever since COVID and we continue to invest. We know that what makes our destination most popular is people getting off a plane at the airport. We know that 87 per cent of our tourists get off an airplane. In the best years we are around about 2.8 million people, with 87 per cent getting off a plane. If that airport is bumpy, so is our economy. We continue to invest. Over \$200 million has been invested. We have some fantastic announcements in relation to Jetstar Bali and Jetstar Osaka. We are talking about Air Niugini. We have seen some terrific announcements with Virgin coming out of the Japanese market, which has been a fundamental investor in the Cairns region. If you have any understanding of the history of our region, you look around at the significant investment.

We continue to put money into our marine precinct. As we heard yesterday, we are putting over \$16 million into our marine college, which is a spectacular investment in our future. In the arts we have put \$15 million into the Cairns contemporary arts area, working with the regional council. We have our marine college, which I talked about. We continue to spend hundreds of millions of dollars in our hospital. Unfortunately, time has run out. We are making significant investments in this beautiful part of the world.

Police Resources

 **Mr LAST** (Burdekin—LNP) (2.56 pm): Earlier today I stood up in this place during question time and asked the police minister what I thought was a pretty straightforward, simple question: are there more or less frontline operational police on the beat today compared to two years ago? What did we get? More spin from this bumbling, incompetent minister; more spin than a Hoover washing machine. It is well and good to talk about approved officers and approved positions, but what the people of Queensland want to know is how many police officers are out there? When they make the call, how many officers are available to respond? That is what the people sitting here in the audience want to know today. They want to know how many officers there are in Cairns and how many officers there are in Mareeba, because they are getting hammered. They are sick and tired of their houses being broken into and their cars being stolen. When they leave here today they would like to know that when they get home their house is still intact and their vehicle is still in the car park when they walk outside.

It is not just me asking that question. Kev Groth, regional rep for the central region of the Queensland Police Union, stated in the *Police Journal*, 'It is clearly evident that the government's commitment of 2,025 by 2025 is now nothing more than a pipedream.' What is even more telling is the reference shortly thereafter to the results of the Working for Queensland survey, in which he describes morale and faith in senior management as being at an 'all-time low'. He goes on to ask what the government has done to address what he calls obvious issues. The answer, according to Kev Groth, is three simple words: 'not a thing'. Think about that: 'not a thing'. Despite all the promises, it is clear that our police on the front line are stretched to breaking point.

I know the Premier and minister stood up here today and talked about interstate and international recruitment. It is clear their strategy is to just keeping pouring money into that big bucket and then let's hope and pray these police are magically going to appear and join the Queensland Police Service at a time when morale is at an all-time low and at a time when we know that attrition is outstripping recruitment. To what extent is that occurring? Let me share these figures with you. For the first five months of this year to the end of April, 225 left and 90 were recruited. The majority of those who left resigned. These are not medical retirements or age retirements; these are resignations. That goes to—

Mrs Frecklington: Culture.

Mr LAST: I take that interjection—the culture in the Queensland Police Service. We need to back these guys. They are here today. There they are, up the back. We need to be backing those police officers—the men and women of the Queensland Police Service who go out there every day and put their jobs on the line for us—for Queenslanders. This is a crisis, and it is a crisis that this government made.

Let us talk about the scrapping a week ago of the commissioner's own signature project—the service delivery program. This project, according to the commissioner, would 'create optimisation for our front line to be able to be more preventative and proactive'. As the people here in Cairns and across the state know, Queenslanders need our police now more than they ever have. To say that the outcomes of this project were less than impressive would be an understatement.

This was the signature program, with many millions of dollars spent. When we went to the minister and asked him for comment, what did he say? He said, 'That's an operational issue. I don't have anything to do with that.' I am afraid to say that the buck stops with the minister. The buck absolutely stops with this minister regarding the scrapping of the service delivery program. This signature program was going to make all the difference to this state of Queensland—gone. We now have three questions. What is going to replace that program? Are we going to see the report as to why that program was scrapped?

Mrs Frecklington interjected.

Mr LAST: I take that interjection. How much did it cost Queenslanders? Because they deserve to know. This goes to the heart of law and order in this state. This goes to the heart of what we all expect of the Queensland Police Service who are out there every day putting their lives on the line for each and every one of us. What we have seen is continued failures by this government, and it is not good enough.

Cook Electorate, Waste Management



Ms LUI (Cook—ALP) (3.01 pm): I want to acknowledge the efforts of the Minister for the Environment and the Great Barrier Reef, Hon. Meaghan Scanlon, as the Palaszczuk government continues to respond to the challenge of managing waste in remote communities. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander councils—so many of them located here in Far North Queensland—face unique challenges in dealing with waste. I come from one myself and represent so many more in the electorate of Cook. Some of these challenges include scarce resources, high costs for products, geographic isolation, long transport distances by land or water, and often harsh and unpredictable climates. Our government acknowledges that these communities need tailored solutions that are appropriate for their geography, account for their access to resources and, most importantly, honour their cultural and custodial relationships with the land and sea.

That is why we have been consulting with community and co-designing strategies in relation to remote waste management. We have been building capacity in this space for many years. In 2019, in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander councils and the Local Government Association of Queensland, we released the Respecting country: A sustainable waste strategy for First Nation communities. This strategy is all about empowering councils and communities to deliver targeted solutions that create economic opportunities for innovative new enterprises and provide jobs for local people. It is when we can create these win-wins—where environmental stewardship meets economic empowerment—that we yield terrific benefits.

I want to give a shout-out to one entrepreneur I know well from an island near my home in the Torres Strait. Edmund Tamwoy is involved in two important projects on Badu Island. One of these projects involves the management of waste from abandoned cars, old whitegoods and scrap metal that has accumulated on the outer islands of the Torres Strait. They are bringing this metal waste from the outer islands to Badu Island where it is recycled or removed from the islands. We allocated \$1.75 million to see this project come to fruition, and it is terrific to see it being delivered.


The other project, in partnership with Container Exchange, was the recent establishment of the Torres Strait's first ever Containers for Change refund point. This facility began operating at the end of last year and has already processed more than 100,000 empty drink containers. In the process it has returned more than \$10,000 in refunds to the local community of around 1,200 residents. This is another great win for the community, pulling useful products out of landfill while easing pressure on household budgets.

This work is not only happening on Badu. We already have 28 container refund points across the Cook electorate. Since our government commenced Queensland's containers refund scheme in 2018,

nearly 90 million containers have been returned in the Cook electorate alone. We are also providing funding and new rubbish trucks for remote communities on Cape York. Our communities on Cape York want to be leaders in the transition to zero waste and the jobs that a circular economy can create.

Tomorrow the minister and I will meet with representatives from Northern Peninsula Area Regional Council and Kowanyama Aboriginal Shire Council to announce new rubbish trucks for their communities. The NPA will receive \$155,000 to fund a locally led litter and illegal dumping prevention and disruption program. This funding will help both councils to improve waste collection services, provide safer local jobs and deliver better environmental outcomes for their community. It is part of our \$1.1 billion Recycling and Jobs Fund that is driving Queensland's zero waste transition. Queenslanders know that the Palaszczuk government can be trusted to take action to protect our environment and provide opportunities for people in remote and regional Queensland.

Community Safety

 **Ms BOLTON** (Noosa—Ind) (3.05 pm): Anzac Day gives us the opportunity to reflect on those who gave their lives for the freedoms we have. I often wonder what they would think about the challenges we face today and how we are handling these. Victims of crime relay the reality of the impacts from perpetrators and the trauma. The horrendous behaviours of a few are leaving victims and their families reeling. Their hurts are profound. Our communities grow angrier every day because we as politicians are not doing enough to deter crime and the judicial system is failing with inadequate sentences.

Just as our service men and women and their families were not supported through their trauma, leaving broken bodies and minds that dominoed through generations, even with the best intentions and efforts, we are facing another generation of pain—physical, mental and financial. This then dominoes again to the next generation. Increasingly, we are trying to fix so many wrongs done by Queenslanders to Queenslanders. As a compassionate, educated society, we attempt this through reconciliation, compensation, rehabilitation, restitution and expanded support services. As the demand grows, so do the costs. We meet this demand through increasing taxes or taking funding from other areas. We live the ramifications daily of rationalising, decreasing, maximising or leaving it to the supply-demand chain, which has failed, for example, with our housing. As we work to rehabilitate offenders and fix the wrongs of our and their pasts, including intergenerational alcohol abuse and violence, we must deal with the present.

Remote diversion sentencing, relocation sentencing and restorative justice options—where victims can tell their offenders how their lives have irreparably been changed forever—are underfunded or have not been supported. As legislators, against advice we increase penalties in desperation, knowing it is not the answer; however, we do so to give the judicial system extra powers in response to the pleas from our communities. We rely on advice and recommendations from experts, investigations, task forces, committee inquiries, data and those with lived experience. We know that, for this small cohort of repeat offenders, there are many years of work ahead. Funds will need to be spent not only on these perpetrators and their families but also on the environment that contributed to their criminality, as well as on their victims and their families.

We must look to those who gave their lives for us and ask what they would advise. Maybe they would say to reflect on each of our own responsibilities in the mix of what is happening. Blaming governments, politicians or political parties can only go so far regarding the behaviours of ourselves, our children and our choices. Through our own actions of increasing self-entitlement, overconsumption and lack of responsibility, we are all contributors—what we purchase; what we waste, just look at our landfill; our commentary online and off; and our own addictions and beliefs that detract from parenting with boundaries, care and rules. We are both part of the solution as well as the problem.

Most of us come from a lineage of those who served our country. I know what my father, my grandfathers and my great-grandfathers would say if they were here today—that we need some tough love and that as MPs we need to set an example by sitting down and coming up with a solid bipartisan agreement. We need solutions instead of rock throwing, positioning and wedging. We do not have to sacrifice our lives as they did; we just need to step up. We need to move beyond what has become a very tired rhetoric of blame to one of truth in relation to our past, the now and future.

As we debate the Path to Treaty Bill this week, truth-telling should never be one-sided or narrow, nor relegated to an Indigenous/non-Indigenous narrative. It should include truths from all of us in this parliament. We are proud Aussies with histories and forebears that went above and beyond so that we can now work together in freedom and safety to find a path forward. If this includes uncomfortable discussions around the contributors to crime, including our own behaviours and responsibilities in this

chamber, and why in our lucky country a small proportion of Australians are increasing their enormous wealth whilst more and more join what is termed 'the new poor', so be it. Our Anzacs and forebears who fought for our freedoms would expect nothing less from us, nor will the elders past and present of the traditional custodians of these lands, winds and waters in which we all share. We can do better and must. Thank you.

North Queensland, Tourism



Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE (Sandgate—ALP) (Minister for Tourism, Innovation and Sport and Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympics and Paralympics Sport and Engagement) (3.10 pm): The Palaszczuk government has always enthusiastically backed the visitor economy and world-class tourism operators of Tropical North Queensland. It is a great honour to be in this iconic part of the state for the regional sitting of our state's parliament. This is a wonderful opportunity for all members of the parliament to learn more about the region's vibrant mix of visitor experiences and the tourism economy. There is so much to Tropical North Queensland's great lifestyle to explore and enjoy, even within walking distance of the Cairns Convention Centre.

I was so pleased that members from across the parliament have had a chance to sample and experience some of those things while they have been here in the short time that they have. I did reflect, when I heard the member for Kawana's histrionics earlier talking about red carpets and Chandon, but it was great to see him at the QHA function last night, and so many other members, including the member for Clayfield. I enjoyed his thongs—footwear, I should be clear—the footwear that the member for Clayfield was sporting at the QHA function. It was a great opportunity to engage with an important part of the visitor economy here in North Queensland, but it did involve celebrating the opportunity of being here in this great part of the world.

Last year, pent-up pandemic demand for the Tropical North's warm hospitality and visitor experiences brought more than 2½ million domestic travellers to Cairns, up 14 per cent on pre-COVID arrivals in 2019. Recovery in domestic spending increased 75 per cent to a whopping \$4.39 billion—sorry, billion. Someone has got me before about getting that wrong, haven't they?

Mr Nicholls interjected.

Mr HINCHLIFFE: I was entranced by you in the thongs—through you, Mr Speaker.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): I remind the member for Clayfield that he is on a warning.

Mr HINCHLIFFE: With a focus on recovery during the pandemic, we invested \$163.2 million to keep Tropical North tourism event and hospitality operators on their feet and workers in good jobs. Since 2018, we have delivered almost \$21 million in new and refreshed tourism infrastructure. From Reef Magic's pontoon to powered caravan sites at Paronella Park, 22 projects in this region have leveraged more than a further \$37 million in tourism experience renewals. Queensland leads the nation for domestic holidays, but there is more to do on the international tourism recovery.

Last week Australian Tourism Exchange brought hundreds of overseas-based wholesale holiday buyers and travel media to Queensland. A large number of buyers and travel writers spent up to seven days and nights sampling unforgettable and unique holiday experiences right here in the Tropical North off the back of ATE. Tourism Events Queensland's 12 bucket list itineraries featured the amazing beauty of the Torres Strait Islands and the tip of the cape, plus Indigenous cultural experiences, luxury reef tours, the Tablelands and World Heritage listed rainforests. Each itinerary was designed to make a lasting impression on buyers, and to inspire global holiday-makers.


Our \$200 million aviation war chest, in partnership with Queensland's four international airports, including Cairns, is supporting 16 new and returning direct international flights, including, as was mentioned by the member for Cairns, Virgin Australia's Tokyo Haneda to Cairns connection, landing from next month with up to 30,000 Japanese visitors a year, and almost \$70 million contribution to the local economy, and that is just the start.

Cairns is going to become the epicentre of Queensland's visitor industry for Tourism Week in November as part of this year's Year of Accessible Tourism. A who's who of the state's tourism industry will be here at three premier events. Destination IQ, an initiative of the Queensland Tourism Industry Council, brings together Indigenous tourism leaders from across Australia, as well as business and community organisations to share the ideas and strategies around developing First Nations tourism. There is also DestinationQ which is the highlight event for tourism. Tourism Week finishes with the

Queensland Tourism Awards Gala Ceremony which is a great opportunity to celebrate the success of our industry right across the state in all of our regions.

The reality is that the Palaszczuk government understands the fundamental importance of visitors to Tropical North Queensland and the multiple opportunities we have on that green and gold runway that we have through to 2032.

Federal Budget; Cost of Living

 **Mr JANETZKI** (Toowoomba South—LNP) (3.15 pm): The federal budget is being announced tonight. Traditionally, from that side of the House we would hear ministerial statement after ministerial statement; in fact, I reckon all questions from those opposite would have been about what we should expect in that Australian budget. However, it has been eerily quiet from that side of the House today.

Who can forget, though, in 2021 when we had media release after media release from the Treasurer himself? It was not so much what the government was asking for, it was nearly extortionate in its threats at the federal government at the time, the Liberal-National coalition. Who can forget in that media release there were nearly two pages of demands for the federal government, yet this time we have crickets. In that media release in 2021 it said of the then prime minister that 'he needs to pay up and deliver for Queensland'.

It is funny, when it came to the budget in 2022, when the federal Labor government cut water projects across the state, all we got from that side of the House was crickets. When Hell's Gate got cut, reprofiled, there was silence; there was nothing from that side of the House. When Urannah Dam got cut or reprofiled, there was silence; there was nothing from that side of the House. The Hughenden Irrigation Project—there was absolutely nothing from that side of the House. Fifty-fifty health funding—nothing from that side of the House.

We have seen time and again when it comes to the Treasurer and the state Labor government, it is always about the politics. It is always about the politics when it comes to the federal budget. I am looking forward to it. We saw the 90-day review from the federal infrastructure minister, Catherine King—that is the beginning—and the potential threats to key Queensland infrastructure projects. Let's see what the budget delivers tonight, but I am guessing from the Treasurer and the Labor government there is just going to be silence.

There is another area where we have seen absolute silence from the Palaszczuk Labor government and the Treasurer. We have seen today a few cherry-picked economic indicators, but we have seen silence from the Palaszczuk Labor government and the Treasurer in respect of one important issue of consequence to the Queensland people and that issue is the cost-of-living crisis. Queensland is ground zero for the cost-of-living crisis in this country. What we get from that side of the House is silence.

Last week we had ABS numbers released. The ABS numbers revealed that there was a 32 per cent increase in power prices in Queensland for the quarter, and we had a promise 150 times from that side of the House that power prices would be reduced. Nothing but silence from the Treasurer. We had healthcare costs go up 5.4 per cent for the last quarter, yet we still have the Treasurer backing his patient tax. We have seen some advertisements in the *Courier-Mail*. Most times the Treasurer loves advertisements in newspapers across the country because it is photos of him handing out hard-earned taxpayer dime to billionaires—tens of millions of dollars to the billionaires of Australia.

Let's focus on what matters to real Queenslanders. Real Queenslanders care about the cost of living and the cost to see the doctor. We have seen those advertisements. I will table that for the House. In a quarter where healthcare costs have gone up 5.4 per cent, the Treasurer is still backing his patient tax, and it will cost Queenslanders more to see the doctor.

Tabled paper: Document, undated, titled 'Queensland Government: It's time to listen! Queenslanders need Bulk Billing' [\[609\]](#).


Tabled paper: Media release, dated 9 May 2021, by the then Premier and Minister for Trade, Hon. Anastacia Palaszczuk, and the then Treasurer and Minister for Investment, Hon. Cameron Dick, titled 'Time for Scott Morrison to deliver for Queensland' [\[610\]](#).

Then there was the 3.4 per cent increase for housing costs. In the Far North we have seen, since the Palaszczuk government was elected, a 60 per cent year-on-year decrease in residential lots being approved. We have seen infrastructure falling behind. We see key projects that have just not been prepared.

In the budget in a month's time, we want to see as much support given to this region as possible in cost-of-living support, but until this government addresses the underlying problems for the cost of

living, get on top of the crime crisis to drive down insurance premiums, deliver infrastructure in lots into the market to drive down housing costs, and to keep a lid on healthcare costs, they will never understand the true impact, the real lived experience of those in the Queensland economy. They are not listening, they are not acting and they fail to understand the real cost of their failures on the cost of living.

Federal Labor Government

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Minister for Health and Ambulance Services) (3.20 pm): I am very pleased to follow the member for Toowoomba South. I am more than happy to talk about the federal government and contrast the previous federal government, the Morrison government, or the Abbott government or the Turnbull government with the Albanese government. Let's have a look at these two. I was astounded that the member for Toowoomba South stood here and started talking about access to GPs. Seriously, we had 10 years under a Liberal National government at a federal level which did nothing to support GPs or the Medicare system. Why? Because the Liberals do not like the Medicare system; we know that. It was Labor who brought in the Medicare system.

Mr Healy interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Order! Member for Cairns, you need to be in your correct seat to interject.

Mrs D'ATH: They did not just ignore it; they froze it. That has meant that we have some of the lowest levels of access to bulk-billing, accessibility and affordability. Those sitting in the gallery today know that the difficulty in getting to a GP is, one, to find a GP who does not have a closed list and then to find one that bulk-bills that is affordable. When we talk about cost-of-living pressures, we have to talk about the cost of health care and accessibility. Pressures on our public hospital system are very much contributed to when people with complex and acute conditions cannot access GPs at the right time and in the right place. It is very difficult; their conditions are exacerbated. We need people able to get that care.

Ms Camm interjected.

Mrs D'ATH: I will take that interjection from the member for Whitsunday. There are no new taxes being applied to these GPs. There is a New South Wales ruling, but that ruling did not change the way the Queensland Revenue Office applied that. However, the Treasurer has led the way nationally in making sure there is no implementation of that ruling, which has always been there, so they can have surety going forward over the next couple of years. That is really important because it is only Labor governments that are trying to work with the primary care sector as well as our tertiary hospitals and our public hospital system, and the same goes for housing.

When we talk about the cost of living, it is not like inflation started the moment the Albanese government came to office. What did the Morrison government do? He did nothing during COVID to support our community. In fact, we had to fight the rhetoric out there, the misinformation, and they picked fights with state and territory leaders at the risk of people's lives. I will say that. They did not ensure we had enough vaccines. They did not ensure enough had access to rapid antigen tests. They did not protect the most vulnerable in the aged-care centres as they were supposed to do. That is what they said they would do. Across the states and territories we were all assured, 'Don't worry, you can rely on us to look after those residents in aged-care facilities when COVID starts coming through the communities,' but they did not. They let them down.

Ms Camm interjected.

Mrs D'ATH: I will take that interjection around Gladstone. We are doing everything possible to recruit amongst a national and international shortage of health workers.

Ms Camm: In Brisbane?

Mrs D'ATH: We are doing everything possible to recruit in the regions.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Pause the clock. The minister has taken your interjection and is responding to it and you are continuing to interject.

Mrs D'ATH: We are seeking to recruit not only domestically but internationally as well. I have recently said that four international doctors were offered positions and had accepted. One has since chosen to take up a position elsewhere. We are working with those doctors. There are processes that we need to go through with colleges in terms of accreditation, with Ahpra and with immigration and we

are working with the Commonwealth. We have a Commonwealth government that understands we need to streamline those processes so we can be competitive in attracting international doctors and specialists to this country.

We also need to train our own. The fact is that the Morrison government actually took Commonwealth supported places for medical students away from Queensland and gave them to regional New South Wales. We have to train up our own. We want JCU and Central Queensland University training in their medical schools in the regions the kids who go to school there, who grow up there, who want to study medicine there and who want to work there. That is what we want because that helps us grow our own and make sure we have the supply chain of workers.

The opposition have put up no alternatives. How would they recruit health workers? What are their health policies? They have a four-point plan that has no jobs, no new hospitals, no beds and no money.


(Time expired)

PATH TO TREATY BILL

Second Reading

Resumed from p. 1242, on motion of Mr Crawford—

That the bill be now read a second time.

 **Hon. LM ENOCH** (Algera—ALP) (Minister for Communities and Housing, Minister for Digital Economy and Minister for the Arts) (3.26 pm): Before I begin I acknowledge the Gimuy Walubara Yidinji people and the Yirrganydji and Djabugay people of this region. I also acknowledge all the First Nations peoples who are in the gallery witnessing this very important debate today. I also acknowledge my colleagues the member for Cook and the member for Bundamba. We are three First Nations people in this parliament who obviously have a great deal of commitment and attachment to this debate today.

I rise in support of the Path to Treaty Bill 2023 and, in doing so, contribute to what can only be described as a history-making moment in Queensland. Over the past 200-plus years, since first contact, there have been a number of legislative and policy themes specifically related to the first peoples of this country: the first wars brought about by the policies of eradication and annihilation during the invasion of this continent where Queensland was the location for multiple conflicts including recorded massacres right across this state; the segregation policies that saw First Nations peoples forcibly moved from their ancient homelands and corralled onto government run missions; the assimilation policies that oversaw a generation of children stolen from their families based on the colour of their skin; and the self-determination policies that sought to create the foundations of community control but failed to ensure a balanced and equal power base.

Colonisation and its multiple policy settings underpinned by an absence of treaty has left its mark on our state and on our identity. Today we set a legislative course to look deeply and honestly into the path that was laid out when terra nullius, this country's first lie, provided the foundation for the discarding of First Nations peoples who have lived in and cared for this place for thousands of generations. Today we set in legislation a new conversation regarding our story as a people not only through the honest conversations regarding the truth of our past but also through new, profound conversations about who we are today and who we want to be into the future.

This new legislative course will not always be comfortable or easy. There will be times when it will be hard to navigate, when the truth will be painful and shameful, when the truth will be opening up the very challenges that will be so complex that our resolve to take these steps will be tested. Importantly, there will be moments of great clarity and breakthrough when we will recognise our collective contribution to our identity as a people and moments of tremendous healing when our understanding of who we truly are is deepened as we forge a path forward of shared prosperity and understanding. This is fundamentally the basis of this bill.

I would like to acknowledge the work of the Community Support and Services Committee: the committee chair, the member for Mansfield, Corrine McMillan; and the committee members, including the member for Cook, Cynthia Lui, the first Torres Strait Islander person ever elected to any parliament in Australia; the member for Nicklin, Rob Skelton; the deputy chair, the member for Burnett; and the members for Oodgeroo and Maiwar. I also acknowledge Minister Crawford and his department for their

leadership and dedication to this important work along with the former minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander partnerships Jackie Trad, who committed government to this journey.

I especially want to recognise the courage and strength of the members of the Interim Truth and Treaty Body, the Treaty Advancement Committee, the Treaty Working Group and the Eminent Panel who, over many years, carried so gently and respectfully the stories, views, experiences, hopes and aspirations of those who have gone before us. Some dedicated their entire lives to the notion of treaty; many of them are no longer with us. This bill is a tribute to those who have brought us this far, and it is also a commitment to those who are yet to come.

The Path to Treaty Bill will establish a First Nations Treaty Institute to develop a framework for treaty negotiations and to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to prepare for those negotiations. The bill also sets in train a Truth-telling and Healing Inquiry to examine the impacts of colonisation and to facilitate healing.


The committee's report includes 18 recommendations. The recommendations related to truth-telling in particular are of great significance at this point on our path to treaty. Recommendation 12 suggests that the terms of reference for the Truth-telling and Healing Inquiry should explicitly recognise the relationship between truth-telling and treaty. This is critical. The path to treaty can only be forged when the truth of our sometimes ugly and uncomfortable and confronting past is understood and acknowledged. Simply put, the relationship between truth-telling and treaty is indivisible and it should be acknowledged in the inquiry's terms of reference.

Recommendation 14 seeks to ensure that evidence obtained during the Truth-telling and Healing Inquiry is managed appropriately. In undertaking this inquiry we are asking First Nations people to come forward, some for the first time, and share personal accounts that may have been held within families for generations, or it may be a first-person account of their own lived experiences. When a person offers to share a significant part of their story, it is incumbent upon us to receive that story with respect and in a culturally and emotionally aware way. Indeed, if the inquiry is to achieve its goal, we must ensure it is a safe space for First Nations people to speak the truth.

How we then hold the truths that are shared and retell them when permission has been given is also important to the treaty process. Within my portfolio, this is an issue I have given significant consideration to as I have responsibility for the Queensland State Archives. As the custodian of nearly 200 years of Queensland government records, the Archives has an important role to play in supporting Path to Treaty. Records held in the State Archives tell the story of the colonisation of Queensland, the impacts of which still affect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and the community more broadly today.

In June 2021, after releasing a statement of intent, the State Archives developed the First Nations First program to begin the journey to welcome, include and involve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the gathering, managing and keeping of Queensland's state records. The First Wars project has involved researching and sharing archival evidence of frontier conflict for the first time. The project identified, digitised and assessed over 4,000 records relating to frontier violence in the 19th and 20th centuries with a focus on the state sanctioned native police. Importantly, last year over 11,000 archival items relating to First Nations peoples were digitised. This work will help First Nations peoples to tell their stories during the Truth-telling and Healing Inquiry. Opening up our state's archives is critical. It will allow Queenslanders to see firsthand the records of events written, in many instances by the very individuals responsible for the sad and often unimaginable acts of our past.

Right now in Australia we have not one but two opportunities to deliver a better future for generations to come. Later this year a referendum will be held regarding the recognition of First Nations peoples in the Constitution through a Voice to Parliament. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have strived for over a century to be recognised as the first peoples of this land. This year we can place that recognition in the Constitution through a permanent Voice to Parliament. This year Queenslanders have the opportunity to say 'yes'—yes to voice, yes to treaty, yes to truth. This bill marks a significant step in Queensland's path to treaty. Through this legislation we will speak the truth about our shared past and begin a new conversation. I wholeheartedly commend this bill to the House.

 **Dr ROBINSON** (Oodgeroo—LNP) (3.35 pm): I rise today to contribute to the debate of the Path to Treaty Bill 2023. I start by acknowledging that a lot of work has been done by many people over the last few years and, in effect, decades before—including interim committees and even more recently our parliamentary committee—across the state in the form of conversations, meetings, briefings and hearings and other ways of connecting and listening to what local Indigenous and other Queenslanders feel about our relationships going forward.

Up-front, I want to say that we all need to keep working together for a harmonised future for our children's and our grandchildren's sake. While much is still unresolved about our history, there is also reason for optimism about the future when you consider that each generation of Australians has a better understanding of the issues and challenges we face. In terms of the purpose of the bill, the explanatory notes state—

The Path to Treaty is a shared journey between the Queensland Government, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and non-Indigenous Queenslanders—a key reform with the ultimate goal of negotiating a treaty or treaties that will reframe and strengthen the relationship between Queensland's First Nations and the wider community.

They further state—

The Path to Treaty seeks a foundation for a better future for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. A respectful relationship between the State and First Nations peoples. And from this foundation, benefit for all Queenslanders.

They go on to describe the bill as 'foundational legislation designed to drive Path to Treaty' and do so by establishing: a First Nations Treaty Institute to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to develop and provide a framework for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to prepare for and then commence treaty negotiations with the Queensland government; and a Truth-telling and Healing Inquiry to inquire into, and report on, the effects of colonisation on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. There are a whole range of other aspects and stated objectives that other speakers, the minister and shadow ministers have covered, so I will not repeat the reframing of those relationships.

There are several things that have informed my views over time in terms of my experience of Indigenous Australians, my appreciation of them and the situations they face. The first was my employment in the 1980s and early 1990s in Townsville in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education. When working with students and parents, I saw the benefit of the mix of both cultural and western education to the students who were committed to homework programs or private tutorials in their home. Through that, many of these children went on to get good jobs, earn a good income, find dignity in work and give back to their own communities. My early experiences in education were that every dollar invested into Aboriginal education was very important and significant and achieved great outcomes.

The second was my connection with and work in community development—prior to politics again, and mostly in a Christian ministry context. I worked with pastors—some Aboriginal, some Islander, some Anglo and some from other cultures—in Christian ministry work in Queensland but also in visiting regions like Western Australia and the Kimberley to provide health services, youth work and Christian pastoral services, based on the gospel message of God's love for all peoples and the call for Christian people to serve and love and care for all people. Over history, many elements of the church got that right in their provision of medical and health services, care and education. In other places and times they got it wrong and, as an arm of colonialism, sometimes got too close to the work of the governments of the day. In some cases it was state interference in the church, seeing churches almost as an arm of government.

The third area is my work with Indigenous peoples as a member of parliament for 14 years in the seat of Cleveland, now the seat of Oodgeroo, with the Goenpul, Ngugi and Noonuccal in the Redlands Coast Quandamooka area, particularly my experience with leading elders like Aunty Margaret Iselin and her husband, Pat, and their family and Aunty Joan Hendriks and other leaders and Quandamooka elders. I want to respectfully note that very sadly in recent years Aunty Margaret, Pat and Aunty Joan have passed away. I pay my respects.

My experience as the local MP working alongside traditional owners for 14 years has been a rewarding and very positive experience for me, helping me to understand Indigenous culture and its strengths. However, less positive has been witnessing—and the government may not want to hear this—the failure of two Labor governments, the Bligh and Palaszczuk governments, to honour their promises and deliver tangible benefits to Indigenous people that actually close the gap of disadvantage. For example, this government has promised for eight years to build Aboriginal housing on North Stradbroke Island. The government has not been able to confirm whether it has built any houses at all. Indigenous leaders say that the number built is zero. The government does not want to answer this question and be accountable for the things it says and the commitments it makes. That is its history—and for 30 years, mostly, we have had Labor state governments. It has managed to spend on North Stradbroke Island approximately \$40 million to build no new houses. Then the government says that the Indigenous land use agreement will deliver further land to build on, but the Quandamooka leaders say that some of the land set aside for building on is unsuitable. One parcel of land as part of the ILUA

is actually a swamp that has been set aside potentially for Aboriginal housing. They are understandably feeling very ripped off by that.

Now, as we consider what a treaty or multiple treaties may mean, Labor wants Queenslanders to trust it and ignore its record of non-delivery as it once again promises the world to Indigenous people. It is these broken promises, not proving to be truthful and not being trustworthy, that has caused some elders on North Stradbroke Island, Minjerribah, to be wary very much even of the Path to Treaty. Some of them in that discussion have said that they were not part of consultation and they feel completely left out. I think the government has some serious repair work to do there.

They well know that since the early 1990s Labor has been in power for almost 30 years. They are tired of big-promising Labor governments that have had 30 years to form treaties or other forms of agreement yet have not done so, and they are wary of this new round of promises—sadly.

The fourth area is my experience of the native title claim on North Stradbroke Island, Minjerribah—the good and the other, with the secretive Indigenous land use agreement that caused upset amongst many of the traditional owners who were not consulted and felt cut out of the process. In fact, many of them were offended and have said from time to time to me, ‘We were completely unaware that that was something in our own ILUA.’ I think that is a very unacceptable process. The secretive approach of the government under Jackie Trad caused further division between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples and between Indigenous groups themselves. To this day, Quandamooka leaders claim there has been financial mismanagement and funds still not accounted for.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Pause the clock. Member, I have provided some latitude to you because I believe you have been exploring alternative policy approaches, but I think you are now straying well away from the long title of the bill. I would ask you to come back to the substance of the long title of the bill.


Dr ROBINSON: As we look at the Path to Treaty Bill 2023, there are questions, concerns and risks about this path that have been expressed by Quandamooka leaders to me. I gave them a commitment that I would raise these issues in the House. In terms of the issues they have raised, I have talked about Labor’s track record as a risk and challenge. I also mention the issue of modelling off New Zealand. While there is much we can learn, we need to be careful. New Zealand has been on this track for some 50 years and it has done a lot of very good work.

Government members interjected.

Dr ROBINSON: It is 50 years since the legislation was introduced in the early 1970s, according to the federal minister in New Zealand. Concerns have also been raised around finance and around consultation. There is a lot of work that Indigenous leaders believe needs to happen for this pathway to be successful. I also mention the statement of reservation by the LNP.

(Time expired)

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I remind all members that if they want to interject they need to be in their allocated seat.

 **Mr McCALLUM** (Bundamba—ALP) (3.45 pm): First Nations and non-First Nations Queenslanders are together, and we have been together for a couple of hundred years now. Our lives, our stories and our songlines have been intertwined for generations, and they will be forever more. This is a simple but powerful fact. It is also a cornerstone of our Path to Treaty Bill.

It is fair to say that Queensland, like other states and territories in Australia, has a long and complex history when it comes to the relationship with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Colonisation brought with it policies and actions that have resulted in deep trauma that has permeated through generations. The forced removal of children from their families, the dispossession of land and the suppression and almost complete erasure of culture and language: these are uncomfortable truths of our shared past but ones we must face together. This is why there have been growing calls and momentum towards reconciliation by so many for so long. With this bill we mark one of the most significant milestones towards reconciliation in Queensland’s history. With this bill the Palaszczuk government is delivering on our commitment to reframing the relationship with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people through a shared path to treaty.

Treaty is a manifestation of a commitment for government to work with our First Nations people, to face the injustices of the past together and to make the most of our future. Treaty acknowledges the fact that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are the original inhabitants of this land—this

country we call home and our deep and abiding connection to it. This bill and the treaty framework it provides for will help directly and meaningfully address the ongoing impacts of structural, systemic dispossession and disadvantage that even today continues to result in lower life expectancy, higher rates of incarceration and lower levels of education and employment.

A full response to systemic racism and structural disadvantage needs effective levers to drive systemic change. Policies and service provision, as important as they are, can only do so much. They are not the complete solution. We know this to be true by looking at the evidence of past attempts to close the gap, including those of the present day.

Treaty provides a path for addressing these issues. Treaty can facilitate generational change. It can take the hurt, pain and suffering of the past and lay down a path to a positive future for our coming generations. Treaty builds stronger, more respectful relationships between Indigenous peoples and non-Indigenous peoples in Queensland through the dialogue and the understanding that it inherently brings with it.

To be clear, the path to treaty is not an easy road, but it is a vital one. It requires a willingness to engage in open and honest dialogue, to listen to the voices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and to work together to find solutions that are fair and just for everyone. It is about building relationships, respecting cultures and celebrating diversity.

This bill has two main parts. It will establish the Treaty Institute and commence a Truth-telling and Healing Inquiry. The Treaty Institute will help develop and provide a framework to prepare and then commence treaty negotiations with the Queensland government whilst the inquiry will hear and chronicle both First Nations and non-First Nations stories. This inquiry will nominally run for three years, but the bill provides for that to be extended by the minister of the day, and this is in acknowledgement that where we are going is completely new territory. It has never been done before in Queensland. It is a shared journey between both First Nations and non-First Nations Queenslanders.

I want to acknowledge the vision, leadership and courage of our Premier in bringing this bill to the parliament and for bringing us to this point. It would have been easy to put this in the too-hard basket. Many leaders have done exactly that in the past. I also want to acknowledge my fellow First Nations parliamentarians—the members for Algester and Cook. I want to acknowledge the incredible work and commitment of the Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships. I want to acknowledge all of the members who have contributed to the Path to Treaty process here in Queensland over several years and I want to acknowledge the work of the committee in examining this bill and the incredible personal commitment of the committee chair, the member for Mansfield. I also want to acknowledge every single ally of First Nations people here in Queensland and right throughout the country who have been there in big ways and in small ways to help over the years to bring us to this moment, and that includes the work of the members of our local Bundamba reconciliation group. Most of all, I want to acknowledge the strength, resilience and grace of our elders and of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. It is a humbling moment for me personally to be able to stand here as a proud Queenslander, an Aboriginal Gubbi Gubbi man, a legislator, a policymaker, a representative of the Bundamba community and a member of the Palaszczuk government.

Should the federal Voice referendum pass, as I truly hope it does, later this year, then, coupled with this bill, Queensland will be uniquely placed to achieve voice, treaty and truth. Treaty is, by definition, consensus. It is agreement; it is respect. Treaty is a fair go. It is about acknowledging the past and working together to create a more just and equitable society for the future. Ultimately, treaty is about a better future for all Queenslanders. In the words of Yothu Yindi from its signature song *Treaty*—

Now two rivers run their course

Separated for so long

I'm dreaming of a brighter day

When the waters will be one

Treaty can turn that dream into reality. It can turn hope into belief. I commend the bill to the House.



Ms BOLTON (Noosa—Ind) (3.54 pm): I want to acknowledge the traditional custodians of Queensland, its Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and pay my respects to their elders past, present and emerging and also special gratitude to all for the beautiful welcome to country this morning. This bill is another step into our future. It is about providing for the making of a treaty or treaties with our First Australians by setting up a process in which to negotiate with our original custodians. The first

step was the establishment in 2019, as we have heard, of an Eminent Panel of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders and non-Indigenous Queenslanders as well as a Treaty Working Group. These groups made recommendations on the Path to Treaty, truth-telling, healing and capacity building.

When I first heard of this Path to Treaty, I asked what it would do and achieve. This bill provides part of the answer, firstly by establishing a First Nations Treaty Institute to provide a legal framework for First Australians to prepare for and commence treaty negotiations with the Queensland government. The committee has recommended that the government reconsider the use of the word 'institute'. It may appear innocuous. However, from an Indigenous perspective, as we have heard, that represents the institutionalisation that they have been subjected to. The bill also establishes a Truth-telling and Healing Inquiry appointed by the government with a majority of First Australians. The inquiry will examine and document the individual and societal effects of colonisation, promote community awareness and understandings of these impacts, and make recommendations to government. Importantly though, this inquiry must provide an avenue for all Indigenous Australians to have input, especially those in remote locations who have vastly different experiences of colonisation and its impacts than those maybe in the more built-up areas.

Overwhelmingly submitters supported the bill in principle—from the Queensland Local Government Association to the Queensland Art Gallery and the Queensland University of Technology. Out of 35 submissions, there was only one opposing which believed that it might be divisive as it will treat Indigenous people differently. The committee made 18 recommendations, with a couple in response to submissions which questioned the timing for the completion of the Truth-telling and Healing Inquiry. For example, the Queensland Law Society did not consider three years sufficient given the complexity and depth of consideration required, with the committee recommending an increase to five years. I note the lack of appropriate consultation—we have brought this up a number of times from committees—as relayed by the member for Maiwar. Two months is just not enough time.

Other recommendations highlighted the need for education on the difference between the Path to Treaty, the Uluru Statement from the Heart and the Voice to Parliament, as submitters suggested that there was confusion about these separate but related processes, and from my own experience in my community there definitely is. Another recommendation is for the Queensland school curriculum to reflect the shared history of the state of Queensland, and this is vital. In Noosa we have learned about the complexity of Indigenous groups, beliefs and traditions versus western lore. This diversity was recognised by the Cairns Regional Council in its submission where it stated that there are over 50 First Nations language groups across Queensland, with the Cairns region being home to the largest number of individual traditional custodial groups, each with their own unique laws, traditions, languages, culture and traditional knowledge. This can be confusing for non-Indigenous Queenslanders, leading to many questions from our communities that often as MPs we have not been able to answer, hence why we need mechanisms to understand this diversity, with the committee recommending that the decentralised and expansive geography of Queensland be recognised and that the Treaty Institute be organised accordingly to develop approaches to manage this diversity to prevent fracturing as well as misunderstandings.

Another recommendation was around ensuring appropriate engagement with non-Indigenous Queenslanders throughout this process. This is essential. As one non-Indigenous health worker with 10 years experience in Indigenous communities said in a submission—

There are three sides to this treaty process—the state, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and non-Indigenous Queenslanders. For this to be successful we all have to be informed and engaged with this process. It also is part of a bigger picture and a long-term path.

The committee did recommend that the government conduct a broad public awareness and information campaign. However, it needs to go much further. We need to actually listen and move beyond the tick and flick by not talking at Queenslanders. We need to talk with them and accept that opposing views are essential for a well-functioning society. Most importantly, the labelling needs to stop. Not agreeing to a majority viewpoint should not lead to those in a minority being labelled as anti 'somethings' as it creates fear and intimidation. Truth-telling requires a safe space. Ultimately we are all Australians, and when any Australian suffers we all suffer. The wrongs inflicted upon our First Australians continue: unacceptable health impacts, incarceration rates and unemployment.


As Noel Pearson said recently in speaking about the Voice to Parliament, it is not about guilt or atonement; it is about recognition. Path to Treaty is another part of that recognition and provides Queensland with an avenue to listen, learn and deliver much better futures for all. That should not take away from other Queenslanders who have had many wrongs inflicted in their histories as well through

wars, poverty and crimes which continue today. There is much hurt, and these shared hurts are one essential component and connector in the healing.

As we embark on this journey in our own small way in Noosa, as in many other communities, we have experienced the complexities around processes such as native title claims and Indigenous land use agreements. As I have raised during previous committee inquiries and in relation to the Cooloola Great Walk, the confidential nature of these negotiations leave room for conjecture leading to misinformation and mistrust. It is important that treaty negotiations be transparent as part of reducing conflict and ensuring this is a path we all travel together. It is also essential that there is an avenue provided for conflict resolution between First Nations groups, not only now—and we do need it now—but also heading down this path.

There are further lessons we have learned from our own Noosa experiences: the need to invest the time and resources to ensure any process brings Indigenous groups together with the information they need to make important decisions. This includes access to meetings, either physically or online. The second is to organise gatherings where Indigenous groups and non-Indigenous groups can ask questions and share knowledge openly and in a safe space. This bill is not just a piece of legislation; it starts a journey for all Indigenous Queenslanders, a journey for those of us who are non-Indigenous, a journey that should never discriminate where we were born. It should not be rushed nor feared. It does not take away our respective histories. It must be transparent, informative and expansive. Importantly, it needs to be undertaken with compassion, respect and shared vision with an understanding that along the journey not everyone will agree. Mistakenly, we often believe that our First Australians would unite in beliefs and efforts to reach a shared vision. However, as we have found, just like the rest of us, they often do not agree on the way to get there. This is okay. Again, differing viewpoints should be celebrated, as these differences are opportunities for greater understanding, knowledge and growth.

In closing, I thank the minister, departments, the committee members and chair and their secretariat for their efforts on this bill. This has been a big piece of work done under unacceptable tight time frames. Thank you to all Queenslanders who participated through submissions, hearings and forums. To all who have assisted in my own community—including some very diverse sides of Kabi Kabi or Gubbi Gubbi peoples—to help us develop greater understandings on the differences, I extend my deep appreciation. Even though it has been difficult, at times frustrating and confusing, we have learned much and know that in the coming months and years we will learn so much more. I commend this bill to the House.

 **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) (4.03 pm): We have a great honour to share Queensland with cultures whose rich histories date back 65,000 years. Our First Nations people called these lands home long before Europeans made their way here. But to our great shame these cultures were never recognised when the first Europeans deemed this land *terra nullius*—nobody's land—a declaration which disregarded the world's oldest living culture and set the stage for centuries of disadvantage and inequality. The treatment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders in this state has often been deeply shameful. We have so much to be proud of as Queenslanders, but this is an unfortunate stain on our history. One that, as lawmakers and leaders in our communities, we have a responsibility to make right.

I am proud to support the Path to Treaty Bill because it will put us on the path to right those wrongs. The bill will establish the First Nations Treaty Institute and healing inquiry which will be empowered to develop a framework for treaty negotiations and begin the truth-telling process across Queensland. Treaty will recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders as the original custodians of the land, waters and air of Queensland and will provide the foundation for a better relationship.

This is an important moment for Queensland. We can choose to make peace with a violent past and right those historic wrongs. I said when speaking in memory of Queensland Elizabeth II that it should not be controversial to recognise the harm of colonisation on our First Nations peoples. We see it to this day in our incarceration rates, in the worst health outcomes, in the education gap. Path to Treaty will be a path to closing those gaps. It will be a path to tell and hear the truth. Along with constitutional recognition and the Voice, it is the path Australia's First Nations peoples generously invited us to walk with them in the Uluru Statement from the Heart. In supporting this bill we accept their offer and take another step on the path to treaty, a pathway I am proud to walk alongside our First Nations peoples, including the member for Algester, the member for Cook and the member for Bundamba, led by the Premier and the member for Barron River, the minister. I commend the bill to the House.



Mrs FRECKLINGTON (Nanango—LNP) (4.06 pm): I rise to contribute to the Path to Treaty Bill 2023. The Path to Treaty Bill 2023 is foundational legislation designed to drive Path to Treaty. As a regional member of parliament and one who represents the Indigenous community of Cherbourg and many Indigenous people who live across the great electorate of Nanango, it is vitally important that members of my community understand what this bill means and represents. However, it is with deep sadness that I note that even the committee chair acknowledged that they did not get enough time to come to the electorate of Nanango and, indeed, even consult with the good people of Cherbourg, of Murgon, of Wondai, of Kingaroy and of Yarraman. They did not consult with those people because eight weeks simply is not enough. To think that the Labor government could just miss out Cherbourg beggars belief.

The objectives of the bill are to establish a First Nations Treaty Institute and a Truth-telling and Healing Inquiry. This will be complex. It will not be a single treaty. It will involve hundreds of treaties between various First Nations peoples and between First Nations peoples and the state government. That is why the government must get it right. It could start by consulting with the people of Cherbourg.

There are several concerns that have been raised about this bill which must be addressed. Firstly, it was noted at all public hearings by the committee, and I note that it has been said in this chamber here today, that there is a level of confusion between the federal Voice to Parliament debate and the lack of knowledge of the Path to Treaty Bill. In a recent article in my local paper, the *Burnett Today*, our mayor of Cherbourg Aboriginal Council Elvie Sandow, said—

Our community is saying they're actually getting confused ... even with the Path to Treaty ... it's confusing our people.

Mayor Sandow says her Council is trying to get clarity around the Path to Treaty, let alone the propose 'Voice to Parliament'.

This was supported by the Local Government Association of Queensland who shared this direct feedback from local councils—

A key area of confusion is how the State Treaty interacts with the Federal Voice. The lack of clear communications around these elements is resulting in many to not know about the Treaty unless they are explicitly involved in the process.

The article goes on—

One of the biggest challenges is a lot of people don't know what the Treaty is and where it has come from. There is real uncertainty as to where the concept of specifically establishing a Treaty Institute or Truth Telling Inquiry came from. Noting that the proposal seems more reflective of SEQ rather than all regions more broadly.

It was in the parliamentary chamber in Brisbane during the last sitting week when a minister of this government, the minister for Indigenous affairs, said that the communities are not feeling heard by the government. Why is the minister not listening to communities such as Cherbourg? Why is he not listening to the good people of my electorate and those of all the other Indigenous communities who did not have the opportunity to contribute to this committee process, which went for eight measly weeks? What is the government trying to hide? What do they not want to listen to?

That leads me to the complexities the Path to Treaty will experience as it must represent the whole of Queensland and not just the louder voices in the south-east. The future Treaty Institute must consider how to effectively engage all of Queensland. There is merit in suggestions that subcommittees of the institute be created for West Queensland, North Queensland, Central Queensland and South-East Queensland. There are huge complexities and geographical challenges and we all know that. Once again, the LGAQ shared many comments from local councils and I again note the shortness of time.

In relation to the limited time for consultation, this is a historic piece of legislation, yet the Labor government chose to allow the committee only eight weeks to consider the bill. That is an extremely tight time frame. Again, I note that the time line was so tight that they could not even go to Cherbourg. At most public forums participants raised the lack of information. Of course, given the short time line, attendance was poor. I have already noted that no public forum was held in Cherbourg, which was very disappointing. Given that the Path to Treaty process has been in development supposedly since 2019, a more realistic committee review period would have allowed for better engagement that fostered more respect and trust in the process.

The bill proposes to establish a statutory body to progress the process and it is to be called the Treaty Institute. There was overwhelming feedback that the word 'institute' is not appropriate and should be changed. I support that recommendation based on the evidence that was given.

The LNP opposition clearly cannot trust the Labor government to administer anything let alone this bill. Let us look at the last few years in Queensland and the Closing the Gap annual reports. There are many examples of Closing the Gap targets that are simply not on track. In health, closing the gap in life expectancy by 2031 is not on track. Instead, in Queensland the life expectancy gap is currently

7.8 years for males and 6.7 years for females. The significant and sustained reduction of suicide in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples towards zero, again, is not on track. The proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children assessed as developmentally on track in all five domains of the Australian early development census, again, is not on track. In education, last year's budget showed significant failures to reach learning outcome targets for Indigenous students across all year levels in reading, writing and numeracy. In housing, to increase the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in appropriate sized housing by 2031, again, is not on track. Approximately 20 per cent of Indigenous Australians in remote communities live in overcrowded households. That is not on track under this Palaszczuk Labor government.

Many times in the chamber I have spoken about the crime issue. Youth crime is seriously affecting the South Burnett and Cherbourg. Again, I reiterate the words of Mayor Elvie Sandow who, late last year, spoke out about her community being outraged, frustrated, frightened and fed up. She said—

We wish to make it known we do NOT in any way condone car theft.

We share our community's frustration and disgust at those who are endangering the lives of not just themselves and their friends, but our Gundoo, elders, uncles and aunties who live here. You are not a hero or clever, stealing cars, speeding and skidding through the streets ...

You are not just giving yourself a bad name, you are giving our Cherbourg community a bad name and reputation.

My communities of Cherbourg and the South Burnett just want to be heard by this government. They want to be heard on the issues that are important to them on a day-to-day basis: housing, crime, health, education and the cost of living. Those are the issues that are affecting my communities. The minister himself said that the Indigenous communities of Queensland are not being heard by this government. It is about time that the Palaszczuk Labor government stopped navel gazing and started listening to our communities.



Hon. SM FENTIMAN (Waterford—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, Minister for Women and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence) (4.15 pm): I would like to begin by acknowledging the traditional owners of the land on which we meet today, the Gimuy Walubara Yidinji peoples, the Djabugay and the Yirrganydji peoples, and pay my respects to elders past, present and emerging. I also acknowledge the deep connection that First Nations people have with the land, rainforest and sea. As the Minister for Women, I particularly acknowledge the role of First Nations women who, for 3,000 generations, have provided wisdom, leadership and protection to two of the world's oldest continuous living cultures.

Queensland is enriched by its unique First Nations heritage and by its cultural history and traditions. Addressing the ongoing impacts of colonisation for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, families and communities is long overdue in Queensland. Significant injustices persist to this day—injustices that we, as a society, must overcome and that we, as legislators, must take responsibility for amending.

I am honoured to serve as the Ministerial Champion of the Torres Strait. I acknowledge that Queensland is enriched by the culture and traditions of this unique and distinct culture. I am so privileged to work in that role alongside the member for Cook, who is the first Torres Strait Islander elected to any parliament in the world. The people across Zenadth Kes have welcomed me into their homes and their hearts, and have shared with me an abundance of knowledge and stories. In particular, my adopted Torres Strait mother, Aunty Rose, even bestowed upon me my own traditional Torres Strait name, Dana Kuth. That name is derived from the emblem totem crocodile, and means 'vision'. With the member for Cook, so many other advocates across Zenadth Kes and so many people in this chamber, for the first time in Queensland's history we helped cultural lore—L-O-R-E—become law—L-A-W—with the passing of the Meriba Omasker Kaziw Kazipa bill. That is something that I was very proud to be associated with.

The Path to Treaty Bill takes active steps towards healing and creating a new relationship for all Queenslanders to prosper and deliver better economic, employment, health and housing outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. It is an opportunity for us to begin to write the wrongs of the past, confront our shared history and collectively determine how we want to move forward. The bill will establish the mechanisms that will advance Queensland's Path to Treaty with our First Nations Treaty Institute and the Truth-telling and Healing Inquiry. The bill's preamble recognises the strength of truth-telling in healing the trauma suffered by First Nations peoples because of colonisation.

The over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in our criminal justice system is unacceptable. That is why our government has committed to developing and implementing a

long-term whole-of-government and community strategy. To lead this work, we have established the First Nations Justice Office to develop and implement a strategy co-designed with First Nations community controlled organisations, individuals and communities. This strategy will contribute to achieving our commitments under the National Agreement on Closing the Gap to reduce incarceration rates of First Nations adults by 15 per cent and young people by 30 per cent by 2031. First Nations voices and experiences will be at the heart of that work, with a clear focus on respecting self-determination.

We have also established *Queensland's framework for action: reshaping our approach to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander domestic and family violence* and a First Nations family violence prevention group. The framework provides a new way of working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities in the spirit of reconciliation to address the causes, prevalence and impacts of domestic and family violence because we know that historical and current events and issues impact the day-to-day existence and wellbeing of all Australian First Nations women and girls and that racism and gender inequalities compound these. However, we also know that First Nations women and girls are strong, brave, determined and resilient. They have remarkable skills and knowledge and boundless potential. Gender equality for everyone will only be realised when outcomes for First Nations women are addressed.

Through truth-telling and healing we will be able to reconcile our past and the harm that colonisation has caused and continues to cause. Path to Treaty is the critical next chapter in our history. We must understand and acknowledge the true history and origins of our state so that we may journey forward together hand in hand and determined to leave Queensland a better place for the next generation. I commend the bill to the House.



Mr CRISAFULLI (Broadwater—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (4.20 pm): I rise to support the Path to Treaty Bill 2023. I do so in the hope that it can be the catalyst for true accountability of government—a catalyst for materially improving the lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in this state. Path to Treaty is a genuine opportunity for our state to improve the lives of Indigenous Australians. It is an opportunity I believe Queensland should embrace wholeheartedly. I believe in truth-telling, and to me that means telling it like it is. We need to be up-front. We cannot shy away from the real experiences of Indigenous Australians throughout history. We must tell the truth about the real challenges they are facing today.

I want to take this opportunity to thank the Treaty Advancement Committee for their efforts so far. However, we must be up-front about the shortcomings of this parliament when it comes to engagement for this process. That is the feedback we received throughout. Indeed, in relation to this bill it is apparent that the process has not managed to communicate and consult widely enough. That became apparent in my discussions with the member for Burnett. The opposition notes concerns raised in the public forums that poor notification had led to poor attendance. We are also aware of the concerns about the lack of knowledge of the bill at these forums. I worry that, if we are not properly engaging with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, how will we as a parliament address the issues facing these communities, and there are issues we must all work together to fix.


Mayor Ross Andrews during an address to shadow cabinet just yesterday told me the three most important issues for his community: education, housing and employment. They are real issues that impact the everyday life of his community. In these areas Indigenous communities lag behind the rest of our state. In education, the gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students when it comes to literacy is around 20 per cent of both years 7 and 9. In housing, approximately 20 per cent of Indigenous Queenslanders living in remote communities are living in overcrowded housing. According to data from 2021, Indigenous people are almost three times more likely to be unemployed.

In Indigenous communities across Queensland, basic infrastructure like water and sewerage lag behind the rest of Queensland. The health of Indigenous Queenslanders is vastly inferior to the rest of the community, with the life expectancy gap in Queensland currently 7.8 years for males and 6.7 years for females. The shadow minister, the member for Surfers Paradise, articulated why there have been failures over a long period of time that we must acknowledge.

These are just some examples of the disadvantage Queensland Indigenous communities live with every day. They are not new issues. In fact, in my time in public life I have travelled to every single Aboriginal shire council—all 17 of them. These issues are prevalent in communities across the state. If we are being up-front about it, they have been this way for a long time—too long. Herein lies the tragedy of the entrenched disadvantage of these communities. It is entrenched because there is no accountability. The issues have been talked about in this parliament, written about in reports,

investigated in various commissions—and nothing changes. Why? Because no-one is being held accountable.

Path to Treaty offers an opportunity to address this—a fork in the road. Down one well-travelled path lies a discussion had for political purposes. It talks a big game but achieves little for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people—a path where political battlelines are drawn but ultimately ends with a decade wasted and no progress made. Down the other path is a treaty. It places accountability on this and future governments—a treaty that enshrines KPIs that materially address the disadvantage in Aboriginal communities on issues like health, education, housing, employment and infrastructure. This is a difficult path, a path that will mean governments can no longer act as though they are powerless observers. We are not. Governments are the bodies to enact change for these communities that deserve and yearn for change. It is a path where, working together, we can all shine a light on poor performance and ultimately lead to what we all want: real improvements in the lives of Indigenous Queenslanders. This indeed would be a worthy path to treaty.

 **Hon. GJ BUTCHER** (Gladstone—ALP) (Minister for Regional Development and Manufacturing and Minister for Water) (4.25 pm): I rise to support the Path to Treaty Bill 2023. Firstly, I would like to recognise the traditional owners of the land on which we are gathering here today and pay my respects to their elders past, present and emerging. I would also like to acknowledge the Indigenous communities and clans in my community—the Gurang, Gooreng Gooreng, Bailai and Taribelang Bunda people.

I would also like to acknowledge the three members in our caucus—Minister Leeanne Enoch, Cynthia Lui and assistant minister Lance McCallum—for the work that they do particularly in supporting and moving forward with treaty here in Queensland. I see the look in their eyes and I hear the tremor in their voices when they speak to us as colleagues in support of treaty and in making sure that we continue to work towards it and ensure that treaty is at the forefront of everyone's mind here in Queensland.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have lived on, as we know, and cared for this country for more than 60,000 years and have never, ever ceded their sovereignty. Voice, treaty and truth—this was the message loud and clear from the historic Uluru Statement from the Heart, a statement that I again commit myself to today.

During this time, First Nations people have cherished Australia's great water channels here in Queensland—the lakes, the rivers, the streams and the gullies. Water holds significant and sacred importance for our First Nations people and is the crux of art, sacred narratives, stories and songs. As Queensland's water minister, this importance is certainly not lost on me. Today we reiterate this importance and our commitment to the respectful and meaningful engagement with First Nations people in Queensland, to protect and promote this sacred relationship that they have with water.

I will never forget the day that we unveiled signage around Kati Thanda—Lake Eyre Basin—last year to recognise the many traditional owner groups and educate the thousands of visitors who go to that area about the rich cultural history of that region. I was joined in Longreach by Uncle George Gorringer, who told me the signs were an important step forward for the education and acceptance of people in their communities.


My department has been on a journey of learning and engaging with our First Nations people and cultures for many years. We are always striving to improve but we are also proud of the work that we have done, especially in our water planning framework where we are committed to updating water plans right across Queensland to include water specifically reserved for First Nations people. This work can be seen right at the tip of Cape York, where almost 500,000 megalitres of water is reserved for First Nation peoples.

This work can be seen in an example I am particularly proud of—the Indigenous land use agreement that I signed with the Darumbal people last year at the Rookwood Weir site. I acknowledge members Barry O'Rourke and Brittany Lauga for their support of those people and for helping to celebrate the signing of that agreement. That agreement guarantees a water allocation from Rookwood Weir for the Darumbal people—a secure water allocation under the control of the Darumbal people.

In North Queensland, we prioritised the values of traditional custodians in the water plan for the Barron catchment. This resulted in the preservation of unallocated water for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to support not only economic but social and cultural aspirations. We have learned about community and culture, about traditions and history, and about what real co-design looks like in Queensland.

I use these examples as a demonstration of the work that has been done so far, but with the passage of this bill and the next stages of our path to treaty the real work in Queensland begins. This

work is to continue to improve, earn respect and trust, and build on the relationships we have begun with hundreds of traditional owners groups right across Queensland. We are braced for the hard truth-telling that will come as part of Path to Treaty. There is some way to go to atone for the mistakes of the past, but our commitment is to listen, learn and co-design a future that truly partners with our First Nations communities. Our path to treaty marches forward, and I am proud to walk alongside Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders on this journey together. I commend this bill to the House.

 **Ms LAUGA** (Keppel—ALP) (4.31 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Path to Treaty Bill 2023. In particular I thank the committee, led by the member for Mansfield, for visiting Woorabinda and Rockhampton in Central Queensland in their review of this bill. I acknowledge the traditional owners of the land on which we gather here in Cairns. I also acknowledge the traditional owners and native title holders of the land I represent in this place, the Darumbal and Woppaburra people, and pay respects to their elders. I acknowledge the wonderful Darumbal and Woppaburra elders who live in my electorate. I am so incredibly grateful for their guidance, support and stories. I have learned so much from our elders.

In 2015, shortly after I was elected as the member for Keppel, I requested a meeting with the Darumbal elders to start planning for the future. I wanted to hear from our elders, get to know them, have a yarn and start to build a relationship. I have learned so much from them about the truth, about history, about culture, about our community, about the land and country that we live on. I really do believe it is my role and responsibility in this place to help share that truth and tell that truth. I was shocked to learn some of the truth. I have lived almost my entire life on Darumbal country, yet I had no idea about some of these stories.

I acknowledge Aunty Sally Vea Vea for her work in conservation and land management. She is chair of the Gawula Land Trust and the Darumbal Capricorn Coast mob. Whenever I am around Aunty Sally I just love soaking up her energy and her love and care for country. I also acknowledge Aunty Nicky Hatfield, who is a Darumbal language elder. She spends so much of her time teaching the Darumbal language in our schools and childcare centres. Odette was lucky enough to receive a lesson from Aunty Nicky when she was at day care. It was wonderful to hear my daughter come home from day care one day speaking the Darumbal language to me. It is fantastic that Aunty Nicky puts in so much time, effort and care into transferring that knowledge to the next generation. I also want to acknowledge Aunty Ethel Speedy for her work in suicide prevention in our region and Uncle George James, who is a member of our local ambulance committee and a seriously awesome health advocate.

Hundreds, if not thousands, of Aboriginal people were massacred on the land between Mount Jim Crow and Mount Wheeler in my electorate. This land was used as prime hunting and fishing land by the Darumbal people. It was also a place where different groups met. I supported the Darumbal people in their efforts to rename racist place names in my electorate such as the two mountains between which this massacre occurred. This area between Mount Jim Crow and Mount Wheeler is so important to the local Darumbal people. It was also the subject of numerous Dreamtime stories, which marks this as an area of significant and important local Indigenous cultural heritage. The fact that the name Jim Crow, a place of significant cultural heritage to our traditional owners, refers to racism and segregation was a great shame. As a community representative I was ashamed to have an iconic local place named after racism and segregation. I would much rather have a community that celebrates our Indigenous cultural heritage and diversity and promotes inclusivity. It made me feel sad that people in my community would drive past those two landmarks and be reminded about racism and segregation on a daily basis, so I believed it was important to work with the Darumbal people to rename Mount Jim Crow to its traditional name, Baga, in the spirit of reconciliation. Mount Wheeler has also now been renamed to its traditional name, Gai-i.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures are the two oldest continuing cultures in the entire world, and that is something we as Queenslanders and Australians can be incredibly proud of. Renaming official places their traditional names, which have existed for tens of thousands of years, is in my opinion the right thing to do and a step in the right direction towards reconciliation. I want our local First Nations community to be proud of these iconic natural places, not constantly reminded about the horrible racist and archaic policy of segregation.

It was a few months after the Darumbal people's native title determination in June 2016 that I suggested to Aunty Sally Vea Vea we should consider applying to rename some of the culturally significant places in our community their traditional names. Aunty Sally liked the idea and I suggested we meet to discuss it further. We met for coffee at the Coffee Club in Rocky. I will never forget the afternoon. It was Aunty Sally Vea Vea, Aunty Nicky Hatfield and Aunty Nicky's daughter Christina—

three incredibly strong Darumbal people—who told me about Mount Jim Crow and its connection to US segregation laws. To their knowledge, there was no justification on record for the name Jim Crow. I had always assumed Jim Crow was some sort of surveyor or explorer after whom the iconic volcanic plug was named. The Department of Resources confirmed there is no record of how Mount Jim Crow was named; however, there is a possibility the name was used by the US military when they were camped at nearby Artillery Road during World War II.


I have always had a very productive and respectful relationship with the traditional owners of the land that I represent in this place: the Woppaburra people, who come from the land and sea country around Keppel Bay; and the Darumbal people, who are native title holders of all of the mainland area of my electorate. I am incredibly proud and fortunate that all 4,000 square kilometres of the Keppel electorate is now native title determined. I meet with Darumbal and Woppaburra elders and First Nations groups regularly about different initiatives and how I can work with them as their state MP to improve the lives of First Nations people in our community.

Our local Darumbal and Woppaburra elders are treasures. They are passionate but modest people who want the best for their children and grandchildren. They want their history and culture preserved and passed down to the next generation. They have been through some pretty atrocious times. They are from the stolen generation. They have been victims of the worst kinds of racism and treated as second-class citizens for most, if not all, of their lives. Sitting in the Coffee Club that afternoon, Auntie Sally told me how her grandmother told her the story about having to hide behind a tree in the land between Gai-i and Baga when the massacre occurred. It really hit home to me that the trauma that is lived as a result of what happened is still so very raw amongst families. Trying to imagine my grandmother telling me a story about how she had to hide behind a tree to avoid being killed in a massacre where tens of thousands of people were killed really hit home to me that this is still very raw and we need to acknowledge that trauma is still very painful.

Both Woppaburra and Darumbal worked for over 20 years to get native title determination awarded by a consent determination of the Federal Circuit Court: June 2016 for Darumbal and December last year for Woppaburra. I was present at both Federal Circuit Court sittings and at both I witnessed the emotion—the sadness, perseverance and pride all combined in the tears of happiness that rolled down everyone's faces. After the Darumbal native title determination I remember being at the Dreamtime cultural centre. Some women were telling their children, 'Come on, kids, we have to go. It's time to go home.' They were kicking the footy around and they said, 'Mum, why do we have to leave now? We've only just got our land back.' It was beautiful to see the next generation relishing in the fact that their ancestors and elders had worked so hard to achieve that determination that day.

I commend the federal Labor government for progressing reform on the national stage with recognition of the Uluru Statement from the Heart and the upcoming referendum for all Australians to consider the inclusion of the Voice to Parliament in the Australian Constitution. The Path to Treaty Bill also marks a momentous time in Queensland's history—a time to right the wrongs of the past and to pave a better way forward for First Nations. It is a special moment in time too for the wider Queensland community to learn a shared history of Queensland and indeed share the benefits generated from treaty-driven knowledge sharing, resource management and service delivery.

Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it. We must remember the past. We must tell the truth about our state and country's past. Path to Treaty presents an opportunity for all Queenslanders to know and acknowledge our past and set a course for the future that will unify, not separate and divide, so that everyone can progress and prosper together. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr SMITH** (Bundaberg—ALP) (4.40 pm): I would like to begin by acknowledging the traditional owners of the land on which we meet today and thank them for their welcome to country this morning. I also wish to acknowledge the traditional owners of the lands of the Bundaberg and Gladstone region—the Taribelang Bunda, the Gurang, the Gooreng Gooreng and the Bailai people. I would also like to acknowledge my good friends and parliamentary colleagues in the member for Bundamba, the member for Algeester and my good friend the member for Cook, who is here to my left. In the parliament back in Brisbane, I have the great opportunity to sit next to the member for Cook and listen to her words about her community and how much that means to her. It is a real honour to have all of my colleagues who represent the First Nations people of their communities here today.

This bill is of great importance. It is important because it will prepare a framework for treaty negotiations. It is important because it will provide for the establishment of the Truth-telling and Healing Inquiry. This bill is important because it will confirm that this Queensland parliament recognises that

there are many distinct communities among our First Nations people. This bill will confirm that this Queensland parliament will recognise that colonisation occurred without consent. It will confirm that this parliament recognises that the land was taken, it was stolen and it was often done so at the barrel of a gun. This parliament will now recognise that sovereignty was never ceded, that there was the desecration and dispossession of rich and vast cultures, and that the children were not simply taken for the right reasons but they were stolen and they were stolen because of their identity, their culture and the language they spoke.

This parliament will recognise that truth-telling is about healing and it is about healing for all of us as we move forward. This bill is momentous because it will see the lore of our First Nations people be recognised through the process of Queensland law. This is something that is truly overdue but is equally momentous in the history of Queensland and the history of our First Nations people reaching back 65,000 years. In Bundaberg, our community is stronger for our diversity. Truth-telling and healing is not only the path to treaty but the path to one united community.

I would like to acknowledge that the committee has made recommendations around ensuring that truth-telling occurs in the curriculum. I can say that as a teacher I know how important it is for our young people to learn the whole history of this country. When I was a teacher, I would play the video from 1984 when Lang Hancock came up with a solution, in his words, to dope up the water for the First Nations people who were unable to assimilate into the society. That was in 1984. I also used to play them the video of Malcolm Fraser, the former Liberal Party prime minister, who spoke of a family he knew of. In the 1920s they would go out hunting and at six o'clock in the evening they would come back with the kill. But the kill would not be of sheep, kangaroo or emu; it would be of our First Nations people. I would then play the even more recent communication of Stan Grant when he unveiled to all of us that his people die young in this country. It is absolutely vital that our young people learn the whole history of our communities, of our state and of our country. It is the only way that we can all move forward together and heal the lands that have been hurt by the history of white Australia.

It is up to all of us in our communities to stand together, to take the hand that has been put out to us from our brothers and sisters of our First Nations communities and to make sure that we walk together to forge a new history that we will all be proud of as we move forward. I note that it is disappointing to see so few members of the opposition putting their names on the speaking list. It is very disappointing to hear some of the disingenuous commentary talking about parliamentary processes instead of talking from the heart about the hand that we want to reach out to our First Nations brothers and sisters. I am proud to be a member of the Palaszczuk Labor government. I am proud to be here with all of my parliamentary colleagues from the Labor government. I thank all of those who have worked so hard so that we can take another big step towards a brighter, better, united Queensland.



Mrs MULLEN (Jordan—ALP) (4.46 pm): It is a special moment to rise and debate this important bill. As our Premier said in her introductory speech—

This is our chance to do what we should have done two centuries ago—to make a treaty or treaties with Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Our state's diversity is its strength. It is also home to two of the oldest living cultures in the world, but for too long we have not rectified past wrong and truly reconciled with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. The bill before us is a tangible and real start.

Our government committed to supporting the establishment of an independent First Nations Treaty Institute that will develop the treaty-making framework and equip First Nations people to participate in future treaty negotiations. Importantly, our government accepts the need for a statewide truth-telling and healing process because we recognise the need to address injustice which has left permanent scars on the lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

As elected representatives, we all regularly participate in events where we are privileged to listen to welcomes to country or acknowledgements of country. Sometimes these rituals are raw and honest. They tell a difficult story; they share a challenging journey. They are important stories and we need to hear them and they need to be documented. Why is this important? As we heard this morning, don't ask 'Why?', ask 'Why not?' We need truth if we have any chance to achieve equal recognition and formal equality before the law for our First Nations people.

The bill will establish a First Nations Treaty Institute to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to develop and provide a framework to prepare for and then commence treaty negotiations with the Queensland government. It will also establish a Truth-telling and Healing Inquiry into and to report on the effects of colonisation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. I would

like to acknowledge the work of the minister and his department and also the Community Support and Services Committee for their considered work in the preparation and examination of this bill. I would like to echo and offer my support especially for recommendation 8, which is that—

... those responsible establish the Queensland Treaty framework from a positive position of equity, opportunity and self-determination, to recognise and value the aspirations, knowledge and skills of First Nations people for the betterment of Queensland and the broader Queensland community.

I note the minister's support for this recommendation which will be actioned.


I also wish to acknowledge work that has preceded the bill through the incredible efforts of the Treaty Advancement Committee which captured the major themes identified by the Queensland community such as reconciliation, respect, inclusion and self-determination. The Path to Treaty conversation began in 2019 with truth-telling and healing at the heart of its dialogue. We also need to build community understanding and empathy for First Nations truth-telling and for wider community acknowledgement of and understanding about these truths.

We can look across the ditch to the mature treaty system in New Zealand, where relations between the Crown and Maori have been governed by treaty since 1840. From the commencement of the Treaty of Waitangi Act 1975, treaty claims and disputes have been considered by that tribunal and negotiated by the Office for Maori Crown Relations. What is clear from the New Zealand experience is that enduring treaties are made with a strong mandate from the community and a framework that embraces continuous partnership, equity and opportunity.

The committee considered it essential for the integrity of the Path to Treaty process that the First Nations Treaty Institute, Treaty Institute Council and Truth-telling and Healing Inquiry are independent. The committee's view was that the bill before us has the correct balance between independence and accountability to First Nations people, non-Indigenous Queenslanders and the Queensland government. This will include that annual reports of the Treaty Institute Council should be tabled in the Queensland parliament.

My electorate of Jordan is the home of the Jagera, Yuggera and Ugarapul people, as well as the Yugambeh people to the south. I am also fortunate to have an incredible school dedicated to First Nations students—Hymba Yumba Independent School. Hymba Yumba prides itself on being an innovative school deeply committed to the traditions of Indigenous culture, spirituality and identity. Its unique teaching philosophy is to instil in the local jarjums a sense of empowerment and cultural identity and familiarity which in turn provides them with a launch pad to successfully commence their lifelong journey of learning. Last month we were honoured to welcome the US Ambassador Caroline Kennedy to Hymba Yumba and, along with the federal member for Oxley, we were able to showcase the outstanding outcomes that are being achieved by our First Nations students. I truly and desperately want to see a better future for these jarjums, a future that is better than what their parents and grandparents have experienced.

We still have a long way to go with our First Nations people and genuinely closing the gap for our Indigenous communities. I truly hope that the Voice referendum will be supported later this year. This will be a vital step in true reconciliation. The bill before us is an important, indeed critical, step. Getting this right does create hope for a better future and a new beginning which we all hope will lead to, as Oodgeroo Noonuccal said, a 'glad tomorrow' for all Queenslanders. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Ms LEAHY** (Warrego—LNP) (4.51 pm): I rise to contribute to the debate on the Path to Treaty Bill 2023. I would like to thank the members of the committee from both sides of the House for their consideration of the bill and the staff who assisted the parliamentary committee. Given that this is the first bill of its kind in Queensland, they had a significant task to consider this legislation within eight weeks. Before going into detail on the bill, I would like to also acknowledge the mayors and councillors of the 17 Indigenous councils who service and support over 237,000 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Queensland. These people need support in their communities, just as any other town or any other community in Queensland needs support.

I have also had the pleasure of meeting regularly with the Torres Cape Indigenous Council Alliance which consists of 15 local government authorities from across the Torres Strait, Cape York and the gulf region of Far North Queensland about their challenges and suggested solutions to those challenges. One of the great challenges they face is housing and ageing infrastructure issues with water and sewerage. As the shadow minister for local government, I have visited a number of these Indigenous councils—Yarrabah, Doomadgee, Palm Island and Woorabinda. My parliamentary colleagues the members for Whitsunday, Surfers Paradise and Everton have also visited the community

of Mapoon on the Western Cape. My other parliamentary colleagues the member for Gregory and the member for Nanango have discrete Indigenous communities in their own electorates. I, too, have a significant number of Indigenous people who live in my electorate.

I want to touch quickly on recommendation 13 of the parliamentary committee report. It says—

The committee acknowledges the important role education plays in creating an accurate historical discourse and in normalising language and culture and recognises that it is the Queensland Government's responsibility to educate the Queensland community.

There is a school in my electorate, St Patrick's School in Mitchell, where the children, Indigenous and non-Indigenous, have been learning Gunggari language. The teachers give instructions in Gunggari, they say their morning greetings in Gunggari, they say their school prayer translated into Gunggari and other prayers like Our Father. The children also participate in Anzac Day, reading parts of the service in Gunggari language. This is all due to the influence and work of a local elder whom I was privileged to know, Aunty Irene Ryder, who sadly passed away in 2015. The community of Mitchell and St Patrick's did not need a treaty or a school curriculum changed; they just did it. For the last nine years they have been teaching that language in their school.

I return to the explanatory notes. Path to Treaty is a shared journey between the Queensland government, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and the non-Indigenous Queenslanders, a key reform with the ultimate goal of negotiating treaty or treaties that will reclaim and strengthen the relationship between Queensland's First Nations and the wider community.

The path to treaty is going to be complex. It may not be one single treaty; it may involve hundreds of treaties between various First Nations people and between First Nations people and the state government that will likely take a very long time and significant additional funding to achieve. This raises a question particularly for Indigenous people who have already negotiated ILUA agreements over pastoral land and Crown lands. There are ILUAs in my electorate and I know there are many here in North Queensland. In summary, an ILUA is a voluntary agreement between native title parties and other people or bodies about the use and management of land and/or waters. Perhaps in the summing-up the minister might advise the House where the ILUAs will sit in the Path to Treaty going forward so that we can all be clear on where these contracts sit within the new legislation in the future. Path to Treaty must be open and transparent so that all Queenslanders have awareness of its implications for them.

A further matter which I have questions about is the timing of the bill and its links to the Uluru Statement from the Heart. Why is the Path to Treaty Bill, which we are debating here today, happening before the referendum later in the year? Should the referendum be successful, will there be implications for this legislation? Will this legislation have to be amended in the future?

The LGAQ raised similar concerns in their submission to the committee. They said—

Although the Path to Treaty is recognised as an important component of the journey, local government in Queensland do broadly seek that State Government considers the following: develop appropriate material for Queensland communities on each of the three elements of the Uluru Statement from the Heart (Voice, Treaty and Truth) so the public can understand the proposals and make informed decisions, particularly noting how the State's Bill links to the elements of the Uluru Statement from the Heart.

Perhaps the minister could provide some advice to the House on this question, as it is of interest to all Queenslanders. How does this treaty legislation link into that Uluru Statement from the Heart?

I also note that the timings have resulted in some difficulties for stakeholders. The statement of reservation referenced the following—

When we look at the community visits, the forums, the committee inquiry, the ongoing work of the Interim Truth and Treaty Body, I detect some consultation fatigue.

The statement went on further to say—

At most public forums participants expressed frustration at the lack of notification of the committee's inquiry and our attendance, in particular the committee experienced poor attendance in Weipa, Longreach, Woorabinda and Inala.

Path to Treaty must focus on practical measures to close the gap and deliver real outcomes for Indigenous Queenslanders. I note that there is a significant amount of feedback from the local government sector received by the LGAQ during their preparation of their submission. These views are from councils. They are not endorsed policy positions of the LGAQ, however they need to be brought to the attention of this House. Council has expressed concern that—

One of the biggest challenges is that a lot of people (public and local government) don't know what the Treaty is and where it has come from. Although council was involved in initial consultations in Cairns two years ago, there was never a follow-up to provide a consultation report and key findings. The lack of closing the loop meant that there is a real uncertainty as to where the concept


of specifically establishing a Treaty Institute or TruthTelling Inquiry came from. Noting that the proposal seems more reflective of SEQ rather than all the regions more broadly.

The councils have also said that there is a lack of consultation with local government, in particular the First Nations Council. Much of the consultation that the group was aware of occurred in the major centres. The local government requirements and the additional complexities of First Nations councils require more detailed and meaningful engagement to ensure the treaty negotiation frameworks and processes consider implications. Local government is at the coalface of service delivery to local communities, as are those 17 Indigenous councils.

They also raised the question: with the Institute Council having a membership of only 10 people, how many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people will be there? Where will they be from? Is it just people from the south-east corner who identify as First Nations, or will there be representation from First Nations communities? How is a small council going to effectively provide feedback to their communities—not just to the councils, but also to the many thousands of people who live in their communities?

The councils also raised issues around the treaties and the agreements that will be made between individual groups. Because their communities are so diverse, will there be multiple treaties? These could be treaties about land use, health or economic development. Their worry is that if there is agreement with a specific group, there will be another hurdle for councils to jump over. For example, if a traditional owner decides that they want an agreement with the state government through a treaty related to economic development which the local government is part of, which agency is going to pay for and do the work for them to be part of the agreement? Will this be yet another element for local government to resource? Who is looking at the local government involvement?

There is also a need to understand the existing complexities and expectations on First Nation councils. To highlight this, just look at any DA application or approval. Councils must work on and consider native title requirements including the 'future acts' amendments as well as cultural heritage arrangements for reporting and monitoring. These concerns have come from councils. I ask that the government engage better with this sector and ensure that their concerns are appropriately addressed.

 **Ms PUGH** (Mount Ommaney—ALP) (5.01 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the Path to Treaty Bill and I do so in awe of my First Nations parliamentary colleagues and their beautiful contributions in this debate. We begin every parliament with an acknowledgement of country, of the world's oldest continuing living culture. Every time I reflect on this, whether it is here or out in the community, it just blows my mind. The treaty is about the fact that, as the member for Bundamba has so beautifully reflected, for the last few hundred years we—Indigenous Australians and non-Indigenous Australians—have had a shared history. This shared history means that we need to forge a new partnership together. As the Uluru Statement from the Heart speaks about, it is a fuller expression of our nationhood.

We do not yet know what form the treaty will take. In fact, I recall the words of Uncle Mick Gooda early on in the treaty process—and I acknowledge his presence in the gallery today—that there will not be just one treaty. Sometimes stepping together into the unknown can be scary; I understand that. So we are fortunate indeed to have a country so close to our own in both location and culture that has had a treaty in place since 6 February 1840, the Treaty of Waitangi—Te Tiriti o Waitangi. I refer, of course, to our sister nation, New Zealand, or Aotearoa. It is the birth place of some pretty great people including my father, Dave.

I must say that as a child I did not fully appreciate the differences between the two nations. However, I do recall a couple of light-bulb moments that really made me appreciate the differences in our relationships with our First Nations peoples. The first was hearing my little niece, Dylan, aged just five, singing the New Zealand national anthem in perfect Maori after school one day to my nan. I was so impressed that it was taught in both languages, something that my father had not experienced back in the 1970s. My nan said to me at the time, 'A five-year-old can do it, but I bet you can't, Jess.' It took me a year but I got there.

At this time of year I must say I feel my Kiwi heritage particularly strongly. All of the Anzac Day services in my local community now include the New Zealand national anthem, which is now sung not just in English but also in the language of the First Nations people. It is taught in every school and I understand that it has been since the 1990s. In my research I actually found that one of the very first times the anthem was performed in both languages was in Queensland for the Expo in 1988. That was one of the first public performances. What a beautiful part of history for us to share with our New Zealand brothers and sisters.


I just cannot convey the emotions I feel when I hear these anthems sung together in both languages. It feels like a joining of two stories and it is so beautiful. As you can hear, it makes me quite

emotional when I sing it. I am proud as a white person, as a Pakeha, to have learnt the anthem in both languages as does every school student in New Zealand.

The second moment was when I attended the Auckland War Memorial Museum, which I have done many times on my visits back to Aotearoa, which features a significant amount of Maori artefacts. If honourable members go to their website they will see it is bilingual. Every heading is also in Maori. There are the two cultures walking side by side. The war museum commemorates the fact that these Maori people fought for their land. These wars are documented in the Auckland War Memorial Museum.

I firmly believe that the reason for all of these things, the reason we see this fuller expression in Aotearoa of this culture, is because of the treaty that was established so long ago, back in 1840. We can observe some things, some outcomes, from the New Zealand experience. No, it was not a magical overnight fix for the systemic injustices that colonisation brought. What it did do was bring a powerful lens to take into account the experiences of First Nations people every single step of the way in every aspect of their culture.

Path to Treaty has taken such a long time to reach. There will be benefits to First Nations people—of that we can be sure. However, there will also be benefits to each and every Queenslander because the treaty is about moving forward together. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mrs McMAHON** (Macalister—ALP) (5.06 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Path to Treaty Bill 2023. It is fantastic to be here in Cairns in Far North Queensland and be able to speak about such a momentous bill. In doing so, I acknowledge the traditional owners, the custodians of the lands on which we are all meeting here today and also the traditional owners and custodians of the land which I represent, the Yugambeh people of South-East Queensland.

I would like to acknowledge that this bill is neither the start of such a momentous journey nor is it a culmination. I acknowledge that the journey we are on is not the work of administrators and bureaucrats but a range of voices of communities and elders. Before Path to Treaty, there were tracks to treaty. There was a Treaty Advancement Committee, the Eminent Panel and the Treaty Working Group. Before that, there were decades, if not a century, of agitating for treaty and representation: the second bark petition and the Barunga Statement in 1988, the *Two hundred years later* report in 1983, the National Aboriginal Conference in 1979, the first bark petitions in 1963 and William Cooper's petitions to King George in the 1930s.

The twin objectives of the bill are critical to setting up a treaty process in Queensland for success: the establishment of the framework that will prepare Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders for treaty negotiations and the Truth-telling and Healing Inquiry that will inquire into and report on the effects of the colonisation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. It is the inquiry process that I wish to focus on here today.

Many of us here of a certain age or older will remember a very specific course of study in Australian history. We memorised dates and names—1770 and 1788 were the dates and James Cook and Matthew Flinders were the names. We learnt of the names of explorers like Sturt, Leichhardt and Oxley and even the ill-fated Burke and Wills got a good mention. We studied Federation and we learnt about the significance of rail gauges.


The history of Australia's First Nations people was largely absent in school. It was certainly studied in the anthropological sense; we learnt what a boomerang, a humpy or a corroboree was and we heard of some of the Dreamtime stories, the mythologies, but not the history before imperial colonisation. Our textbooks never mentioned the over 50,000 years of inhabitation of these lands. Any student of history will tell you that history is written by the victors, the strongest, but history and truth do not always coexist in the same space. It is time for Queenslanders to hear the truth in order to gain an understanding of history as it happened, not necessarily history as it was written.

The truth-telling inquiry this state is about to embark on is not going to be an easy one. There are many uncomfortable truths to be unearthed. A collective and simultaneously uniquely personal trauma will play out over the next few years. This truth-telling is not just an excuse to revisit and open old wounds, to re-litigate stories to inflict guilt; it is a necessary step to address the intergenerational trauma that those untreated, unrecognised and largely unrecorded wounds have caused. To understand that history is to understand today.

It is not lost on me that we have a cohort of Queenslanders, thankfully a relatively small one, who do not recognise this history in Queensland and who fail to connect that past with the current systemic disadvantage of First Nations people. We have all heard them—the ones who feel there is some magical gravy train of welfare based on the colour of a person's skin. This is what happens when you

not only are perhaps devoid of a knowledge of history and its implications but also deliberately fail to see and acknowledge it. It is either that or they are simply devoid of humanity. It is no coincidence that this cohort are generally also of a certain age, one in which the school curriculum was silent on certain aspects of our history.

Treaty must be built on truth, and it must be a truth that is publicly acknowledged. The truth-telling process will be cathartic, if not a painful chapter in this journey we are all on. As a student of history I look forward to truths being voiced and records being corrected. Where history is recorded on page and feted by scholars, the truth is found most often in the silences and in the quiet places. I look forward to those who have been silent finally being heard. I heard an interesting quote from a Buddhist scholar who commented that to communicate the truths of history is an act of hope for the future. In going through these dialogues and in going through this inquiry, I acknowledge the pain that many communities, individuals and families will feel, but I also know that it will be an act of hope for the future. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr DAME** (Hinchinbrook—KAP) (5.12 pm): I rise to give my contribution on the Path to Treaty Bill 2023. The bill was introduced on 22 February 2023, and submissions to the inquiry on the bill closed in April 2023. The Community Support and Services Committee held three public hearings and a briefing as well as public forums, one of which was held in Brisbane. I commend the committee on its work. I thank the committee for the opportunity to sit in on the public forum held in Townsville as an attachment to the committee—an ‘outsider’. It was brilliant to see that the committee travelled around Queensland. It went to places like Cairns, Weipa, Thursday Island, Palm Island, Townsville, Longreach, Woorabinda, Rockhampton and Inala. When I first heard that the committee was having a public forum, I thought it would be similar to a normal committee hearing. It was completely different; it was more of a yarnning circle, I would call it. Everyone was able to talk about how they felt about treaty and how they felt about the legislation we are debating in the House tonight.

I found it interesting that a lot of people sitting around in that circle did not have a real understanding of this piece of legislation. They spoke about what they thought treaty would look like, or should look like, and some of the failings of consecutive governments in dealing with Indigenous Australians and Torres Strait Islanders. A number of people in the circle took the microphone and talked about negative interactions when it comes to trying to get businesses off the ground, trying to get permits to do things with their land tenures, trying to get access to land for agriculture and trying to get access to water. Funnily enough, as a member for regional Queensland, I felt the same way. A lot of Indigenous people have negative interactions with government when it comes to seeking prosperity for their people.

The Community Support and Services Committee considered the bill and recommended that the bill be passed. The statement of reservation from the LNP indicates that they are broadly supportive of the bill but are critical of some aspects—especially the time frame for consultation and the confusion created amongst the communities about the Voice to Parliament and treaty. I concur with that. Running these things simultaneously can add some confusion. Some of the people in the circle in Townsville had a little bit of trouble distinguishing between the two processes, and I acknowledge that.

The first objective of the bill is to establish a First Nations Treaty Institute to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to develop and provide a framework for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to prepare for and then commence treaty negotiations with the Queensland government. That is interesting, because the Queensland government represents not only Indigenous Australians but also non-Indigenous Australians. This pathway to treaty and the truth-telling exercise we are about to go through will cost Queenslanders \$300 million. Some of the requests from around the circle in Townsville raised a few eyebrows—calls for things like sovereignty from Queensland laws and having different legislation depending on whether you are a non-Indigenous or Indigenous Queenslanders.

Path to Treaty is a five-stage process, and I believe that we are now up to stages 4 and 5. I believe that this legislation will lift the lid off Pandora’s box in so many ways. The explanatory notes state—

The Path to Treaty is a shared journey between the Queensland Government, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and non-Indigenous Queenslanders ...

From the outset, I think that is being separatist. It starts to split people up between non-Indigenous and Indigenous. If people want to practise true reconciliation it is about walking together, not identifying whether you are Indigenous or non-Indigenous and whether you are open to different opportunities. I believe in equality. That is why I walked into this House. I think everyone in this

House should believe in equality. I think treating people differently based on their genetic and cultural heritage is the wrong way for this state to be heading.

The foreword by the committee chair starts with the following quote—

“When crimes go unpunished, the world becomes unbalanced”.

I feel that this sort of language is about settling a score, not about telling the truth or telling a story from both sides. It will be interesting to see how this \$300 million truth-telling process unravels, because the reality is that there are a lot of things out there in Indigenous communities that we need to see fixed by this state government or the next government, whoever they may be. The health system is an example. A 37-year-old mother of four was diagnosed with rheumatic heart disease as a child and died in Doomadgee in 2020. In 2019, an 18-year-old in Doomadgee suffered a similar fate. Ensuring we address these things should be paramount for this parliament. \$300 million could help fix that. Right now a coronial inquest is looking at the deaths of four teenagers in a stolen vehicle in Townsville that rocked North Queensland. I can speak about this—before anyone interjects—because the matter has been finalised in the courts. We should be trying to find ways, with that \$300 million, to keep these kids out of stolen cars.

I also raise the issue of the over-representation of Indigenous children in various aspects of child safety. \$300 million could go a long way towards fixing that problem right now. Between 2007 and 2011, more than 26 per cent of the deaths of Indigenous children between birth and 17 years of age were due to external causes.

An opposition member interjected.

Mr DAMETTO: Horrific, I know. Will we see this treaty work to prevent vicious gang rapes of young boys in Aboriginal communities?

An opposition member interjected.

Mr DAMETTO: This is truth. You want to talk about truth. I will bring up some of the harsher things that are going on in our remote Indigenous communities, and I will do it without fear because those people need to be represented. I agree that we have to go down this pathway to try to reconcile what has happened in the past, but we cannot spend so much time and money acknowledging the past while continuing to ignore what is happening right here in the present.

Government members interjected.

Mr DAMETTO: I am not taking the interjections. I hope that the people who are interjecting are sitting in their allocated seats.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Lister): Members to my right will cease their interjections. They are not being taken.

Mr DAMETTO: Thank you for your protection, Mr Deputy Speaker. There are multiple nations that make up this country and this state. I remember that in the 1990s and the early 2000s we talked about multiculturalism. We talked about bringing cultures together in this state. We talked about celebrating everyone from the Greeks to the Italians to the Indigenous people and about the work of our early settlers. We seem to be quickly drifting away from that. Every time I turn up somewhere and there is an acknowledgement of country and of First Nations people, I want to put up my hand as a non-Indigenous person and also acknowledge those who have contributed to building this country. I want to acknowledge all of the cultures in the room, not lean so far one way that we forget that Australia should be one and not divided—not divided by this sort of language and not divided by trying to create a situation where one race of people in this country has more of a say than the rest. We are saying that 95 per cent of non-Indigenous Australians should also have a voice and should also have an opportunity to be involved in this pathway to treaty.



Hon. MT RYAN (Morayfield—ALP) (Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services) (5.22 pm): The journey on which we are embarking is one that many would say is very long overdue. It is with great pride that I join my colleagues in rising to speak in support of the Path to Treaty Bill 2023, this foundational legislation designed to drive Path to Treaty.

The bill is a response to generations of calls from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in Queensland for a formal agreement which recognises Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the original custodians of the land, waters and air and provides a just and realistic foundation for a reframed relationship—an agreement that delivers broad-ranging substantive outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and the wider Queensland community.

As we have heard from other speakers, the bill contains a preamble that recognises numerous aspects of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander lore, history, custom and tradition—the ancient history of the place we call home. The principles for administering the bill also include the importance of

respecting and protecting Aboriginal lore and tradition and Torres Strait Islander lore and ailan kastom. Aboriginal lore and ailan kastom are designed in the bill as the body of culturally embedded principles and practices which govern traditional Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities or groups.

In preparing for Path to Treaty, many government agencies, including the departments I have portfolio responsibility for, have already started doing work. Already they are working towards treaty and establishing truth-telling processes. Queensland Corrective Services has established a Path to Treaty Group, which is being chaired by the First Nations and Cultural Capability Group. They have also established the Murrindhagin Cultural Centre and are employing more and more cultural liaison officers throughout the corrective services network. The Queensland Police Service is also engaged with the Path to Treaty process and just this week has advertised the position of Assistant Commissioner—First Nations. This will be the highest ranking First Nations police officer in the Queensland Police Service and is a great move forward to establishing a partnership between police and communities right across Queensland.

There is also investment from Queensland Fire and Emergency Services with treaty readiness, building on some of the great work that Queensland Fire and Emergency Services has already undertaken with better understanding the connection that First Nations people have with the land through the creation of First Nations bushfire safety officers, using traditional burning as a way of mitigating the risk of bushfire. There is much for us to learn about this ancient land and the peoples who connect us to the very beginning of time. It is about time we started listening more and acting more.


Let's get to the heart of the matter. Let's get to what we in this parliament now have the opportunity to achieve. There is a notion often quoted that justice never sleeps. It is an uplifting notion based on the assertion that, no matter the passage of time, it is never too late for justice to be done. It is never too late for justice to be seen to be done. It is never too late to give someone a voice. It seems to me that this notion applies when we discuss our history and the impact of that history on First Nations people. It is a history with dark undercurrents—a history that, when read by those who dwell in our modern era, can be very confronting. But we should never hide from the truth. We should never deny the truth. We need to show that we can handle the truth.

St Augustine admonishes us to never use the truth to cause injury to another, but I would add that we can also cause injury to another by avoiding the truth. We can cause injury to others by hiding from the truth. Worst of all, we can cause injury to another by denying the truth. We would risk committing all of those sins, in my view, if we were not to proceed with the truth-telling. We would risk committing all of those sins if we were not to proceed down the path to treaty. Justice never sleeps. It is time for an awakening and it is time for justice to be done and time for justice to be seen to be done. It is time for First Nations people to have a proper voice. It is time for the truth-telling to begin. It is time for truth and justice.

Truth and justice can and should be our moral beacons. Truth and justice can be the shining lights that show us the way down the path to treaty. It is time to right the wrongs. It is time for all people of goodwill to come together. It is time for people of goodwill to lay bare the truth. It is time for members to be genuine about it rather than joke about it. It is time for people of goodwill to walk together down the path to treaty. I commend the bill to the House. I encourage all members to support it. I did not call out the member, but I request that all members treat this debate with respect and acknowledge the contributions everyone is making as heartfelt and genuine—

Mr Stevens: Talk to your mob about it.

Mr RYAN: It is a reflection on the character of the member who was interjecting, not the character of those who are conducting themselves in a way that is respectful to this debate. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr KING** (Kurwongbah—ALP) (5.28 pm): I rise to contribute to this momentous debate of the Path to Treaty Bill 2023. I could not think of a better place to be right now than Tropical North Queensland. I thank the people of Cairns for hosting us and thank my parliamentary colleagues the members for Cairns, Cook and Barron River and, of course, Mr Speaker, the member for Mulgrave, for inviting us to their beautiful part of the world.

As we have heard, the objectives of this bill are: to establish a First Nations Treaty Institute, a new statutory body to support the development of a framework for treaty negotiations between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and the Queensland government; and to establish a Truth-telling and Healing Inquiry. The inquiry will run over a three-year period to inquire into and officially record the individual, family, cultural and societal impacts of colonisation on First Nations people from Queensland, with an added focus on public awareness and education to help us better understand and

share in First Nations culture, history, languages and truths. I look forward to hearing more about all the terms of reference as they are developed.


I have had some really positive feedback about Path to Treaty from Kurwongbah locals, recognising the significance of this moment in our history books. I echo the Premier's sentiments that story is everything. I am incredibly proud to be part of this chapter in this story by speaking on this bill this evening. It is just not possible to isolate our story in Queensland from the global and national context of reconciliation. Next year will mark a century since the Indian Citizenship Act became law in the United States and there are now hundreds of treaties across that country. New Zealand is approaching two centuries since the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi, establishing a partnership between the Maori people and the state. The rights of Aboriginal peoples of Canada were affirmed in its Constitution more than 40 years ago, with its history of treaties dating back to the 1700s. In 1967 there was a referendum that changed Australia's story, removing discrimination against First Nations peoples from the federal Constitution. The 'yes' vote in 1967 was over 90 per cent, and that happened under a Liberal government. In 2008 then Labor prime minister Kevin Rudd delivered the apology to Australia's Indigenous peoples—another proud moment in our history.

At the national level, we are now having a conversation about enshrining a Voice to Parliament in the Constitution. I am definitely not an expert on constitutional law, but the concept seems pretty simple to me. There will be a group of people—the Voice—that will provide advice to the federal parliament on proposed laws and policies affecting the lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in Australia. I am not buying the arguments that it is too complicated or that there is not enough information. I reckon that that is a cop-out, a way to hold off declaring your hand and explaining why you are voting no to the people that you represent.

I personally find it difficult to understand the motivation for voting no. As someone who shares a constituency with Peter Dutton, who is advocating a no on behalf of the federal Liberal National Party, I am really disappointed in the missed opportunity for bipartisanship on this crucially important issue. When the question is put to us in the referendum later this year, I hope the compassion of the Australian people, our appreciation for cultural differences and our spirit of mateship shines through with another overwhelming 'yes' vote in support of our traditional owners. I encourage the other federal MP whose electorate overlaps mine, the member for Longman, to be a leader in his community in this important step of our journey of reconciliation. Sadly, he has been silent so far.

I hope our Path to Treaty journey here inspires more Queenslanders to open their hearts and listen to the stories of First Nations people—those who have experienced and are experiencing the trauma, both firsthand and vicariously, of separation from family, from culture and of stolen wages, of being treated like second-class citizens, a peoples who continue to experience significant and unacceptable differences in life expectancy, health and education outcomes and overcrowding in homes. It is probably going to be hard to hear some of the stories that will be told through the Truth-telling and Healing Inquiry, but it is important that we do. Together we can do better. That is what Path to Treaty is about. That is what enshrining a Voice is about.

I want to acknowledge my colleagues the member for Cook, the member for Bundamba and Minister Enoch for being role models. The member for Cook, someone that I am proud to call my friend, is the first ever elected member of parliament to come from the Torres Strait Islands and I could not be more excited about visiting with her soon in the coming weeks to examine transport infrastructure. I commend this bill to the House.

 **Mr MILLAR** (Gregory—LNP) (5.33 pm): The path to treaty is going to be complex as it is not a single treaty; it may involve hundreds of treaties between various First Nations people and between First Nations people and the state government that will likely take a long time and significant additional funding to achieve. Path to Treaty must operate with bipartisan agreement wherever possible to ensure the best outcomes for all Queenslanders. In the seat of Gregory there are many Indigenous people who have played a significant role in the economic development of Western Queensland. In the seat of Gregory there are the Iningai people in Longreach, the Mithaka people in the Channel Country and the Pitta Pitta people towards Boulia. They have been involved in the community with me as community leaders in making sure that I am aware of their issues.


In the 2022 *Queensland Closing the Gap annual report* there are numerous examples of Closing the Gap targets that are not being met. In the area of health, a key target is to close the gap in life expectancy within a generation—that is, by 2031. We are not on track to do that. Life expectancy gaps are currently 7.8 years for males and 6.7 years for females. Preventable diseases and the management of chronic diseases remain serious obstacles to achieving this target. Preventable diseases, ranging from heart disease to fetal alcohol syndrome disorders to childhood deafness caused by untreated ear

infections, still afflict our First Nations people at a much greater rate. Chronic diseases like cardiovascular disease, cancer and diabetes also inflict a greater toll. The proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in Queensland assessed as developmentally delayed in all five domains of the Australian Early Development Census highlights another target that we are not meeting. We are also not on track in significantly reducing suicide among our First Nation Queenslanders. It is the same in education. I have spoken previously in this House, most recently in the debate on the Strengthening Community Safety Bill, about the disproportionate rate of disciplinary absences from school for our Indigenous children compared to our non-Indigenous children.

I also want to talk about housing and the impact of housing in regional Queensland, specifically the impact of our Indigenous housing and maintaining our Indigenous housing. Recently we had major floods in north-west Queensland with flooding down the Georgina River and the town of Urandangi in my electorate suffered severely. In fact, basically the town had to be evacuated and those people from Urandangi are now living in Mount Isa. Some may be living in housing but not all are living in housing but are living on the banks of the river at Mount Isa. They are feeling displaced. Urandangi has a fantastic school and is educating some fantastic primary school students. I have been there and it was heartbreaking to hear that it has not been able to get back to that place that it calls home. I am hoping through this process and what we are supporting that we are able to find pathways—a pathway to make sure that they are not forever displaced and they can go back home. Those young children need to have that education and I commend the education department, especially the principal, for the dedication that they give to those Indigenous children in making sure that they get a good start. We need to ensure that they continue to have some place to call home.

While talking about the issue of housing, the federal Labor government has promised \$200 million to repair and maintain existing homes in Indigenous communities, along with a pledge to build 20,000 new social housing units. However, that \$200 million is to be invested nation-wide and it is not clear how many of the new social housing units will be built in Queensland, let alone made available to our First Nation Queenslanders. Fundamentally, Closing the Gap is meant to achieve a better future for our First Nation Queenslanders, so one of the most important things that we must do is to continue to close that gap.

Along with my LNP colleagues, I will be voting for this bill in the sincere hope that it is a foundation of a better future for our Indigenous Queenslanders and for all Queenslanders. For instance, many Indigenous people in Gregory were unaware of the committee forums that were held such as the forums in Longreach and there was some confusion about that. If we are to build a strong foundation for the future, then this bill must operate in the most practical way that engages people and the purpose it seeks to serve. It must be real and practical in that engagement and it must include our Indigenous people to come along with everybody through government departments. I commend this bill to the House.

 **Ms BUSH** (Cooper—ALP) (5.38 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the Path to Treaty Bill and in doing so acknowledge what an historic moment this is. What a privilege it is to be here as part of a government championing this reform, surrounded by colleagues who are such fierce human rights advocates. I feel both a sense of responsibility to uphold my community's values and a sense of honour to be here as a community representative at such an important time.

I would like to acknowledge the traditional owners of the land on which we meet today, their elders past and present, and I also acknowledge the traditional owners of the land where I am from, the Yagara and the Turrbal people, and thank the elders and representatives from our traditional owner groups for giving me a deeper understanding of our past and a stronger appreciation for our future.

I thought I would share a couple of local stories to assist with my contribution today. The first story occurred shortly after my election to the seat of Cooper. I was invited to meet with a local gentleman who is a bit of a stalwart in our community. This man is a descendant of one of the first European families who arrived in our community. His family played a large role in shaping our local history and he continues to reside locally today. The story of his family and the contributions they have made are well known. They are well documented with roads, parks and schools sharing his family's name. During this meeting we spoke about the history of our suburb, the people, the industry, the developments and I was struck with the contrast of how well we know and how well we document our local stories from colonisation forward and yet we are desperately missing the stories of the period that precedes that point in time.

The day that we met up was a beautiful day and I remember noticing the line of hoop pines that is plotted out through the mountains and runs down along Waterworks Road. The hoop pines, I have since come to learn, are quite ancient and were used as points of reference for First Nations people to

guide the journey from the west of Brisbane to the east. That story by contrast is largely unknown and, like many of the local stories of our First Nations people, they are there but they are incredibly sparse and difficult to locate. This interaction struck me then and the memory is still so clear to me today. It was a moment that demonstrated the grief contained in our past and the opportunity for our future.

History is written by the victors and in the case of modern Australia those who got to write the stories were European settlers who framed the narrative and, in doing so, paused and, in many cases, completely erased the stories of Australia's First Nations people. These stories need to be told fully and truthfully. The impact of colonisation, the intergenerational trauma, the erasure of language and culture, the dispossession of land, the removal of children, these are painful memories to revisit for our First Nations people and they are incredibly confronting stories for non-Indigenous people to hear, but they are our stories and I feel a strong sense of obligation to understand them.

Treaty presents us with an opportunity to reframe the relationship between non-Indigenous Australians and our First Australians. We do not get the opportunity to re-do our past, but we can create a greater future, one based on a shared history and a commitment towards recognition and respect, renegotiated land rights, cultural protections and a stronger voice. This bill lays out the framework to commence that work through negotiated treaty or treaties and I am proud to be part of a government that is listening and leading.

The second story I want to share occurred the year after my election. It is the story of the Star of Taroom. I will not do it justice in the time that I have, but the ABC has documented the story and I encourage people to hop online and check it out. It is a story of repatriation and forgiveness, a story of how local Ashgrove resident, Johnny Danalis, and his supporters returned an ancient Aboriginal stone, known as the Star of Taroom, to Iman country 45 years after it had been unearthed and removed from its country by a worker on a cattle station in Western Queensland. This worker was, in fact, Johnny's father who later told Johnny about his regret at removing the stone and that it was, in fact, his dying wish to have the stone returned to country and returned to its people. The stone has significant value to the Iman people. I was there with Johnny and hundreds of others, including the member for Greenslopes, on the day that it was returned to the Iman people. Not only was it returned, but Johnny and his team walked the stone, which weighed around 160 kilograms, back along the path that it was taken from, from Brisbane to Taroom, which is about 500 kilometres, talking to people along the way about this act of reconciliation. That moment of people coming together in Taroom to redo those decisions from the past was a moment that I will never forget. The healing that took place through that was palpable. I know that the actions which arise from the passing of this bill will create hundreds of thousands of moments like this for all Queenslanders.

I want to conclude by acknowledging the wonderful community groups, such as Balaangala, who facilitate greater understanding and recognition of First Nations rights and issues and also our local schools, who are showing such leadership in tackling these uncomfortable but necessary conversations of our past and ensuring that our leaders of tomorrow are aware of our and their responsibility to do better. This is an historic moment for Queensland and I commend the bill to the House.



Ms PEASE (Lytton—ALP) (5.44 pm): Thank you and yura, a Jandai word meaning welcome. Thank you for having me here today. I would like to acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land on which we gather and pay my respects to elders past, present and emerging and thank them for the beautiful and gentle care that they have taken of the lands, winds and waters that we all enjoy. I rise to speak today to this momentous piece of legislation. What an honour it is to have you in the chair, Deputy Speaker, representing your community of Cook; our first Torres Strait Islander representative to be elected into parliament.

The Path to Treaty Bill will establish the First Nations Treaty Institute to prepare a framework for treaty negotiations with Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples to participate in treaty negotiations, to provide for the establishment of the Truth-telling and Healing Inquiry, to inquire into the continuing impact of colonisation on Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples and to amend the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities (Justice, Land and Other Matters) Act 1984 and the Fire and Emergency Services Act 1990.

I would like to acknowledge the many people who have come forward and spoken their truth and shared their stories during this hearing process. I was fortunate to substitute for you, Madam Deputy Speaker Lui, in the hearings in Cairns and Weipa. It was a truly humbling experience to hear the truth from local First Nations people. Sadly, for our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples the truth is not always easy to speak and, frankly, it is not easy to listen to. However, now is the time that we all need to be part of this journey of hearing the truth, of listening to the truth, so that we can learn and partner with our First Nations people to be part of the healing. I thank the Interim Truth and Treaty Body.

This amazing group of people has travelled the length and breadth of Queensland. Their tireless work engaging each and every community is so important to each and every community and each and every Queenslanders.


Recently, together with Aunty Becky Thompson, a Quandamooka elder from my community, I hosted a Path to Treaty forum in the bayside. What this forum showed me was that Baysiders are genuinely interested in Path to Treaty, with over 90 people attending from all walks of life and cultures, local church groups, local church leaders, schoolteachers and sporting groups, parents and young people. This diverse group of Baysiders wanted to hear the truth. They want to know how they can be part of the healing and to hear the history of our First Nations people and how western colonisation has impacted on our First Nations people. It was an incredibly humbling and heart-warming experience.

As a little girl at primary school I came home one day and said to my parents, 'Mum, why is the government taking kids away from their parents?' This was during the sixties. It was still happening. My parents did the best they could to explain why this happened. They were appalled. My parents were great people and they taught me a huge sense of justice and opportunity for all. As a consequence, my parents were very actively involved in politics in the Redlands area and did a lot of work with the people on the bay islands.

Growing up I spent a lot of time over on Minjerribah, running around with the kids on the island. Without really knowing it I learned the importance of hearing stories about what happened to families and how they were impacted by people who looked like me and what they did to the people that looked like the local people from Minjerribah. I was fortunate to have such wonderful activist parents who made sure that me and my two sisters had a broad range of experiences so that we could learn the terrible injustices that were happening and had happened.

I was also very fortunate that the teachers at Cleveland State High School were obviously activists because we learned the truth. We were taught the truth of our First Nations peoples and I thank them for that. Truth-telling, healing and voice were as important to me as a little kid running around Minjerribah gathering pipis as they are to me now. I am incredibly humbled to be in a position to vote on this momentous bill.

I acknowledge my friend Corrine McMillan, the committee chair, who is incredibly disappointed that she could not be here. Corrine has been working in this space her entire career. She has changed the lives of many and she has heard the truths of many. I also acknowledge the minister and my colleagues the member for Cook, the member for Bundamba and the member for Algeester as well as, of course, our Premier, Hon. Annastacia Palaszczuk, for leading this important piece of work. This week we are about to change history and I am really proud to be on the right side of history. I am really proud to be changing the wrongs of the past and I am incredibly humbled to be a part of this.

 **Dr ROWAN** (Moggill—LNP) (5.50 pm): I rise to contribute to the debate on the Path to Treaty Bill 2023. At the outset, I acknowledge the traditional custodians of the lands on which we gather and pay my respects to elders past, present and emerging. I also wish to begin by acknowledging the importance and historical significance of this debate and the unique opportunity that we, as elected representatives, are afforded this week by having the Queensland parliament sit here in Cairns.

The foundation of my contribution to this debate comes from my personal and professional experiences of working to advance the economic, health, educational and social outcomes of First Nations people. That includes my tenure as a former medical superintendent of various remote and regional Queensland hospitals and work in various rural and Indigenous communities, including in the Northern Territory, to address in many instances complex social and health matters as well as other issues that exist in those communities. It was a pleasure to also be the shadow minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander partnerships during the 56th Parliament of Queensland. Those experiences and more have provided an important opportunity to listen to the stories of Queensland's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and appreciate the significance of acknowledging their history and recognising the various and varied economic, social and health impacts that are felt to this day.

I take this opportunity to acknowledge the incredibly important work undertaken by the Institute for Urban Indigenous Health, a not-for-profit community controlled health service that delivers a comprehensive range of health and family wellbeing services as well as employment pathways for many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities across Queensland. I also wish to acknowledge the work undertaken by Associate Professor Noel Hayman and the Inala Indigenous Health Service that he established in 1995. As Queensland's first Indigenous doctor, Associate Professor Hayman has dedicated his life to improving Indigenous health outcomes, contributing to health policy and enhancing the life expectancy for Indigenous Australians. In 2011 he was recognised as the Queensland Australian of the Year. Dr Hayman is widely acknowledged as one of our country's leading Indigenous health

experts and advocates. Certainly he is an outstanding role model for Queenslanders, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous, across our state.

On such important matters as a path to treaty, as with all matters that pertain to Queensland's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, it is incumbent on the Queensland state government to seek a way forward that unites rather than divides. Indeed, as the deputy chair of the Community Support and Services Committee, the member for Burnett, clearly articulated in the relevant parliamentary committee report—

The Path to Treaty should always foster the reconciliation of Indigenous Queenslanders to each other and Indigenous Queenslanders to the wider Queensland community so that we can all grow together.

To grow together with practical measures that deliver real outcomes for Indigenous Queenslanders must be at the centre of what this Queensland state government seeks to achieve. Before I expand further on this, I wish to turn to the specific measures contained within the legislation.

On 22 February 2023, the Premier of Queensland introduced the Path to Treaty Bill 2023 with two key objectives: firstly, to establish a First Nations Treaty Institute to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to develop and provide a framework for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to prepare for and then commence treaty negotiations with the Queensland government; and secondly, to establish a Truth-telling and Healing Inquiry to inquire into and report on the effects of colonisation on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. The Path to Treaty Bill is the latest in a series of steps the Queensland state government has undertaken as a part of its efforts to implement a so-called reframed relationship following the 2019 signing of the state Labor government's joint statement of commitment as a part of the then Tracks to Treaty process. With the establishment of the Eminent Panel and Treaty Working Group, from October to December 2019 consultations were held in 24 communities leading to the publishing, in February 2020, of eight recommendations, including those pertaining to truth-telling and healing, a Path to Treaty overview, the First Nations Treaty Institute, community understanding and engagement, implementing the Path to Treaty Act and transparency.

Following the introduction of the Path to Treaty Bill 2023, the legislation was referred to the Queensland parliament's Community Support and Services Committee for further consultation and examination. The Community Support and Services Committee conducted 10 public forums across Queensland, with 39 written submissions received. Following feedback from stakeholders, the committee extended the date for the lodgement of submissions. I note from the committee's report that, during the inquiry process, concerns were raised in relation to the time frames that were allotted for consultation, the brief lodgement period for submissions and additional calls for wider consultation in regional areas. It must also be acknowledged that at most of the public forums participants expressed their frustration at the lack of notification of the committee's inquiry and the committee's attendance.

I also wish to note the confusion that was expressed by the community and stakeholders in relation to the concurrent discussions concerning the federal government's Voice to Parliament and the Queensland's state government's Path to Treaty legislation and how those separate processes were related, if at all.

Since these processes first began in 2019, I have consistently maintained that the Tracks to Treaty and Path to Treaty processes had to be conducted openly, carefully and diligently by the Queensland state Labor government given the varied and important measures that were continuing to be pursued at a federal level under various federal governments. It would appear that such openness and diligence have been lacking in some respects. Therefore, it is not surprising that, in consideration of Path to Treaty, a number of submitters specifically raised the importance of communication, education and public awareness.

Earlier in my contribution I spoke of the importance of ensuring that all Queenslanders, Indigenous and non-Indigenous, can grow together with practical measures that deliver real outcomes for Indigenous Queenslanders. If the current state Labor government wishes to truly deal openly and transparently with our state's history then it is important to also acknowledge Queensland's more recent history. For the overwhelming majority of the past 25 years, various Queensland state Labor governments have been responsible for implementing policy pertaining to Queensland's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Despite this, the gap on First Nations outcomes continues to remain shockingly wide in many important areas, particularly in health, education and housing.

Of the 11 targets where data was available according to the 2022 *Queensland Closing the Gap snapshot report*, seven targets were found to still be not on track. That includes closing the gap in life expectancy within a generation by 2031. Also not on track is the target to increase the proportion of


Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children assessed as developmentally on track in all five domains of the Australian Early Development Census to 55 per cent by 2031. As the Liberal National Party shadow minister for education, I am also deeply concerned by the ever-increasing gap in the educational outcomes of Queensland's First Nations students and the failure of the Palaszczuk state Labor government to address the growing disparity with respect to Indigenous student results and school attendance.

As the state Labor government's own state budget papers revealed last year, on every measure and target in reading, writing and numeracy, Queensland's Indigenous students were significantly behind their peers across all year levels, including years 3, 5, 7 and 9. More concerning is the fact that the outcomes achieved by Indigenous students were significantly behind their non-Indigenous peers, with some gaps as high as 20 percentage points. Last year's annual report for the Department of Education also revealed that the Labor state government is failing when it comes to student engagement and retention in relation to Queensland's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander state school students. In fact, since 2017 school attendance for First Nations students has continued to fall from 84.8 per cent in 2017 to 80.3 per cent in 2021, and rates of attendance for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander state school students has also consistently been behind all Queensland state school students.

To deliver true reconciliation and true healing, the Queensland government must provide more than just words and signed statements of intent. These real issues affecting Indigenous Queenslanders and Indigenous communities cannot wait any longer. They must receive immediate attention and practical action from the Queensland state government.

As I conclude my contribution, I wish to again reiterate the importance of acknowledging the challenges and struggles of our past in a manner that is done objectively, carefully and diligently, with full transparency and accountability, so that we can continue to work towards a brighter, shared future. Acknowledging our past is not just a matter of historical record. It also helps to frame the present, and future, of our state of Queensland.

Finally, I wish to thank all stakeholders who contributed to the Community Support and Services Committee's consideration of this legislation including those who took the time to participate in the 10 public hearings, as well as all committee members—the chair, the member for Mansfield, the deputy chair, as well as the Liberal National Party's member for Burnett and the member for Oodgeroo and those members who served from the Labor government.

 **Mr WHITING** (Bancroft—ALP) (6.00 pm): I also want to start by acknowledging the traditional owners of the land on which we gather in this parliament today and the traditional owners of the land that I represent in this parliament, and that is the Gubbi Gubbi people.

I rise to speak in support of the Path to Treaty Bill. I also support the Voice, I support truth-telling and I support moves towards treaty. It is clear to me that voice, truth and treaty are supported by a strong majority of First Nations people. I welcome the LNP's support for this bill. It was with some interest that I listened to the shadow minister, who said that issues were complex. I reflected that, yes, the issues of disadvantage and potential solutions are complicated, but to me the purpose of what we are doing is clear, unequivocal and uncomplicated. This is the right thing to do.

Path to Treaty is the right thing to do because it deals with one of the most profound unresolved issues in our history here in Queensland, and that is that the colonial settlement of this land was not done on a legal basis. First, it was originally conducted on the basis that this land was *terra nullius*—that it belonged to no-one. It was a fiction at the time and the fiction was finally exposed in 1992 when the High Court brought down the Mabo judgement. *Terra nullius* was dead. Secondly, in Queensland in the 19th century the colonial settlement was contrary to 19th century legal doctrine, and it was recognised as such at the time. You can see that if you read Henry Reynolds' book *The Law of the Land*, which covered how Australia's colonisation stood in contrast to the legal doctrines of the time.


Let me be clear about what I believe: the settlement of the land in Queensland was in fact a seizure of the land, contrary to the legal doctrines of the day; it was conducted in the main by a military campaign carried out by the Queensland government through the use of local police forces; and the role of the Queensland Native Mounted Police, staffed by young men from around Australia who had been dispossessed and removed from their culture, was crucial to this military campaign. There have been many studies attesting to how the Queensland government wielded this force to dispossess the First Nations people or, as they put it at the time, dispersed with Snider rifles.

This story has rankled me for over 30 years when I first learned of the secret histories of Queensland, and it has rankled me even more since I became a member of parliament, for I know that

it was a military campaign planned and conducted from George Street by our predecessors in this parliament—by the men whose seats we now occupy in our parliament. Our names are on an honour roll in parliament preceded by men who most probably were involved in massacres themselves. I welcome wholeheartedly the action by the Minister for Communities to open the archives and digitise the information about the mounted police. These stories are some of the issues that will be confronted on the road to treaty.

There are other reasons shared today on why treaty is the right thing to do. We heard from the Minister for Communities and the members for Cook and Bundamba that it is vital to reconciliation and that it is a shared journey. I agree that we must do everything to make a better future for all Queenslanders. That means doing all we can to close the gap for our First Nations people. I strongly believe that treaty will be a crucial part of this journey. It will help increase self-determination for First Nations people. It will help to deliver even greater reconciliation. As the Minister for Communities said, this will mark another step along the way, another step on the journey.

One of the things I have learned today is the truly rich history of the First Nations people or traditional custodians in the Cairns region centred on Gimuy, the traditional name for the area occupied by this city. It is very clear from what we saw today that there are many nation groups here. I have no doubt that each possesses their own legal system and language and protects the recognised tenure of their land. Yet they are all connected through a kinship system, and these nations and the cultures are strong and alive today. Reflecting on all of the things I have learned from over 30 years and what I have learned today, does it not seem only fair that we start a treaty process with our First Nations people—because, as I said, it is the right thing to do.

 **Mr HEALY** (Cairns—ALP) (6.06 pm): I rise in support of and to make my contribution to the Path to Treaty Bill. I also want to make it very clear that I support truth-telling and that I also strongly support the truth. I want to start today with a quote from an Australian whom I have admired for many years and has proven to be one of our great visionaries. He said—

Australia's treatment of her Aboriginal people will be the thing on which the world will judge Australia and Australians—not just now, but in the greater perspective of history.

When Gough Whitlam made that statement he knew there was a lot of work to be done in this important space. He knew of the journey which we as a nation needed to embark upon and the wrongs of the past that needed to be acknowledged and righted.

I want to touch on the member for Lytton's speech. For my sins I grew up in Sydney. This presents significant challenges around State of Origin time. My mother was from Erskineville. My father was from the south Sydney side of Darlington. There was an Aboriginal community living in Redfern that had been living there for thousands of generations before my Irish ancestors arrived. We learned at a very early age through interaction about the significant disparity, the racism and the great injustices. That was something that was taught to us very early, and it is something we have acknowledged and recognised.

I make that observation because I want to state for the record that it is a great privilege and I consider it to be a highlight of my parliamentary career to be part of a government that is doing the right thing. It is just the right thing to do. It is a journey. We have begun the journey. Hopefully, we will speed up as we get closer to it. This is a vitally important and very much needed process. The end benefits will far outweigh the process.

Treaty is the way for all Queenslanders to move forward and hold our heads high in the world arena. I know this will come with some resistance. I must say that, whilst I respect other people are entitled to their views, I am dumbfounded by those people who do not acknowledge the significant benefits that this journey and this part of the journey will provide. Their resistance, I am hoping, will dissipate in the face of decency, what is just and what is right—a Queensland brave enough to right the injustices of the past in our endeavour to unite and connect all Queenslanders and Australians in embracing First Nations history and culture as part of who we all are. This says so much about all of us. Path to Treaty will present challenges—and we have heard a number of speakers touch on those challenges—but we need to face those challenges. It will make us stronger, it will make us a greater community, it will connect us and it will give us great strength.

I think it is also important to acknowledge that what we propose here has already been embraced by many other nations. We heard the minister talk about some trips to New Zealand. Canada has 70 recognised treaties with First Nations Canadians. The United States has 364 recognised treaties. Norway, Sweden, Finland, Japan and Greenland have also signed and implemented treaties with First

Nations peoples. We now join these nations as a country that, in celebrating our First Nations people, will move forward with honesty, integrity, an accurate sense of our history and, more importantly, a greater understanding of our past.

I have always believed that until we recognise, acknowledge and fix the mistakes of our past we are doomed collectively to live with the burden of them. Our government is providing the people of Queensland with a new opportunity to celebrate what Queensland and Australia have meant to millions who have come here as convicts, immigrants, refugees and those seeking safety, opportunities and a quality of life where your children have a real future while acknowledging the rights of the world's oldest living culture to call this land ours and theirs. A treaty will unite us all in an equally shared recognition of our history and the future we all want to share. The truth-telling focus of our government's approach to treaty means that all Queenslanders participate in a process that promotes healing, justice and reconciliation as we seek to hear the voices of all Queenslanders on our road to that important recognition.

What a legacy we will leave for future Queenslanders, who can hold their heads high knowing we took the opportunity to unite all in the recognition of the ancient connection our First Nation community shares with us all through their understanding—this, their land and ours. All of our communities will benefit from sharing in First Nations culture, history and vision, and as I have said, we will be stronger as a community. We will leave behind a past that allowed many to build their lives on the shattered dreams of others.

The extraordinary Professor Tom Calma, Chancellor of the University of Canberra and Senior Australian of the Year 2023, said—

Here in Australia we are fortunate enough to have one of the richest and oldest continuing cultures in the world. This is something we should all be proud of and celebrate and embrace.

For me, it is the height of hypocrisy and pretence that we acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land and water on which we all live but we do not provide a legally acknowledged mechanism where those traditional custodians' voices might be heard.

I want to acknowledge the work of the committee and the member for Mansfield. I know she is very disappointed that she is not here because she, like many, made a great contribution. I want to acknowledge Minister Crawford—thank you very much, Minister, for the work that you do—the Premier and all of those who contributed to the committee, both in person and through written submissions. With treaty, we can and we should. I, like millions of other Queenslanders and Australians, are confident that we will.



Mr MOLHOEK (Southport—LNP) (6.13 pm): I rise to make a very brief contribution in support of the bill before the House: the Path to Treaty Bill 2023. At the risk of being accused of plagiarism, I thought I would open with a summary of our history from some law notes from Griffith University I dug out earlier this week. I agree with the words of the commentator when they said—

It is important to acknowledge the past—the history of this country that begins tens of thousands of years ago and was interrupted by the invasion of this land by the British. As we have discussed, the colonisation of Australia was predicated on an idea of settlement. That suggests a peaceful, gentle process, but as we know it was anything but. We know of frontier wars and resistance to British occupation, but in legal terms adopting the misnomer of settlement ruled out recognition of native title, of customary or traditional ownership of the land by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples for over two centuries. This approach was underpinned by the doctrine of terra nullius: the assumption that this land belonged to no-one. This approach was catastrophic for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders and a legacy which persists.

Fast-forward a few years to the 1970s. A period of significant social and political protest and reform led to jurisdictions adopting land rights legislation in favour of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. However, this legislation did not address the myth of terra nullius and did not recognise native title. The High Court finally jettisoned the doctrine of terra nullius in the 1992 Mabo decision.

It has been an interesting journey from high school student at Keebra Park on the Gold Coast to a member of parliament. I have spent many years in the broadcast industry and I too have ridden societal waves of change at different times towards Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. I have said it recently in the media and I will say it again: there is not much that we can be proud of.

At the Parliamentary Friends of First Nations debate recently at the Queensland parliament I reflected on two items I have hanging in my office that serve as a reminder of our history. One is a poster from the 1967 referendum calling on Australians to support the right of Indigenous Australians to vote. That poster says simply 'vote yes.' The other is a piece of art I acquired when I was assistant

minister for child safety. It is a painting of a young Indigenous child that hangs in my office. I keep it there to remind myself firstly of the over-representation of Indigenous children in the child protection system but also because it provides a sense of hope. This particular painting depicts a young Indigenous child with the most beautiful eyes. They are eyes full of hope. As we stand here in this chamber today and debate this legislation, my hope—and I am sure the hope of all of us in the House—is that the outcome of this path to treaty will result in significant reforms for Indigenous Australians, Indigenous Queenslanders. I am sure all of us share the hope that we will see a significant closing of the gap.

Over the last decade it has been my great privilege as a member of parliament to travel around the state and visit a number of Indigenous communities. I have spent time at Palm Island, Napranum, Kowanyama and Cherbourg. I have been to Yarrabah a couple of times. While there are still many great challenges, I am heartened to see there is a transition and there are improvements. The name of the mayor of Yarrabah escapes me, but when we met with that council—

Ms Leahy: Ross Andrews.


Mr MOLHOEK: I will take that interjection from the member for Warrego—Ross Andrews. When we met with the mayor of Yarrabah as part of our health inquiry last year we were taken to visit the health facilities in that community. It was encouraging to see the progression that has been achieved over the last 10 years. There were people there who were invigorated, enthusiastic, smiling and full of passion. The spirit of what we have seen in that community and more recent developments there are the sort of progress we want to see in Indigenous communities across the state of Queensland.

I know this will be no secret to you, but in a publication from Create Foundation—an organisation with very humble beginnings that was established in 1999 to track and support the progress of young people—their strategic plan talks about some 45,000 children and young people who are in care; that is, children who are not living in their own homes and whose families do not directly control their futures. Sadly, today still around 40 per cent of those children are First Nations children. That just simply says to me there is so much more to be done.

While the objectives of this bill are to establish an institute to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to develop and provide a framework for treaty negotiations, my hope is that there will be far more that comes out of this process and that in truth-telling we will have the hard discussions around how we can improve the lot of Indigenous children in this state and in this nation and how we can provide greater hope for Indigenous young people.

I have mentioned on many occasions in public forums that I am proud of the fact that Griffith University—which is predominantly based in my electorate of Southport, although I share the overlap with the electorate of Bonney—now has some 2,500 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students studying across its three campuses. That is actually the largest cohort of Indigenous students in the state. I look forward to the day when many of those students graduate and return to their communities and take on the role of doctors and frontline service workers there so we see far greater cultural appropriateness and practices in those communities and Indigenous people actually working more closely with their own to improve and progress the challenges that many Indigenous communities face.

We have to recognise our past and acknowledge that. We also have to reconcile our past. My sincere hope is that, if this legislation is passed this week, we will see a significant closing of the gap, that we will see dialogue and discussion around Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander issues and challenges in our state, that we will see truth-telling and open and honest dialogue and, more importantly, that we will see real action that improves the lives of Indigenous young people and Indigenous communities across this state.

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Minister for Health and Ambulance Services) (6.22 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Path to Treaty Bill 2023. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have demonstrated resilience through their enduring culture, law and knowledge shared through generations of proud First Nations peoples. It is important that we acknowledge the profound impacts that colonisation has had on the quality of life of many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. The laws we have passed, the damage we have done and the generational trauma must be recognised and must be talked about.

The Path to Treaty reforms outlined in this bill will work towards treaty readiness—highlighting the importance of, firstly, embarking on a truth-telling and healing journey, preparing for negotiations and agreement making, and working towards cultural change within government at an agency level, which includes my agency of Health and Ambulance Services. Specifically, the bill will establish the

First Nations Treaty Institute and a Truth-telling and Healing Inquiry as recommended by the Treaty Advancement Committee's report delivered in October 2021. This institute will play an important role in supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to prepare for treaty negotiations. The 10-member statutory body will provide a foundation for a treaty-making framework with an aim to empower First Nations people to participate in the treaty-making process.

The bill will also establish a Truth-telling and Healing Inquiry, which I think is well and truly overdue. It will play a very important role in gaining an insight into the historical and ongoing impacts of colonisation on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders in Queensland and facilitate that truth-telling and healing for all Queenslanders. This will be implemented through the truth-telling sessions and/or hearings, with powers to require the chief executive officers of government entities to produce a document, make a submission or attend a hearing if the inquiry considers the CEO can assist with its functions. It is on all of us to ensure we do everything to encourage our First Nations people to participate in that process and tell their stories, whether they be in private or public, to have that voice heard. I want to commend the requirement that the inquiry consist of five members with the majority being Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander and be representative of gender diversity as well.

As the health minister, I want to acknowledge that this bill will also complement the ongoing work we have been undertaking as a government, such as our First Nations health equity reform agenda, which we should be very proud of as a government. A cornerstone of the reform agenda was the legislative amendments we passed back in 2020 and 2021 to require our hospital and health services to appoint at least one First Nations person to their governing boards and to co-design, co-develop and co-implement the First Nations health equity strategy. I am very proud of the fact that all of our 16 hospital and health services across Queensland have now published their inaugural health equity strategy and commenced their initial three-year implementation cycle.

I am proud that there are a number of health commitments and reforms which complement this bill and the Path to Treaty, including: our commitment of \$37.8 million over two years for 2021 to 2023 towards a number of initiatives, including five new First Nations maternity services across Queensland and expanding the Birthing in our Community program; creating an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health division within the Department of Health to drive change; appointing the inaugural chief First Nations officer and deputy director-general in 2019; and appointing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health executives, system leaders, across the hospital and health services. This shows that we are not just talking but we are acting. We are embedding reforms to recognise that we need to not just close the gap on the health outcomes of our First Nations people but also embed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in our own workforce to look after their own mob and to do that on country. It is so important that we embrace that opportunity. It is important that these strategies are underpinned by action plans that are measured, accountable and transparent so that the whole community can see what we are doing. These strategies will continue to evolve over time and be co-designed with the community.


These commitments show that this bill is another step in the Palaszczuk government's long-term commitment to achieving health parity between our First Nations and non-Indigenous Queenslanders. It is completely unacceptable that our First Nations people, our young people, are suffering from conditions and dying from conditions that should not exist in a country like Australia and that we know are preventable. They are suffering at a much higher rate than the general population. We have failed our First Nations people for far too long, and we need to take this opportunity through this bill and through other initiatives across government and every agency to start turning the tide on what has occurred. We can only do that by starting to have the conversations around truth and looking at our past.

As many members have already heard, we will hear stories that are uncomfortable and confronting, and so we should. We cannot learn from our past if we do not identify the past and if we do not talk about what has never been spoken about. I want to acknowledge Minister Enoch and her very important role with State Archives and what we will discover. In every one of our communities we will discover something we did not know, and it will not be pretty and we need to acknowledge that. We need to come together with our First Nations people not just in our remote or regional communities but in every suburb and every community across Queensland. We need to sit with them and hear their stories, hear their pain, grieve with them for that pain and then talk about how we come together and move forward. I know from the health perspective that we will hear some uncomfortable truths.

There is still racism and discrimination out there against our First Nations people. There is still very much unconscious bias and racism. We know that it still exists across the health system as well. We need to be honest with ourselves that that exists. We need to use this opportunity to change that.

This bill is a clear demonstration of the Palaszczuk government being fully committed to delivering on our promises to First Nations people in Queensland working collaboratively towards treaty. The importance of this legislation cannot be understated.

I want to note that I had the absolute honour of serving as a federal member of parliament when the then Prime Minister Kevin Rudd delivered the national apology. I consider it an honour and privilege to serve in the Queensland Labor government that prioritises and invests itself in the reconciliation process. In closing, I want to also note how proud I am as a Labor member who will be supporting the yes vote to give our First Nations people the voice they deserve in our Constitution later this year. Thank you.

 **Mr MADDEN** (Ipswich West—ALP) (6.30 pm): I am pleased to rise to speak in support of the Path to Treaty Bill 2023 as well as the amendments proposed by the minister. I begin by acknowledging the traditional custodians of the land on which we meet. I would also like to thank the Community Support and Services Committee, the committee secretariat, Hansard and the submitters. Also, Deputy Speaker, I would like to say how pleased I am that I am making my contribution while you are in the chair.

The primary purpose of the Path to Treaty Bill is to establish foundational legislation to drive Path to Treaty, including formation of a First Nations Treaty Institute to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in preparing treaty negotiations with the Queensland government and a Truth-telling and Healing Inquiry to inquire into and report on the effects of colonisation on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

This is a landmark bill that was introduced to the Queensland parliament on 22 February 2023. The bill furthers Queensland's Path to Treaty commitment made between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous peoples on 16 August 2022. Provisions informed by discriminatory practices of the past which are still present in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities (Justice, Land and Other Matters) Act 1984 will also be amended by this bill.

As said so well in the preamble of the bill, the Parliament of Queensland will recognise for the first time what we all know to be true and are self-evident—

- 1 Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples of Queensland are made up of many distinct communities and groups, each with their own unique laws, traditions, languages, culture and traditional knowledge.
- 2 Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples successfully governed their lands, seas, waters, air and resources for at least 65,000 years prior to British colonisation of Queensland.
- 3 The colonisation of Queensland occurred without the consent of Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples and often against their active resistance.
- 4 Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples assert they have never ceded their sovereignty over their lands, seas, waters, air and resources and they continue to assert their sovereignty.
- 5 Aboriginal peoples have a continuing responsibility for their lands, seas, waters, air and resources under Aboriginal law and Aboriginal tradition. Torres Strait Islander peoples have a continuing responsibility for their lands, seas, waters, air and resources under Torres Strait Islander law and Ailan Kastom.
- 6 The colonisation of Queensland and the dispossession of the lands, seas, waters and air traditionally occupied and used by Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples had a devastating, and ongoing, impact on Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
- 7 The foundation for a respectful and mutually beneficial relationship between Aboriginal peoples, Torres Strait Islander peoples and the Queensland community generally is to provide for processes and opportunities to hear the voices of Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
- 8 The process of truth-telling will help inform the Queensland community generally and help heal the trauma suffered by Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples as a result of colonisation. The process will inform treaty negotiations between Aboriginal peoples, Torres Strait Islander peoples and the State, highlight the resilience, enduring culture, law and knowledge of Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and demonstrate how these strengths are priceless assets for Queensland.
- 9 Treaties between Aboriginal peoples, Torres Strait Islander peoples and the State will act as recognition of the impacts of colonisation and the State's commitment to working with Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples to build a new future.
- 10 The truth-telling and path to treaty processes will provide measurable economic, social, cultural and environmental benefits for Aboriginal peoples, Torres Strait Islander peoples, the Queensland community generally and the State.

A treaty or treaties will set the foundation for a shared future between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and the Queensland government. It will allow for all parties to come together and negotiate a new way of working and set the foundation for a positive coexistence.

In closing, I would like to quote what the Premier of Queensland Annastacia Palaszczuk said about the bill. She stated—


Our government is determined to deeply understand our past, to acknowledge the pain and suffering, and to build a better future together.

Queensland's Path to Treaty signals an opportunity to walk into a much brighter tomorrow, and this landmark Bill is a crucial next step toward that after the commitment made last year.

I thank the Interim Truth and Treaty Body for their guidance, including in co-designing this significant Bill.

I urge all Queenslanders to find in themselves the courage to finish this unfinished business, the compassion to walk in other people's shoes and the commitment to make the most of this opportunity.

I commend the Path to Treaty Bill 2023 and the amendments proposed by the minister to the House.

 **Mr LISTER** (Southern Downs—LNP) (6.37 pm): I rise to make a contribution on this bill. I am proud to say that I will be supporting it, however I would like to make sure that my contribution here is reflective of the kinds of views expressed to me by the people who have elected me in Southern Downs, and it will not come as any surprise to members that I am prepared to do that in a fairly frank way. I think the bill is a good bill. It is necessary that we move forward. It is necessary for people whose stories have not been told and for the hurt that they have experienced which has not been acknowledged to be acknowledged.

Having said that, the people of Southern Downs expect us to have results. One of the things that people come to me regularly and say is that we have spent a long time trying to address the disadvantages that Indigenous people experience in our country—life expectancy, health, employment, education—all of those kinds of things. I think I am not alone in wondering: where has all the money gone? Where has all the work that we have done ended up when we still have a situation where our Indigenous fellow citizens have such poor prospects in life and in employment and so forth? I could summarise that by saying that there is a suspicion about big government, a suspicion about big programmes and big talk, and an understandable concern from people in my electorate as to whether or not this process—this bill effectively serves as an enabling bill—will result in action that we can be proud of.

A common complaint that the opposition has had, along with many other community groups, is that this bill did not experience the degree of public input that it might have had there been a decent amount of time for consideration. A number of submitters were explicit about this. It is a disappointment that we had the Foundation for Aboriginal and Islander Research Action, the Local Government Association of Queensland, the Queensland Mental Health Commission, YFS Legal Community Legal Centre, the Queensland University of Technology, the Queensland Indigenous Family Violence Legal Service and the Australian Lawyers Alliance, and I know a number of speakers before me, highlight concerns about how Indigenous communities appear to have not been adequately consulted and were not fully aware of the implications of the bill, and therefore it would stand to reason that their voices have not been appropriately heard.

I would like to think that, in spite of the paucity of consultation and the relatively truncated period for public consultation given the enormous importance of this bill, we will see benefits from it. I remain vigilant and inquiring as to how the processes that will be enabled by this bill will go ahead. I want to make sure that those Indigenous people whose circumstances are in most desperate need of improvement get that improvement. In saying that, I am confident I speak for the vast majority of people in my electorate of Southern Downs.

I want to make a couple of observations about some of the things that have been said in the debate so far. The opposition has copped some criticism from the government for our members taking umbrage at the inadequate amount of consultation, which was also expressed by some of the important submitters. The member for Bundaberg was critical of that. I would say: does the government expect us to rejoice in this? Does the government expect the opposition to say nothing about how legislation like this, as so much legislation before it, has experienced a lack of consultation or, in the case of some amendments, no consultation at all? That is our job. The government and the outcome would be the better for being open and allowing the community to have due opportunity to contribute to bills like this.


I also notice that the Minister for Water made an observation correctly, a good observation, that there is Indigenous water provided for in a number of water projects. That is cold comfort for the people in my electorate of Southern Downs, for the Githabul people, who would have access to 200 megalitres of Indigenous water if the Emu Swamp Dam project were to go ahead. When we are talking about improving the situation of Indigenous people and listening to them and having practical outcomes which benefit them, you could start right there. It is not just about talk. It is not just about important people

being on their soapbox. It is about the people on the ground having access to the benefits that this process is supposed to provide.

I would like to acknowledge the Indigenous people in the electorate of Southern Downs that I represent: the Githabul people who are on the eastern side of Southern Downs and the Bigambul traditional owners around Goondiwindi. I think it is also important to acknowledge the Indigenous community of Toomelah, which is just over the border in New South Wales and for whom Goondiwindi is their centre of interest: the Goomeri nation. The Toomelah settlement is on their land. I am not satisfied that those groups are sufficiently aware of or have had sufficient opportunity to help shape this bill. I think that is disappointing given that it is supposed to be for their benefit among others.

I would like to sum up by saying that I acknowledge that there have been some incidents and happenings in our past of which we should be ashamed. In becoming a member of parliament after a relatively sheltered career as an officer in the Australian Defence Force, I have come across more of that. I have met Indigenous people of consequence who have patiently explained to me how their lives and their culture are affected by what has gone before us. For that reason I can understand why it is important that the wrongs of the past and the experiences of people who have suffered in the past need to be acknowledged and fleshed out. I agree with that.

I urge all concerned to ensure that this process results in kids going to school, families being healthy and Indigenous people having work and having the opportunities that we want them to have, that all Australians and Queenslanders have. As I say, I support the bill. I hope that it will be the start of a new type of success in addressing the disadvantages that Indigenous Australians and Queenslanders experience. I will be very vigilant and inquiring about progress as we go on.

 **Mrs GILBERT** (Mackay—ALP) (6.45 pm): I speak tonight to support the bill for an act to establish the First Nations Treaty Institute to prepare a framework for treaty nations with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and to support Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples to participate in treaty negotiations and truth-telling. I would like to acknowledge the traditional owners of Cairns and Far North Queensland and also the Yuwi people from the land where I live.

The students of Kutta Mulla Gorinna Special Assistance School sent me some statements because they wanted to be part of this bill. Kutta Mulla Gorinna Special Assistance School has predominantly Indigenous students. These students are the future of my region. These are the words of teenagers. One said—

This is a step forward. This is a chance for all Queenslanders, Like, exactly as it should be. A step forward with 'coming together'.

Another student stated—

It will be a better future for my kids. The more people that know our ways, they will have a better understanding of our kids.

Another student stated—

First Nations culture is embedded into the everyday life—it has a physical presence in all aspects of community life.

Another said—

Treaty, it's a big emotion to put into words. Its just years and years of—

and then they could not finish it. Some of them call me aunty. Another said to me—

If Aunty is to do it, please don't stuff it up. This is our chance and probably only chance.

Another said—

It would just feel good, you know to be able to have a voice and know that we are being heard.

These are the children, the youth, of my community.


As the Premier said, this is our chance to do what we should have done two centuries ago: to make a treaty or treaties with Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islander peoples. There are rare moments in time, perhaps just once in a generation or even once in several generations, when we have the opportunity to be true agents of change. Queensland's Path to Treaty is just such a moment. It is a moment which will define our humanity and our sense of fairness and will be a legacy to leave our children.

We are always talking about breaking the cycle. This is our opportunity to do so. The youth in my community do not want to be listed as statistics because of their indigeneity. They do not want to be overrepresented in the justice system. They do not want to die earlier than other people and they also do not want to have less education than other groups. They want change. They want history to change. We can only do that by looking back to move forward. In the words of the committee chair, the member for Mansfield, Corrine McMillan—

Queenslanders have a right to know the past and to understand how it affects everything we witness and experience today. The Path to Treaty Bill highlights the maturity of the Queensland Government, under Premier Hon Anastacia Palaszczuk MP, to deal honestly with our state's history and provide the foundation for a path forward.

In my region, the Yuwi Aboriginal Corporation was formed following the Yuwi people achieving consent determination in February 2020 over the Mackay electorate. This is our modern history. What we do know is that in our past history there was widespread violence against Aboriginal people when they resisted white settlers taking their lands in the 1860s and 1870s. We have a Boundary Road, like many other places in Queensland do. This road marks the boundary to keep Aboriginal people from coming into town. There is a statue of an Aboriginal woman running holding her baby outside the Leap Hotel. This woman was hunted by police. She leapt off the hill to try to save her baby. Her baby survived but she did not. Her great granddaughter Debbie teaches young people in our community about our local Indigenous culture. Some years ago I spoke to Debbie and asked her if she was offended by the statue. She said, 'No, we need people to know the terrible story of our local history.'

There is one thing that I have heard from people who do not want to engage and recognise our hard history. It is that we are all the same, that we should not be any different and should treat everyone equally the same—similar to what the member for Hinchinbrook was saying. As Noel Pearson said at the Voice forum at parliament, equality is not giving everybody the same pair of shoes; equality is when you give people shoes that fit. It is time that we made sure everyone's shoes fit so that we can move into our collective future. It is time to gather the stories, treat them with cultural respect and have a mature future for all. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Dr MacMAHON** (South Brisbane—Grn) (6.51 pm): Thank you to the representatives from the Yidinji people, the Yirrganydji people, Djabugay people, the Zagraeb Island Dancers and Reverend Van Den Broek Amber who welcomed us here today. We are privileged to meet on your country this week. I come here from Yagara country, and I would also like to pay respects to Yagara, Ugarapul and Turrbal elders who have been custodians of their country for over 60,000 years and who continue to fight for land rights, justice, language and culture. I have been privileged over the years to have spent time with elders on Yagara country in South Brisbane and at Deebing Creek. I would like to acknowledge the many elders, particularly some incredible matriarchs and women, who have shared their stories, insights and struggles with me—people like Auntie Dawn Daylight and Janine Kelly, whose stories I will share later in my contribution.

I and the Greens support the Path to Treaty legislation as a first step towards treaties in Queensland. When we say that we are on the lands of the longest continuing living culture in the world, it is worth remembering that this continued practice of culture and language on country is something that First Nations people have had to fight for and continue to fight for. First Nations people and their culture are alive today not through the good graces of government but in spite of governments. For this reason, many of the First Nations people I speak to have an understandable scepticism of governments, and their expectations for treaty processes are low. This scepticism is a significant barrier to a meaningful treaty process and truth-telling and healing inquiries. If we are to overcome this, we need to do much better than those who have come before us.

It is not enough to just have good intentions. Too many of the injustices against First Nations people in this state were the result of policies that were justified on the basis of good intentions. On the rare occasion where legislators have sought to listen, too often we have been unwilling to hear the truth when it is spoken let alone act on it. Thirty-two years on from the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody, many of its recommendations are yet to be acted upon. Black deaths in custody are sickeningly common. We marched just a few months ago for Aubrey Donahue, who was shot to death by police. He was shot four times. There were 15 police officers present, none wearing body cameras.

Almost all of the First Nations people who made submissions on the bill commented on the hypocrisy of the government in introducing this bill in the same week that it introduced harsh bail laws for children which will only see more First Nations children locked up. Twenty-six years on from the *Bringing them home* report and 15 years on from the national apology to the stolen generation, First Nations children are 10 times more likely to be in out-of-home care. Land continues to be stolen, desecrated and cleared and sacred sites destroyed. This is happening in real time, on our watch. First Nations people are sleeping in tents in South Brisbane and right across the state. Colonial legal processes, including native title and cultural heritage protection frameworks, have led to division and conflict.

If we are sincere in our commitment to meaningful treaty then there needs to be more than just the platitudes and tokenism shown by the governments in the past. We need tangible change from the get-go. For a treaty process to be meaningful we need to address the economic and social injustices

that First Nations people experience—overincarceration and lack of access to housing, health care, education and employment. In an incredibly wealthy state like Queensland, it is simply not good enough that First Nations people can expect to have shorter lives than any other Indigenous population in the world, that First Nations children will be 32 times more likely than their non-Indigenous peers to be put in prison or that 40 per cent of First Nations households are living below the poverty line. There is no treaty-making capacity for an incarcerated child, for those dying of preventable diseases or for families struggling to keep a roof over their heads. First Nations people have solutions to these challenges—solutions that need to be properly funded and supported. We should be redistributing the immense wealth of this state into First Nations housing, health care and education.

The principles set out in this bill to guide the application of this bill should also guide all legislation in this place: self-determination; free, prior and informed consent; respecting and protecting Aboriginal law, Aboriginal tradition, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander lore and ailan kastom; and the importance of equality and non-discrimination. I share the concerns of First Nations people that the promised funding for the Path to Treaty itself is insufficient to do the process justice—\$10 million a year will not go far. I call on the supporters of treaty in this government to ensure the process is properly funded.

For the many First Nations people I speak with, truth-telling is a key concern. Telling the truth of the history of this country—the violence and the resistance—is long overdue. I share concerns regarding the time frame. The experience of the Yoorrook Justice Commission of Victoria and the concerns voiced here tell us that the three-year time limit on the Truth-telling and Healing Inquiry is likely to be too short. All sides of politics should commit themselves to extending the inquiry upon any recommendation to do so.

Similarly, there is some concern around the inquiry's lack of power to compel information from non-government entities. I thank the minister for introducing amendments to include the Queensland Police Service in the inquiry, but, given the significant role of non-government entities in enforcing colonial genocide, if the inquiry recommends it be afforded the power to compel information from non-government entities then both sides should commit themselves to legislating this power.

Despite these concerns, many First Nations people I have spoken to have expressed their desire to be part of the truth-telling process. I have heard stories of violence at the hands of employers, teachers and caregivers, stories of sexual violence and rape, children removed at birth, destruction of country and deaths in custody. I spoke with Yamatji woman Janine Kelly, a documentary maker who has been on her own journey of truth-telling, gathering stories from elders in Cherbourg about the harm of ongoing child removals of First Nations children. She has documented the pain of forced removals, the lack of communication, the trauma and their struggle to reunite children with their families. She hopes that these stories of the ongoing impacts of child removal will be captured in the truth-telling process.

Aunty Dawn Daylight was placed at All Hallows' School as a domestic slave doing unpaid work. Aunty Dawn is an important part of the West End community and has devoted her life to this community. She has a painful story and unanswered questions. She writes—

At the age of 12, I was stolen and I sent to All Hallows' covenant—one of the wealthiest elite private schools in Brisbane. I was forced to work there as a domestic servant. At the time, the college was run by the Church, and more specifically, the Sisters of Mercy.

I remember being locked up at night and not being let out until morning. I remember the sound of the nuns' 'rosary beads as they walked on wooden verandas above our heads. I remember lugging big pots and heavy trays of food, baked custards and rice.

I remember not being with my family or any other Aboriginal people. I was not allowed to go home until I was 18 years old.

Despite the experience of Dawn and her sisters, the Sisters of Mercy have denied that Aunty Dawn was kept there, claiming that she was a paid day worker. Aunty Dawn writes—

I've held unanswered questions my whole life, and so have my sisters. To know in your heart that you were stolen by someone and put to work at such a young age, with no explanation from authorities—it provides no closure. It's very painful.

Asking these questions has never been about going for the jugular vein. It has always been about finally putting that feeling to rest. There is a hurt here, one that us Aboriginal people feel and will continue to feel unless there is a point of truth-telling. The next thing is to heal. For me, that is what I am trying to do. I am telling my truth and the easiest thing for people to do is listen.

It is stories like this and questions like this that I think we are all hoping the Truth-telling and Healing Inquiry will bring to light. The opportunities before us—for truth-telling and for treaty—will only be realised with a genuine commitment to justice, to redistribution of resources and to self-determination of First Nations people.

Debate, on motion of Dr MacMahon, adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT

Moggill Electorate, Budget



Dr ROWAN (Moggill—LNP) (7.00 pm): Whilst the federal Labor government's budget is to be handed down tonight, I wish to turn our attention to next month's upcoming Queensland state Labor budget. The Palaszczuk state Labor government must listen to the needs of local residents of the electorate of Moggill and deliver the critical infrastructure, government services and cost-of-living relief that I have been consistently advocating for and raising with the state Labor government over many years. This includes an integrated road and public transport plan with funded solutions to ease traffic congestion and improve public and active transport services, with cyclist and pedestrian safety also prioritised. It is also imperative that the Palaszczuk state Labor government delivers additional and increased public transport services on existing routes as well as expanded local services for residents, who have long been ignored by the state Labor government. The Palaszczuk state Labor government must also deliver enhanced footpath and pedestrian infrastructure along both Moggill Road and Mount Crosby Road, including to the Moggill District Sports Park.

Local school communities also deserve to have their school infrastructure priorities fully funded, including those at Kenmore State High School, which is in absolute need of a new school hall and other purpose-built and enhanced learning environments to meet the increasing student population. These are matters that I have raised directly with the Minister for Education.

The Labor state government must deliver enhanced disaster and emergency management resources for the management of floods and bushfires, with additional resource funding for our local ambulance stations and the dedicated building of a new ambulance station at Karana Downs.

Local residents and all Queenslanders must see practical measures that meaningfully provide cost-of-living relief, enable more affordable housing and increase the delivery of clean, reliable and affordable energy. There absolutely must be funding allocated to fix Labor's hospital and health crisis. This includes fully funding new hospital beds. Too many local residents in the electorate of Moggill are suffering due to ambulance ramping, ambulance delays and access block.

All of these issues were also emphasised at a recent local community forum hosted by the Brisbane West Lions Club. Members of the Brisbane West Lions Club understand and continue to highlight the failure of the Labor-Greens alliance, and specifically the Palaszczuk Labor government, to deliver the local infrastructure required for our local area including an additional high school as well as a community and neighbourhood centre, funding to enhance our local environment and ensure sustainable growth, and solutions to bust traffic congestion and enhanced public and active transport. This was a clear outcome of the Brisbane West Lions community forum hosted by president John Williams and the report compiled by the Lions and its Community Infrastructure and Wellbeing Committee.

Whilst Labor and the Greens have given up, I will continue fighting for local residents—for the infrastructure and services they deserve. There is no doubt that we need additional solutions to bust traffic congestion and additional investment in our schools, cost-of-living relief as well as the building of a community and neighbourhood centre which can service all suburbs in the electorate of Moggill.

Bundamba Electorate; Cairns, Infrastructure Projects




Mr McCALLUM (Bundamba—ALP) (7.03 pm): It is wonderful to be here in Cairns in Far North Queensland for regional parliament. As the representative of the wonderful Bundamba community, it did not take me long to see the links between Cairns and our local community. When you walk outside and see the construction that is going on for the \$175 million expansion of the Cairns Convention Centre, if you are eagle-eyed you will see that the site offices carry a logo for Ausco. Ausco is a company that has been delivering local jobs in our community, at Redbank and Riverview. It is absolutely wonderful to see it here as part of the job-creating supply chain for the expansion of the Cairns Convention Centre.

On Saturday I had the opportunity to go up to Barron Gorge, where I was able to inspect the Barron Gorge Hydroelectric Power Station. That station is owned by our proudly publicly owned CleanCo, which of course also operates our local Swanbank Power Station and Wivenhoe pumped hydro, just a bit further west of our community. These links are delivering more clean, cheap energy for Queensland homes and businesses as part of proudly publicly owned power.

Yesterday at the Trade and Investment Queensland Taste of Tropical Queensland showcase it was really wonderful to see a local 100 per cent Indigenous owned and operated business—FigJam and Co—who were here to meet with some of the over 80 international investors who have come here to look at all of what our local community in Ipswich as well as right throughout Queensland has to offer. The Bundamba community is really kicking goals.

I will finish by talking about the Kuranda Scenic Railway. One of its locomotives has been fully overhauled at our local workshops at Redbank by Progress Rail. It is wonderful to see the strong connections between Bundamba and Cairns.

Regional Queensland, Road Infrastructure; Callide Electorate, Budget

 **Mr HEAD** (Callide—LNP) (7.06 pm): Isn't it great to be in regional Queensland for parliament? It is nice to see the government acknowledge—at least once—that there is in fact more to Queensland than the concrete jungle of the south-east. While Labor is here to put on a show, I will talk about a few things that will actually improve the lives of people in the bush. Firstly, how about delivering on promises instead of breaking them? Specifically, the Minister for Transport needs to deliver on a promise he made in June 2020 in relation to the Monto Mount Perry Road. The minister said—

The Palaszczuk government has just allocated \$8 million to seal the last 9.2 kilometres of dirt on this road.


Three years and \$26.6 million later, how much of this road do you think has been sealed? With 5.7 kilometres of gravel remaining, a meagre 3.5 kilometres has been sealed. A bridge is also yet to be upgraded. This is a budget blow-out beyond imagination but, frankly, with the record of this government, I am not surprised at all. I add that they closed this road for nearly two years to undertake these works. With hardly any traffic to manage and a work site to themselves, this government has stuffed around and failed to deliver on a clear promise made to the people of the North Burnett.

What does this mean? Patients from Monto, who have next to no local health services because of the failures of this government, must travel up a gravel road to access health services at Bundaberg. With Biloela and Gladstone maternity wards still on bypass, it remains a reality that mothers in labour may have to travel up this gravel road. I call on the Minister for Transport to deliver on this commitment and ensure the remaining road sealing is budgeted for and completed as soon as possible.

I also call on the government to deliver on other much needed infrastructure and services across Callide in its upcoming state budget, including but not limited to: improved heavy vehicle access to the Gladstone port; adequate parking for parents at Calliope State School; a CT scanner at Biloela; adequate maternity services at Gladstone, Chinchilla and Biloela; sufficient funding for local governments; more police resources across the electorate; widening and upgrades to the Mundubbera Durong Road, Maryborough-Biggenden Road, Leichhardt and Dawson highways; and sealing of the Gayndah Mount Perry Road. Paradise Dam must also be rebuilt with absolute priority. School halls remain without air conditioning, including at Calliope and Gin Gin, and many school tuckshops and toilet blocks also fail to meet health and safety standards. I call on the government to deliver these projects and please, on behalf of every taxpayer, deliver them on time and on budget.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): I remind members that they have to be in their allocated seats to participate in the debate. The jump seat does not count.

Brian Prince Awards


 **Mr SMITH** (Bundaberg—ALP) (7.09 pm): You have to love the enthusiasm of youth though, Mr Deputy Speaker. For 10 years the Bundaberg East and now Bundaberg Central Rotary Club has celebrated commitment, dedication, service and legacy of our first responders across the Bundaberg community and has done so in the last 10 years in honour of a great man, Mr Brian Prince. Brian was a long-time paramedic and also a long-time member of Rotary who was as much loved and adored by his friends as he was by his family. On Saturday evening just past we celebrated the 10th anniversary of the awards put on by the Rotary Club. It was wonderful to see so many Rotarians from other clubs there and so many people from the emergency services, volunteers, members of the community and previous winners as well. In fact, on the evening there were over 120 people there to celebrate our first responders and celebrate the life of Mr Brian Prince.

Ian Mylrea, the past district governor and good friend of Brian, was on hand to talk about Brian's life. President Mike Hiosan was also in attendance and President-Elect Charles Blanshard was there. I want to give a special thank you and acknowledgement to Rod Medew and Brant Duff for the hard work that they put in, as they do every year, to make sure that the evening is special for all of those in attendance. I also want to acknowledge Laurel Prince, David Prince and Jacinta Prince who are

members of Brian's family. Even after 10 years of being at each and every awards, you could still tell how emotional they were to celebrate not just their father but a great man who was much loved and adored by so many.

The awards cover a number of different categories as well as volunteers—recognising our hardworking volunteers—and we were also very lucky to have Inspector Grant Marcus speak to all of us about the dangers that our first responders encounter each and every time they put on their uniform. The presentation of the award for the Queensland Ambulance Service went to advanced care paramedic Rebecca Harvey, for the Queensland Police Service the award went to Detective Senior Constable Darlene Webb, for the Queensland Fire and Emergency Services the award went to Captain Eric Dyke and for the Bundaberg Hospital Emergency Department the award went to Dr Chris McMullen. The finalists for Volunteer of the Year were Darren Nelson from the RFS, Tony Van Wijk from VMR and Kieren Galey from the State Emergency Service. I am very glad to say that the Volunteer of the Year for 2023 went to Mr Kieren Galey from the State Emergency Service. The legacy of our first responders will be felt for years to come.

Burdekin Electorate, Burton Coalmine

 **Mr LAST** (Burdekin—LNP) (7.12 pm): Last Thursday I had the privilege of attending the reopening of the Burton coalmine in the Burdekin electorate, and what a great event that was. Some 280 people were in attendance. This is a reopening that has created in excess of 500 jobs, and hasn't it hit the ground running? It has a target of five million tonnes next year. Congratulations to Nick Jorss, the Executive Chairman, and his team for the work that they have done in reopening that mine and creating all of those employment opportunities in that neck of the woods.

Nick was the founding managing director of Stanwell Coal, leading it from an exploration company to a profitable mid-tier producer. He has worked as an engineer and he has worked in investment banking where he advised corporate, private equity and government clients across industry sectors ranging from resources to infrastructure. His passion was clearly evident on the day. During his contribution he quite rightly said that there is no substitute for metallurgical coal, particularly when it comes to the making of steel. They have tried a lot of alternatives, but at the end of the day it is metallurgical coal.

Ms Grace interjected.


Mr LAST: I take that interjection from the minister. We do have the best metallurgical coal in the world and most of those coalmines of course are located in the mighty Burdekin electorate.

When talking about the new coal royalty regime, Nick said that it was like something that you expect from Argentina, but then he said, 'No, that didn't go far enough,' and it was more like something from Venezuela or another dictatorship. He does not mince his words because, as he rightly says, it is those coalmines in Queensland which are contributing significant royalties to this government. I never miss a chance when I get up in this place, whether it be in Brisbane or here in Cairns, to highlight that all we want in those areas—in the Isaac region and the Bowen Basin—is our fair share of the royalties. I know that Mayor Anne Baker and I have a regular discussion about those royalties coming back to the area that produced them—royalties which could be used for roads, royalties which could be used for health, royalties which could be used for schools.

The minister knows my passion and my interest for the schools in my electorate and my commitment to get that blue block at Moranbah State High School reopened. I look forward to the day when the minister gives me a manual arts teacher so that we can reopen that particular building to give our students there the opportunities that they deserve.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): I think on the back of that speech it would be remiss of me, with my co-chair of the Parliamentary Friends of Latin America, not to take the opportunity to encourage people to come to the next Parliamentary Friends of Latin America event during the next sitting week.

Jordan Electorate, Events


 **Mrs MULLEN** (Jordan—ALP) (7.15 pm): I want to highlight three very special events that have been held in my electorate just in this past week. It was an absolute pleasure, along with the federal member for Oxley, to host 190 very sprightly seniors for morning tea. This was a very popular event and in fact we had some rather disappointed seniors as we physically could not take any more RSVPs. As well as providing a delicious morning tea courtesy of the Springlake Hotel, we also held informative presentations from the ACCC talking about preventing scams, the Office of Fair Trading which focused

on consumer rights and Crime Stoppers which gave an update on its work. We were also grateful for the support of Services Australia, My Aged Care and the lovely Joe, a retired accountant who volunteers in my office with the ATO's Tax Help. The feedback from the morning tea was so positive. Everyone loved the social connection and we look forward to doing it all again next year.

May also marks Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Month. I am very proud that our local community has once again stepped up to raise ongoing awareness and to say that domestic and family violence is never acceptable. I host a now yearly domestic and family violence Night of Remembrance and Candlelight Ceremony, and proudly so. The event is held around the Orion Lagoon—a well-known landmark in our community—and I want to thank everyone who joined us in support. This year I was deeply honoured to welcome Vanessa Fowler OAM, Chair of the Allison Baden-Clay Foundation and Co-Chair of the Queensland government's Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Council. Vanessa's words to those gathered were deeply personal and impactful and I am very grateful for her support. Thank you as always to the team from the Domestic Violence Action Centre who co-support this event with me and who each and every day undertake critical work in supporting victim-survivors in our local community.

Finally, on Saturday I was so pleased to attend the Greater Springfield Community Festival. This is a special event in our community which had its original inception 11 years ago as a celebration of the Indian and Tamil new year. I am so proud to represent a very large and growing Indian community and this event has always been a wonderful showcase of the rich culture of our Indian residents. For the last few years the event has morphed into a truly multicultural event, with a greater focus on the incredible diversity of our community. Last weekend we experienced an amazing array of cultural performances—in fact, 62 individual performances, and all just outstanding. Over 300 performers with 18 cultures and languages were represented, including from India, China, Mexico, PNG and Thailand, just to name a few. I am so proud to once again be the event ambassador for the Greater Springfield Community Festival and I congratulate the terrific Varnam Cultural Society and all of the incredible volunteers who organised this spectacular festival in our community which was attended by an estimated 13,000 across the day.

North Queensland

 **Mr KATTER** (Traeger—KAP) (7.18 pm): This morning in a question to the Premier I made reference to self-determination and possible statehood for North Queensland. That often gets misrepresented in the media as a political stunt or a joke. However, it is addressing the chasm between the investment and the policy decision-making in relation to the people of North Queensland and those in South-East Queensland. This evening I want to put that in the context of coal, crime and crocs.

When it comes to coal, we are looking at \$16 billion in royalties to governments at the federal and state levels as we are driving towards net zero. A lot of people in North Queensland do not have that same deep determination to get to net zero. They are quite happy with the coal industry and the jobs it provides and the money it gives to the hospitals and schools. It is a highly hypocritical position of the government to oversee the wind-up of coal-fired power stations while it is still willing to sell it to everyone overseas. We are all patting ourselves on the back talking about what we are opening, but there are a lot of people trying to shut it down. The government cannot reconcile getting to net zero and getting rid of coal. A lot of people in North Queensland see the value in coal and want to retain the industry.


Turning now to crime, we have been told for the last four or five years that youth crime is a media beat-up and the KAP were trying to get headlines. It was not a beat-up. We all know that now. As soon as it hit Brisbane it became an issue for the government. It is a little bit offensive to those of us who have these high crime rates that all of a sudden it gets attention when it hits the media in Brisbane. That makes one think we should have better representation up here.

Everyone thinks it is a big joke to talk about crocs, but it is pretty serious. It is a management issue. We want to have a mature debate about it so it can be done properly. We are still facing ridiculous propositions such as being told to put up more signs and tell people to be more careful in the water, which is a euphemism for do not swim in your waters anymore. That is the solution. We are a bit sick of being told what to do.

I will talk about roads as well. We have been talking about Doomadgee and trying to get a crossing so that a town in this modern age cannot be cut off for four months by road while we are celebrating an \$8 billion Cross River Rail so people in Brisbane can get to work 10 minutes earlier. How can that be a fair use of resources in this state? How can that work unless we have better

representation? We are heading for another redistribution where we are going to have to put more seats in Brisbane because that is where the population is. We are going to have to take them away from here. We can look forward to less representation in this parliament when it is already bleeding. There needs to be change. We need a North Queensland parliamentary council or decentralised departments.

International Day of the Midwife; International Nurses Day; Redlands Electorate


 **Ms RICHARDS** (Redlands—ALP) (7.21 pm): Can I say how lovely it is to be in Cairns. I have a very deep affinity with Cairns. My sister and two nieces are Yorkeys Knob residents. It is a beautiful place to be. Last Friday was International Day of the Midwife and this Friday is International Nurses Day so it is again a fantastic opportunity for this House to recognise all of our amazing healthcare workers. They really are our health heroes. Our nurses do an absolutely incredible job day in, day out. It was lovely for the member for Capalaba and myself to be able to host coffee for the staff at Redland Hospital on Friday, mixed in with a couple of baby cuddles as we did a little tour through the maternity department. The babies were very cute indeed.

In the other good news in the health space, as I have said in the last three sittings, the satellite hospital down in Redland Bay is going absolutely gangbusters. Last week we were able to announce that the satellite hospital will have a minor injury and illness clinic that will be open from 8 am to 10 pm. What that means for my residents, particularly my Southern Moreton Bay Island community and the growing Southern Redland Bay region, is that they will be able to get health care closer to home. That clinic will provide walk-in urgent care for common injuries and illnesses, which is particularly important if you like playing sport on the weekend and you need to get an X-ray. They will have all of that mix of medical imaging and diagnostic services. That clinic will be absolutely fantastic.

In addition, it will build capacity in renal dialysis chairs and chemotherapy chairs. I do not think there is anybody in here who would not recognise how important renal dialysis and chemotherapy services are for our communities. It will also include consultant and treatment rooms for neurology services, cardiology services, older persons care, wound care and musculoskeletal care. What I am really proud of and that Minister D'Ath has been fantastic in assisting to deliver is that my community will be able to access mental healthcare services there. This is fantastic news for our Redlands community and it will take the pressure off Redland Hospital.

While I am on Redland Hospital, Hutchinson's is again going gangbusters on that site, with the 28-bed ward being delivered for the intensive care unit and 37 new beds. There will be a 30 per cent increase in the capacity of that hospital. Every day of the week our Palaszczuk government will continue to deliver great health care for our Redlands community and they will deliver it closer to home. I am extraordinarily proud of all the work we have going on in the Redlands.

Southport Electorate

 **Mr MOLHOEK** (Southport—LNP) (7.25 pm): At the outset I want to say how great it is to be here in Cairns. It is not my first visit and I hope it will not be my last. I always enjoy coming to Cairns. I want to start by saying thanks to my leader, David Crisafulli, who took time out of his busy schedule to meet with my young leaders group two Saturdays ago. It was great to have not only 20 other young people there but also the recently inducted youth member for Southport, Priya Virdee-Hero. It is a great program. It has been running for about 10 years. It is amazing to share the journey with some of those young people and see where they end up. In fact, one of the young leaders from last year is now working in the Prime Minister's office. I feel I may need to counsel her about her political path, but it is what it is.

I also want to acknowledge a couple of the schools in my electorate, Bellevue Park State School and principal Robyn Hutchins and Ashmore State School and principal Karen Brown, which put together absolutely cracker Anzac Day services this year. I think they were two of the best services I have attended at local schools in my 10 years as a member. Both schools truly did the Anzac tradition proud. It was such an honour to be there as part of that. Just a few weeks ago Bellevue Park State School also celebrated its 40th anniversary at Southport Sharks. The school was originally to have been named Bundall school but for some reason at the last minute they thought better of that and gave it the name Bellevue Park.

Also during the month I had the privilege of attending the reopening of Little Grubbs Orchard in Southport. Little Grubbs Orchard provides behavioural support, occupational therapy, language, oral motor and communication skills and therapeutic programs for children and their families impacted by neuro-developmental conditions such as autism, ADHD and Global Development Delay. You do not

have to spend much time there to see just how passionate Josh and Lily Grubb, the founders and directors of the organisation, are about helping families. More importantly, thanks to the generous support of Blackwood Building Company and their suppliers, Little Grubbs Orchard were able to expand their facilities in Southport and increase their capacity to support even more families in need. The new building includes additional therapy rooms, a sensory room and a play area for children. The support they received from Glen Moat, the head of business for Blackwood Building Company, has been amazing. It is important to acknowledge the role of people who donate their services, whether in kind or cash, to important charities and organisations like Little Grubbs Orchard.

Bulimba Electorate, Anzac Day



Hon. DE FARMER (Bulimba—ALP) (Minister for Employment and Small Business and Minister for Training and Skills Development) (7.28 pm): It is so good to be in the wonderful city of Cairns. I want to talk today about Anzac Day, which is a special day for all of us. It is a day when we acknowledge the extraordinary service of the men and women who have served on our behalf. This year it was the 108th anniversary of the landing at Gallipoli. We know that the Anzac Day celebrations are about the First World War, but have since come to reflect the service of men and women in every conflict and every peacekeeping effort since then. I pay tribute to all of those fine people.

I want to use this occasion to pay tribute to the people who give our community the opportunity to pay their respects to those fine people for their extraordinary service. We know that we would not have that opportunity without some significant people in our own local communities, and we all have them. I want to mention them because it is such an incredibly big effort that they make. I want to thank Brian Daley OAM, the president of the Bulimba and District RSL Sub-Branch and his mighty members. I want to thank Eric Beutel, who is the president of the Norman Park National Servicemen's RSL Sub-Branch who is retiring after 35 years of helping to run the service there. I thank our very own HMAS Moreton and the schools of my electorate which all ran their own services and/or took part in the services on the day. We all go to our school services and see even the little preppies knowing the seriousness of the occasion. I thank the schools for making sure that those kids are the ones who are taking these memories into the future; we need them so much.

To Lourdes Hill College; Bulimba State School; Balmoral State High School; Cannon Hill Anglican College; Murarrie, Morningside and Seven Hills state schools; St Oliver Plunkett; Sts Peter and Paul's; St Thomas'; Norman Park State School, which does a special service to support the Nashos down there in their memorial service; Camp Hill State School—and, Mr Deputy Speaker, you know that school very well—which took over from the service of the RSL sub-branch at Camp Hill and Belmont and have been running the service ever since; to Bulimba Girl Guides and the Morningside Scouts; to the Bulimba Bowlo, which is a memorial bowls club; to the residents of Suvla Street—their street is named after Suvla Bay—who get the whole community together to pay their respects; to Keith who is 100 and who puts on a dawn service at his place—I think he had about 300 people there on the day; to Craig who played the didgeridoo at the Norman Park service—his great uncle was Len Waters, the first Aboriginal military aviator—I thank you all and I honour you for your work.

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, 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, Mellish, Mickelberg, Miles, Millar, Minnikin, Molhoek, Mullen, Nicholls, O'Connor, O'Rourke, Palaszczuk, Pease, Perrett, Pitt, Powell, Power, Pugh, Purdie, Richards, Robinson, Rowan, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Simpson, Skelton, Smith, Stevens, Stewart, Sullivan, Tantari, Walker, Watts, Weir, Whiting