



# RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

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## FIRST SESSION OF THE FIFTY-SEVENTH PARLIAMENT

### Wednesday, 24 May 2023

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## WEDNESDAY, 24 MAY 2023

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The Legislative Assembly met at 9.30 am.

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.

### ACTING SPEAKER'S STATEMENTS

#### Palliative Care Queensland



**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Honourable members, the Palliative Care Queensland MP lunchbox information event is taking place in the Dandair Room today between 1 pm and 3 pm. The event is to raise awareness of National Palliative Care Week 2023—an extremely important issue to all members of this House and especially to me personally. Information has been distributed on members' desks.

Palliative Care Queensland is the peak body and leading charity in Queensland for palliative care. Its signature program is Ambulance Wish Queensland, providing last wishes to Queenslanders with life-limiting illnesses. Attendees will include Dr Anthony Herbert, President of Palliative Care Queensland and Medical Director of Paediatric Palliative Care Service at Children's Health Queensland; Louise O'Neill, the Chief Executive Officer of Palliative Care Queensland and the former CEO of Aged Care Workforce Industry Council, Commonwealth Health and NDIS senior executive and registered nurse; as well as board members, clinicians, volunteers and staff. I would encourage all members who are available to visit the lunchbox session and I look forward to seeing many of you there.

#### School Group Tours



**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I wish to advise members that we will be visited in the gallery this morning by students and teachers from Edens Landing State School in the electorate of Macalister, the Queensland Academy for Science Mathematics and Technology in the electorate of Maiwar, Moorooka State School in the electorate of Toohey and Kingaroy State High School in the electorate of Nanango.

### TABLED PAPERS

TABLING OF DOCUMENTS (SO 32)

REPORT BY THE CLERK

The following report was tabled by the Clerk—

[689](#) 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—

**Monitoring of Places of Detention (Optional Protocol to the Convention Against Torture) Bill 2022**

Amendments made to Bill

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

*Omit—*

'Monitoring of Places of Detention (Optional Protocol to the Convention Against Torture) Bill 2022'

*Insert—*

'Monitoring of Places of Detention (Optional Protocol to the Convention Against Torture) Bill 2023'

**Corrective Services (Emerging Technologies and Security) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022**

Amendments made to Bill

**Short title and consequential references to short title—***Omit—*

'Corrective Services (Emerging Technologies and Security) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022'

*Insert—*


'Corrective Services (Emerging Technologies and Security) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023'

## MINISTERIAL PAPER

The following ministerial paper was tabled by the Clerk—

Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence (Hon. D'Ath)—


[690](#) Legal Affairs and Safety Committee: Report No. 41, 57th Parliament—Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Bill 2022, government response**MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS****Housing**

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Olympic and Paralympic Games) (9.33 am): Every week another 10 Queenslanders and their families find a home thanks to the actions of our government. We have invested a record \$3.9 billion in social and affordable housing—the biggest investment in housing in our state ever. Since 2015 we have built 4,300 social homes—that is 10 new homes every week—and there are 647 social homes under construction right now.

Just last Friday I joined the housing minister at Yeronga where we are turning a TAFE site that was shut down by the LNP into a new housing development which includes 75 social and affordable units. Today I can announce more action that our government is taking. This week construction will be completed on another 32 new social housing units in Mount Gravatt. These new homes have been designed specifically for singles, couples, seniors and young people. From as early as next week, more than 32 Queenslanders will have a brand new roof over their head. The \$12.28 million project is being delivered in partnership with the Brisbane Housing Co. The Brisbane Housing Co. is just one of many organisations we partner with to help manage the almost 75,000 social houses our government manages.

Social housing is not the only support our government is providing. We are also helping to keep people in their private rental properties. This financial year, as I have said, including the money towards homelessness, rental assistance plus social housing, we have helped more than 200,000 households, which is fantastic, by providing such things as bond loans, rental grants and rental assistance. Our publicly owned QBuild is building modular homes in Brisbane. This includes government employee housing to free up rental supply, especially in the regions, and new social housing. The land audit our government is leading is helping find land owned by the state, local councils and faith-based organisations for future housing development. Our government will always work to provide social housing for our state's most vulnerable.

**Health Workforce**

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Olympic and Paralympic Games) (9.35 am): At the last sitting I announced a recruitment program to bolster numbers of health workers. Doctors would be eligible for up to \$70,000 to take up a job in regional or remote Queensland. Other healthcare workers would receive up to \$20,000. Well, I have good news for Queensland. As of this morning—just wait—680 doctors and healthcare workers have expressed interest in taking up our offer. This includes 340 from interstate, 205 from other parts of Queensland and 131 from overseas. These applicants can take their pick from more than 2,400 wonderful communities spread across our great state. As any visitor to any of these places will know, Queenslanders will offer a very warm welcome.


To get the extra money they must stay for 12 months and the offer is open to medical practitioners already living in Queensland. Since 2015—and I love this; member for Kawana, thank you—we have hired 17,000 extra frontline workers—3,100 more doctors, 10,600 more nurses and midwives, 1,100 ambulance officers and 2,400 allied health professionals. Some 9,475 more health workers have been hired simply in the first two years of this term of government including 1,500 doctors and 5,800 nurses and midwives, but we know we must do more.

There is a global shortage of healthcare workers. The World Health Organization estimates that between 80,000 and 180,000 healthcare workers died trying to save others during the pandemic. The shockwaves of those losses will be felt for years to come. We will always do all we can to ensure Queenslanders have access to the best health care. Some 700 expressions of interest in just two weeks is an astounding result. This investment of \$21 million to attract more to regional Queensland is money very well spent.

**Ms Simpson:** When will the workforce data be released?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** So rude.

## India

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Olympic and Paralympic Games) (9.38 am): At the invitation of our Prime Minister, Anthony Albanese, I will join a business dinner tonight in Sydney with Indian Prime Minister, Narendra Modi. It is my honour to represent Queensland at this meeting.


India is Queensland's second largest trading partner with exports worth \$19 billion in the 12 months to March, an increase of 29 per cent or \$4.5 billion. Last year India bought more metallurgical coal from Queensland than Korea and Japan combined. Trade means jobs for Queenslanders, which is why it is important that I attend this meeting. India is the fastest-growing major economy in the world. By 2030, it will be the world's third largest. In fact, India's economy is expected to grow by the size of Singapore's economy each year through to 2032. India has more 18-year-olds than the entire population of people of all ages in Australia. Each month, a million more people in India turn 18.

By 2025 India will have the largest population of people of working age in the world. They are highly skilled and educated, which presents great opportunities for Queensland. There are 10,409 people from India studying at our universities. In March, representatives from 10 of Queensland's universities joined the Treasurer at an education fair in Mumbai to develop these valuable relationships even further. The Treasurer also led a trade delegation, signing an important MOU to do with further developing aerospace and defence manufacturing in Queensland. The education minister backed this in with a visit in April, underlining this state's eagerness to attract more business and more students to Queensland. This will be assisted by the Australia-India Economic Cooperation and Trade Agreement, which will give Queensland manufacturers and producers even better access to India's market of 1.4 billion people, with duty free products including our mining resources, wool, barley and oats, not to mention higher education, travel and professional services. I will be working to ensure that, as a first step, we secure more flights between India and Queensland to unlock more investment opportunities.

There are more than 90,000 people of Indian descent in Queensland. It is the fastest growing of our multicultural groups in Australia. Members of our Indian community are industrious and hardworking. They make a tremendous contribution to Queensland. On Sunday I was glad to join the opposition leader at a reception to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the formation of the Federation of Indian Communities of Queensland. We share a common heritage, democratic institutions, interests and ideals. Overnight, Prime Minister Modi announced that India will open a consulate in Brisbane, which is something that I know our Indian communities have long wanted. It will further cement the closeness of our people.

It is often noted that the growth of India's middle class will drive the economies of the 21st century just as the growth of the American middle class drove growth in the 20th after World War II. I want Queensland to share in those opportunities and India will play a vital role in Queensland's future. I am pleased to promote our interests at this meeting.

## Beef Australia 2024

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Olympic and Paralympic Games) (9.41 am): There is less than one year until the biggest event in the southern hemisphere, Beef Australia 2024, which will be held in Rockhampton. I note that the member for Rockhampton is wearing his tie.


**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Member, no props.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** He is beaming from the back of the chamber. In Rockhampton, from 5 to 11 May next year, Beef 2024 will be the best one-stop beef shop in the world. We will see producers, international visitors, tech companies, scientists, foodies and chefs flock to Rockhampton. When the event was held in 2021, it attracted a record attendance of more than 115,000 visitors, which was up 15 per cent from 2018 figures. I was there with the local members, along with the Deputy Premier, the

Treasurer and the farmers' friend, Minister Furner. Beef 2021 supported more than 790 jobs and generated \$86 million for the economy in the Rocky region. Beef 2024 will also be a great opportunity for students to connect with the sector. In 2021 more than 3,900 students took part and we want to see that number grow in 2024. The event is also a major tourism attraction. At the Queensland Tourism Awards, Beef 2021 won gold for major events and festivals, and another gold for excellence in food tourism. Beef 2021 went on to win gold nationally. Beef 2024 will be even bigger and better.

The beef industry is at the heart of Queensland's \$23.1 billion agricultural sector. Beef is our largest agricultural commodity. It is worth more than \$10 million and supports over 40,000 jobs across our regions and supply chains, from farm to factory to export. That is why I am so proud that our government is supporting Beef 2024 with \$2.25 million worth of investment. I acknowledge the member for Rockhampton for his advocacy for this event. Queensland is home to the best beef in the world and at Beef 2024 Rockhampton will once again show the world why it is the capital of Australia's beef industry.

## Economy

 **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) (9.44 am): As the Premier and the Treasurer regularly outline to the House, the Queensland economy is booming. It is the best performing economy of the Australian states and territories, delivering high jobs growth and low unemployment. The Palaszczuk government is implementing plans to lock in that economic performance for the next decade and beyond.


Queensland is on the cusp of a new wave of economic development, driven by the shift to cleaner, greener and more sustainable products and services. The Palaszczuk government is determined to use this energy transition to lock in our state's economic prosperity for decades to come. There is an immediate opportunity to expand our footprint in global markets of high-value supply chains involved in the transition to a net zero future. We are seizing this opportunity with the Queensland New Industry Development Strategy, which I launched last week at CEDA, the Committee for Economic Development of Australia. I table a copy of the strategy for the House.

*Tabled paper:* Queensland Government: Report titled 'Queensland new-industry development strategy: A strategy for new industry in a decarbonising global economy' [\[691\]](#).

The strategy leverages on existing strengths. Building a sustainable aviation fuel industry would not be possible if it were not for our agriculture industry and green hydrogen would not be possible if it were not for the skilled workers in our resources industries. We are building on Queensland's track record of successful industry development, like the creation of a world-beating CSG to LNG industry. Under the strategy, a statewide local economic opportunities network will be established to work with communities to identify opportunities on the ground. We are also deploying the Queensland Jobs Fund to grow the state's economic footprint and we will deploy our catalyst Regional Economic Futures Fund to deliver initiatives that drive economic transformation, especially in communities impacted by the transition to low emissions technology: the North West Minerals Province including the economic corridor through to Townsville, and the Greater Whitsunday, Central Queensland, Darling Downs, south-west and South Burnett regions.

We are ready to capitalise on this opportunity with our abundance of natural resources, world-class ports and skilled workers, not to mention that we own our energy assets, our water resources and our port infrastructure. By driving investment in industries that support the future economy, we are ensuring a strong, bright future for Queensland and jobs for Queenslanders.

## India; Gilmour Space Technologies; Endua

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment) (9.47 am): I start by echoing the Premier's words about Queensland's enduring and welcoming relationship with India. Our relationship may have been forged over cricket, curry and the Commonwealth but today it is so much more than that. It is especially important that Queensland businesses can engage in commerce with a nation that they know shares and respects our values. The Indian population boom that the Premier described means that the nation faces a challenge to industrialise as fast as possible. India intends to double its steel production. It intends to produce 300 million tonnes of steel each year, which represents a significant opportunity, of course, for Queensland coal companies. I am particularly pleased that last night Prime Minister Modi announced that India will open a full consulate here in Brisbane. That step alone signifies how important Queensland is and will be to the world's most populous nation.



Queensland is the place to be. As tens of thousands of Australians from southern states prove each year, Queensland is the place to live. As hundreds of thousands of tourists from interstate and overseas show, Queensland is the place to visit and Queensland is the place to grow your business because the future is bright for businesses in Queensland. The Palaszczuk Labor government continues to make targeted investments to ensure Queensland businesses can grow.

Through our business investment funding, we are backing Gilmour Space Technologies. Our investment helped Gilmour Space Technologies develop the Eris rocket. Last week the rocket was officially unveiled by the Prime Minister. It is expected that it will be launched from the Bowen spaceport later this year. If successful, the rocket will be the first Australian designed and built orbital rocket launched into space and Australia will become the twelfth country in the world to send one of its own orbital rockets into space.

**An opposition member** interjected.

**Mr DICK:** It is based on the Gold Coast, in one of your electorates, as a matter of fact. Just like Gilmour Space Technologies, we are looking to the future. The delivery of our Queensland Energy and Jobs Plan is part of our state's clean energy future. The plan will develop new industries, new jobs and new investment and it will deliver clean, reliable and affordable energy.


It will turbocharge the development of that electricity system by backing companies such as Endua from Archerfield. Endua has received an investment through the Queensland Investment Corporation's Enterprise Acceleration Fund. The investment allowed Endua to fast-track the production of next-generation hydrogen power banks. The 100-kilowatt hydrogen power bank will be able to replace old diesel generators. It will be used to run water pumps, farm sheds or standalone cellular network towers. As Endua powers ahead with production, more than 100 local manufacturing jobs will be created.

As we invest in new industries such as renewable energy and space technology, we are investing in traditional industries as well—industries like 40-year-old Beenleigh Steel, proudly based in the city of Logan. In all of Queensland's great iconic facilities and at landmarks like Suncorp Stadium, the Gabba, the Cairns Convention Centre and Queensland Country Bank Stadium you will find Beenleigh Steel.

Just as India and the rest of the world needs more of Queensland's metallurgical coal to make steel, our growing state will need more steel itself. Through an investment from our Jobs and Regional Growth Fund, Beenleigh Steel fast-tracked the construction of a new \$12 million facility which I had the opportunity to open last Friday with federal Treasurer Jim Chalmers and Logan Mayor Darren Power. Our investment helped them double their floor space. Our investment helped them double their production capacity. Our investment will help them employ almost 60 new workers and apprentices in the years to come.

Investment in Queensland companies like Beenleigh Steel Fabrications, Gilmour Space Technologies and Endua reflects our broad industry investment strategy. Through our programs and support, we are fuelling Queensland's fast-growing economy, creating skilled jobs and increasing our industrial and manufacturing capability.

### Student Wellbeing Package

 **Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for Education, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing) (9.51 am): Supporting the health and wellbeing of our students is fundamental to delivering a world-class education. During my recent trip to India I was aware of the interest in our health and wellbeing program, particularly with COVID closing schools in India for 12 months. They are very interested in visiting us to look at what we are delivering. I am always proud to talk about the investment the Palaszczuk government has made through its \$100 million-plus Student Wellbeing Package.

We now have 345 wellbeing professionals in our schools, including 138 psychologists, 119 social workers, 78 guidance officers and 10 youth workers. A key element of the package is our GPs in Schools pilot, supporting 50 Queensland state schools to provide their secondary students with free access to a GP at school. Members will recall that we went to the election with a commitment to have 20 schools with GPs but, given the level of interest, we have expanded the pilot and more than doubled our original commitment.

As of today, 46 schools across the state have now commenced providing a GP service to their students—from Charleville State High School in Warrego to Spinifex State College in Traeger and Helensvale State High School in Theodore. In 2022, students at participating schools attended a total

of nearly 5,000 GP appointments—a fantastic outcome for our students—and 2023 has continued in the same vein. Students at Western Cape College in Weipa in the Cook electorate attended 120 appointments in term 1 this year. In one day alone, the GP had 23 appointments. This is all about ensuring students can access health care, free and in a timely manner, and the feedback we are getting shows it is valued equally by students, principals and the GPs alike. As the principal at Deception Bay State High School in Bancroft said—

The GP program in our school has provided a fantastic service for so many students, some of whom would have struggled to access medical support. This is particularly the case with our most at-risk students.

A student at the same school said—


Having the doctor at school gives me peace of mind and I can get in to see them quickly.

The GP at Murgon State High School in Nanango has reported—

The program feels like a place where you can really make a difference—even just by being a trusted adult to discuss things confidentially.

This is a nation-leading program delivering health and wellbeing services directly to our students and, as I found out on my recent trip to India, is an international-leading program. This is a game-changing initiative and, again, the Palaszczuk government is delivering better services for Queensland students and school communities no matter where they live.

### Mental Health


 **Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (Minister for Health, Mental Health and Ambulance Services and Minister for Women) (9.54 am): We know that there are many Queenslanders who experience a mental health condition at some point in their life. Over the last five years, mental health, alcohol and other drug services across Queensland's hospital and health services have experienced an eight per cent increase in the number of referrals. Every single Queenslander deserves high-quality care close to home, and that includes mental health care.

In last year's budget we introduced a groundbreaking mental health levy to provide sustainable funding for mental health services which commenced in January this year. As a result, we are investing \$119 million from this levy into mental health initiatives. This includes \$21.7 million into mental health services for children, adolescents and young people, because we know that more young people are grappling with these issues. We have just heard from the Minister for Education about the wonderful services we are providing in our schools. We also know, coming out of COVID, how many young people are struggling.

Services for adults and older people are receiving \$19.3 million, while \$5.6 million will go towards delivering digital capability and digitally delivered treatment, care and support, making sure that those who live in regional and rural Queensland still get support. To ensure that there is support for those who need it most, \$17.3 million is being invested into responding to crisis situations and suicide prevention. As our government understands the difficulties that so many young families face, we are investing \$8.6 million into mental health services for new parents and infants. On top of this, \$11.8 million will go towards our hardworking alcohol and other drug services. All of this is critical, but we know there is always more to do if we are to address the impacts—often tragic—of mental ill health in our communities.

We are also looking at a range of strategies to support workforce recruitment, retention and sustainability including to support more First Nations mental health workers and more peer support workers. We are expanding our mental health co-responder model which pairs a senior mental health clinician with paramedic rollouts. We are also continuing to explore opportunities to expand mental health and police co-responder models so that vulnerable people experiencing a crisis can be treated in their own home, de-escalating issues before they become tragedies. All of this is only possible because of our government's mental health levy. It is delivering better health outcomes for some of the most vulnerable people across our state. I am so proud to be part of a government that is prioritising Queenslanders' mental health and wellbeing.

### Social and Affordable Housing


 **Hon. MAJ SCANLON** (Gaven—ALP) (Minister for Housing) (9.57 am): Dozens of Queenslanders will soon call brand new social housing units in Mount Gravatt East home. This morning, I joined our partners BHC and the member for Mansfield to check out the new units where tenants will move in over the coming weeks. Construction is about to wrap up on the new complex, which includes

32 one-bedroom units for Queenslanders on the social housing register. These modern, high-quality social and affordable units will provide long-term, stable rental housing—a place to call home. These new social and affordable homes have been designed for single people and couples who need housing assistance, including seniors and young people.

An important factor in social housing is accessibility to services, and these units are located close to local shops, services and public transport. The over \$12 million project was constructed in partnership with the Brisbane Housing Company. I want to acknowledge its contribution with the Palaszczuk government's contribution of over \$6 million. It is part of a record \$3.9 billion investment in social and affordable housing, the largest concentrated investment in Queensland's history. As the Premier said this morning, on average we have built more than 10 homes a week since coming to government. I am keen to see more projects like this delivered as soon as possible.

I will continue working with housing providers, industry, councils, First Nations groups and the federal government to deliver for our state's most vulnerable. I am for building housing. Anyone who is holding up funding needs to get out of the way. Just recently, the federal coalition and the Greens teamed up to delay federal Labor's vital housing legislation. They are standing in the way of thousands of homes in Queensland. We are delivering housing; they are blocking it. We will always stand up for more housing for Queenslanders, and every politician at every level of government should do the same.

### Engine Immobilisers

 **Hon. MT RYAN** (Morayfield—ALP) (Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services) (9.59 am): Technology is a big part of our everyday lives. Ideally, it makes our lives better. Part of that is finding new and different ways to use existing technologies to improve our lives. Immobiliser technology has been around for many years. In fact, for the last two decades all vehicles coming into Australia have had to be fitted with a key activated immobiliser so that a vehicle cannot be started without the keys.

Now we have new technology engine immobilisers. It is currently not fitted as standard to vehicles—and I will come back to that later—but the technology is now available. The government's announced trial of new technology engine immobilisers is gathering pace. This project is being led by Acting Assistant Commissioner Chris Stream from the Queensland Police Service. I commend him on his excellent efforts to date.


In recent weeks police have held consultation sessions with industry. The first round of consultation took place in Cairns at the end of the week parliament sat in the Far North. I acknowledge the member for Cairns as a strong supporter of that industry consultation. Police advise that the feedback from industry representatives was that new technology engine immobilisers were effective as an added layer of security and reduced significantly the likelihood of a vehicle being stolen. Last week the police conducted further industry consultation in Townsville—the member for Thuringowa was there, and I know that this project is strongly supported by the Townsville MPs—and Mount Isa.

Those are the three locations chosen for the trial—Cairns, Townsville and Mount Isa. The trial will be available to eligible residents in those three areas. The trial will offer up to 20,000 subsidy vouchers to residents to offset the cost of installing the approved device. It is expected that for a number of approved devices there will be no out-of-pocket expense for residents. Details about how eligible residents can obtain a voucher will be publicly announced in the near future.

Individuals will be able to choose the type of approved immobiliser that best suits their needs and budget. While it is expected that the trial will encourage more Queenslanders to install these devices, it is important to note that these devices are currently already available for installation, and vehicle owners in any part of Queensland, who are in the position to do so, do not need to wait for the trial.

I am hopeful that this trial will not only have an impact on vehicle security here in Queensland, but potentially across the nation. As many would know, key activated immobilisers have been a standard fitment in vehicles for around 20 years. I hope that this Australian first trial of new technology engine immobilisers in Queensland leads to a requirement nationally that new vehicles are fitted with this device as standard. This is something that Queensland Police Union President Ian Leavers and I have been advocating for in recent times. That would be a great outcome for Queenslanders and a great outcome for Australians. In the meantime, I urge residents of Cairns, Townsville and Mount Isa to consider participating in the trial as it is rolled out in coming months.

## Sport and Recreation, Funding

 **Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE** (Sandgate—ALP) (Minister for Tourism, Innovation and Sport and Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympics and Paralympics Sport and Engagement) (10.03 am): More than 2,200 Queensland not-for-profit community sporting clubs, state level sport organisations and local councils are sharing \$23 million in new sport funding. Across four programs, this is 23 million ways of maximising Queensland's green and gold runway to the Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games. There is \$16 million in 91 shovel-ready community sport minor infrastructure projects. A number will mean female-friendly change rooms, including at the Zillmere Eagles AFL Club in the Nudgee electorate, the Burleigh Bears Junior Rugby League Football Club in the member for Mermaid Beach's electorate and Easts Rugby League club in your electorate, Mr Acting Speaker. It will include a replacement hockey surface in Cairns and upgraded lighting at Rocky Hockey.

**Ms Palaszczuk:** That's a tongue twister.


**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** It is a tongue twister, Premier. We will see new bike trails at the South Burnett Mountain Bike Club in the electorate of Nanango, new court surfaces for Emerald Netball Club in the electorate of Gregory and a number of field lighting upgrades, including one at Innisfail United Football Club in the member for Hill's electorate.

We are also helping clubs back their volunteers with \$2,500 grants through the popular Active Clubs program. This \$5 million initiative is for volunteer training and equipment because volunteers are the backbone of so many clubs. A further nearly \$1 million will also be shared by 22 state level sporting bodies. AFL Queensland and Basketball Queensland are teaming up to do sport training accreditation courses for volunteers in these fast growing sports. There is funding to streamline club administration and monitoring for female surf lifesavers.

Our \$1 million ActiveKIT round is getting behind 13 innovative ideas from online physical activity software for Queenslanders with a disability through to physical and mental health apps. Next year the Palaszczuk government will launch two super rounds of the Active Industry Project Fund and ActiveKIT. We will roll two years of funding into one, giving certainty and time to develop and deliver new community sport initiatives. The end game of the Palaszczuk government's Accelerate 2022-2025 strategy is about enhancing elite pathways to maximise podium level Queensland competitors and coaches for 2032, and ensuring Queenslanders of all ages and all backgrounds have tailored opportunities to stay active and healthy.

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** We look forward to many future athletes emerging from Rocky Hockey.

## Path to Treaty

 **Hon. LM ENOCH** (Algera—ALP) (Minister for Treaty, Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, Minister for Communities and Minister for the Arts) (10.06 am): Today is the first time a Minister for Treaty has stood before this House. It is in this very House that successive state governments have legislated policies and practices to, at times, the detriment and disregard of culture, ceremony, spirituality and language for many First Nations peoples. It is in this parliament, earlier this month in Cairns, that we passed the historic legislation as part of our Path to Treaty. I want to acknowledge the work of the former minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander partnerships, Craig Crawford, for all of his work getting us to this point.

This legislation provides the foundation for Queenslanders to look deeply and honestly into the truth of our shared past and to begin the journey of healing together. The next steps in the Path to Treaty are important ones, and ones that we need to ensure we get right. Since becoming Minister for Treaty, I have got straight to work, immediately meeting with the Interim Truth and Treaty Body to discuss their important ongoing work and the milestones ahead of us. My immediate focus is the terms of reference for the inquiry and appointing members of the inquiry and the Treaty Institute Council.

The Truth-telling and Healing Inquiry will inquire into and report on the effects of colonisation on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. In telling the truth of our shared history we will not shy away from the difficult conversations. 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. I am absolutely determined to help guide Queensland through the truth and treaty process.

This Saturday, National Reconciliation Week will begin. The theme this year is 'Be a voice for generations'. All Australians are encouraged to be a voice for reconciliation in tangible ways in our everyday lives. This is particularly important in 2023—a cornerstone year for reconciliation in our state and country. In Queensland, we have the potential to realise all elements of the Uluru Statement from

the Heart. We are already on our path to truth-telling and treaty in this state. Later this year, all Australians will have their say on the important referendum that aims to establish full recognition of the First Peoples of this country via a permanent advisory body. Supporting the Voice is about speaking to the truth of who we are as a nation and asking our Constitution to reflect that back to us. I look forward to updating the House on our state's advancement toward treaty, voice and truth.

### Carbon Farming

 **Hon. LM LINARD** (Nudgee—ALP) (Minister for the Environment and the Great Barrier Reef, Minister for Science and Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (10.09 am): I am pleased to advise the House today that Queensland's leadership in environmental protection has again been recognised. Queensland has been named the nation's best carbon farming state for the second year running in a national scorecard that rates how Australia's federal, state and territory governments are supporting the carbon farming industry.

The Carbon Market Institute assessed each government on how they are developing their land-based emissions offset markets. The 2023 carbon farming scorecard, which was released earlier this week, found Queensland was once again leading the way in the level of support and investment of carbon farming with a score of 83 per cent. Our score this year is three points higher than in 2022. Coming second was the federal government with a score of 78 per cent, with New South Wales rounding out the top three with 71 per cent.


Carbon farming refers to practices that increase carbon storage in our landscapes or avoids the release of greenhouse gases such as methane and nitrous oxide through active management of vegetation, fire, soil or livestock. Carbon farming is an established and growing industry which makes a significant contribution to our climate crisis response, whilst also delivering important environmental, economic, social and cultural benefits across the country. This includes the potential to create new job opportunities and economic benefits in rural and regional areas including in remote Indigenous communities.

The 2023 carbon farming scorecard result recognises the Palaszczuk government's trailblazing \$500 million Land Restoration Fund, strong policy initiatives and ongoing partnerships with key stakeholders—all of which are protecting the state's environment while also creating jobs through the growth of carbon farming. The Land Restoration Fund's third investment round, which was launched recently, will see up to \$50 million invested into carbon farming projects that will deliver environmental co-benefits to the state.

The new projects contracted under this new investment round will complement the 22 projects this government has already invested more than \$100 million into since the introduction of the Land Restoration Fund. These projects include the BC4 Project, at Goondicum Station near Monto in Central Queensland, which is using carbon regenerative farming methods to restore parts of the landscape while continuing to produce high-quality cattle for an international market. There is also the Ivanhoe Timer Retention Project, in Covert, which is retaining and supporting vegetation regrowth to produce multiple co-benefits for the Great Barrier Reef, threatened wildlife and the local community.

This year's result in the carbon farming scorecard also recognises that the Palaszczuk government has taken a proactive approach to sharing information about its investments, enabling investors to make more confident decisions. Since the 2022 report card was released, the Palaszczuk government has increased the amount of data available to the market about each LRF project and each investment round to uphold and improve the carbon market's integrity and transparency. The Palaszczuk government will continue to work to lead the country by supporting carbon farming initiatives to tackle climate change and economic, social and cultural benefits.

### Australian Manufacturing Week

 **Hon. GJ BUTCHER** (Gladstone—ALP) (Minister for Regional Development and Manufacturing and Minister for Water) (10.13 am): The Palaszczuk government is supporting Queensland manufacturers because local made means local jobs. It was my pleasure to attend the Australian Manufacturing Week in Melbourne and to also host a networking breakfast and support my department's amazing work that they were doing at that event. This event is a major drawcard for manufacturers and manufacturing customers from all over the world and, with almost 20,000 people going through the facility and through the doors, it was an overwhelming success by any measure. I was proud to be there alongside some of our leading Queensland manufacturers not only to showcase the incredible work they are doing but also to promote Queensland as the place to be for manufacturing—in Australia and the world.

As part of the event, the Queensland government also sponsored the Women in Manufacturing event because we are committed to a more diverse, inclusive and bigger manufacturing workforce. At Australian Manufacturing Week my department handed out hundreds of 'Taste of Queensland' sample packs, which included macadamia nuts from Nutworks and gin from Sunshine and Sons—both in the mighty electorate of Nicklin; jerky from Mallorys Tocino in the manufacturing powerhouse of Kurwongbah; and sourdough crackers from Silver Tongue Foods in Maroochydore. That is right: we are spreading the love in manufacturing here in Queensland.

One of our Queensland manufacturers, Elexon Electronics, was an exhibitor at Australian Manufacturing Week, showing off their new capabilities. When I met with Elexon CEO Frank Faller at the event, he told me all about Elexon's recent work to adopt industry 4.0 manufacturing processes and how it has resulted in a one-of-a-kind manufacturing capability for the defence and aerospace industries.

Just to remind the House, Elexon Electronics received a Made in Queensland grant of \$890,000 in 2020 to increase production capacity, reduce manufacturing costs and create new job opportunities. Since then, Elexon has doubled its manufacturing capacity, implemented aerospace quality standards and started supplying to defence customers. Just in the last month, Elexon created eight brand new jobs in the business and plans to move to a new and larger purpose-built facility in the soon to be developed Technology Park in Petrie.

This is what the Palaszczuk Labor government and Made in Queensland program is all about—helping local manufacturers get to the next level, create more good jobs in Queensland and export their Queensland made products to the whole world.

## NOTICE OF MOTION

### Palaszczuk Labor Government, Youth Crime



**Mr NICHOLLS** (Clayfield—LNP) (10.16 am): I give notice that I will move—

That this House notes:

1. Attorney-General D'Ath weakened the youth justice laws in 2015-16 including abolishing breach of bail and bringing back detention as a last resort.
2. The members for Barron River, Thuringowa, Townsville, Keppel, Maryborough, Pine Rivers and Mackay voted to support those laws.

and calls on the government to listen to community concern over escalating levels of youth crime and consider all options to tackle the issue.

**Government members** interjected.

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Order, members! There will be plenty of opportunity to debate that motion this evening.

## QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Question time will conclude today at 11.16 am.

### Ambulance Ramping



**Mr CRISAFULLI** (10.16 am): My question is to the Premier. Under three health ministers ramping had doubled before COVID and today remains over 40 per cent. The current health minister says, 'Queenslanders expect us to do better, particularly around ambulance responses and wait times.' When will ambulance ramping return to the 15 per cent the Palaszczuk government inherited?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I thank the member for the question. This has been addressed many times in this House. We understand that successive health ministers have focused on this issue, including back to the former health minister under the LNP. As those opposite know, Queensland went through the horrendous period of COVID and—

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. Premier, please resume your seat. Members to my left, the Premier is being directly responsive to the question asked. I am listening carefully to the answer. She is giving factual information in response to your question. I ask that you listen in silence.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Thank you very much, Mr Acting Speaker. What we know very clearly is that we had COVID. The former LNP federal government failed to invest in primary health care. They failed to invest in GPs. These are the facts. We now have a federal Labor government investing in primary health services. We are looking carefully at where GPs can extend their services. We also know that we need more capacity for health care closer to communities where people live. That is why we are building seven satellite hospitals. We looked at—

**Mr Bleijie:** Without emergency.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** From 8 am to 10 pm. There is not a satellite hospital the opposition likes. Next week I will be inspecting another satellite hospital. Our Queensland Health and Hospitals Plan is the largest infrastructure spend—

**Mrs Frecklington** interjected.

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Order, member for Nanango.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** You asked a question.

**Mr Bleijie:** So arrogant!

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** The member for Kawana is the biggest culprit.

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Order, member for Kawana.

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. Members opposite, the level of interjection is far too loud. It is clear that you are deliberately trying to interrupt proceedings. I would ask that you hear the Premier's response—which you may not like, but it is being responsive to the question asked—in silence.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** The most recent quarterly data also shows that we are ahead of New South Wales when it comes to emergency departments. That is why we are building more beds. This week you have seen the announcement of tenders for our major hospitals to increase bed capacity across the state. We will continue to do more. We will announce more tenders over the coming weeks as well.

**Government members** interjected.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** That is right, because we invest in hospital infrastructure. You closed the Barrett adolescent mental health—

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Comments through the chair, Premier.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Those opposite closed the Barrett adolescent mental health facility. Just this month Jacaranda Place celebrated three years of operation—

*(Time expired)*

### Elective Surgery, Waiting List

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** My question is to the Minister for Health. The health minister says that dealing with the nearly 60,000 Queenslanders on the elective surgery waiting list is a priority. When will it reduce to the levels it was when the Palaszczuk government came into office?

**Ms FENTIMAN:** It is wonderful to finally get a question as the Minister for Health from the Leader of the Opposition. What the Leader of the Opposition fails to remember is that something has happened since 2015: a global pandemic. Health systems across the world are under pressure.

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Order! Members, I will start to warn people. The minister is being directly responsive to the question. I would ask that you hear the response.

**Ms FENTIMAN:** If the Leader of the Opposition wants to talk about figures, how does he think elective surgery wait times or ambulance ramping would be going with the 4,400 workers they sacked? Whilst we absolutely acknowledge that our health systems are under pressure, do you know what we will not do? We will not blame our hardworking frontline staff because they change Queenslanders' lives for the better every day. They save Queenslanders' lives. We will not be calling them duds, member for Mudgeeraba. We will not be rushing around Queensland to denigrate hardworking doctors, nurses and midwives.

We know that there are a number of pressures. The workforce is a huge issue. That is why, as the Premier announced today, we have a workforce incentive scheme. We have 600 people from interstate, South-East Queensland and overseas who want to go and work in regional Queensland because of our government's policies. That is how you take the pressure off ED departments. That is how you get the elective surgery waiting list down: you get more staff. Every day we will stand up and

we will defend them. We will not sack them. We will back them, because they are some of the hardest working public servants across Queensland. I am incredibly proud of our government's record \$23 billion investment in health in the last year, including \$9 billion in infrastructure, because those satellite hospitals will mean families do not have to go to an emergency department. If a kid breaks their ankle playing sport they can go to the satellite hospital—

**Ms Leahy** interjected.

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. Member for Warrego, you are warned under the standing orders.

**Ms FENTIMAN:** We will back our frontline staff. We will not sack them, we will not call them duds and we will absolutely drive better performance across our health system by supporting those hardworking frontline staff.

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Before I call the next member for their question, I would like to acknowledge the student leaders and principals from Burleigh State School in the electorate of Burleigh who are in the gallery.

### Health Workforce

**Mr HARPER:** My question is of the Premier and Minister for the Olympic and Paralympic Games. Can the Premier please update the House on action taken by the Palaszczuk government to recruit frontline health workers, and is the Premier aware of any alternative approaches?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I thank the member for the question. The member for Thuringowa is a former paramedic with 30 years experience working on the front line. I commend him for all of the work he did in that time and all of the paramedics across our state. Of course the member for Thuringowa knows very clearly the damage that was done to Townsville when it came to the savage cuts of the LNP government, including 398 health workers—

**Mr Lister** interjected.

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Member for Southern Downs, you are warned under the standing orders.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:**—in North Queensland, including 156 nurse and midwife positions—

**Mrs Frecklington** interjected.

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Member for Nanango, you are warned as well.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:**—30 in emergency medicine, 29 in cancer care. There were 14,000 that were sacked. We know that in North Queensland since 2015 we have delivered an extra 631 nurses and midwives, 305 more doctors, 179 more health professionals and 96 more ambulance officers. We want to do even more. Those new recruitment incentives I mentioned earlier this morning are working and we are getting interest—not just from across Queensland and Australia but also from around the world. Perhaps some of the students sitting here today will be future health workers across Queensland. Can I encourage some of those students to think about working in regional Queensland. We are a big state, we are very decentralised, and they would find it very fulfilling to work in those roles no matter what part of Queensland they choose to serve.

Our TAFEs are also producing great health workers. I want to update the House. Right now there are 5,800 students enrolled in 48 allied health courses across Queensland TAFEs, and that includes 2,800 nursing students. Isn't that wonderful to see! They are not just going through our universities but they are going through our TAFEs. We are making sure that we are doing everything possible to get the workforce because there are worldwide health shortages at the moment.

It would be remiss of me not to mention that nine years ago this month the former assistant health minister from the other side quit. Chris Davis, the member for Stafford at the time, handed in his resignation. He did not support the savage cuts that his own party was making to health workers across the state. Let that be a lesson to those opposite.

*(Time expired)*

### Emergency Departments, Wait Times

**Mr BLEIJIE:** My question is to the Minister for Health. The number of patients waiting longer than 24 hours in an emergency department has increased by 225 per cent since 2015. It had doubled before COVID. When will emergency department wait times reduce to the levels they were when the Palaszczuk government came to power?



**Ms Grace** interjected.

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Order! Member for McConnel, I have made it clear that I do not want interjections between the question and the response.

**Ms FENTIMAN:** I thank the member for the question. There are two ways to drive down wait times at ED. It is workforce—which is getting more people into the system, and the Premier has already talked about our incentive scheme where we have had over 600 inquiries—and it is also investing in primary health. That is what our satellite hospitals will do. They will take pressure off emergency departments. We know that the Leader of the Opposition has had such a small target strategy that Queenslanders—

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** Mr Acting Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The minister has risen to her feet and is answering the question. As close as I am to her, I genuinely could not hear what she was saying.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** I will hear the point of order in silence. I think it is important, given the point of order, that it is heard in silence.

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** I genuinely could not hear the point she was making as a consequence of the interjections and the volume of interjections that were coming from the other side. Clearly, those who have asked the question are not interested in hearing the answer.

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** I think you have made your point, and I agree there is a point of order. I was actually consulting with the Manager of Opposition Business in relation to other matters. I will ask the House to maintain order while the minister responds.

**Ms FENTIMAN:** Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker. When it comes to our satellite hospitals, it is really the one policy for some reason that those opposite have decided to oppose. We know the Leader of the Opposition does not normally take a stand on anything, so it is really surprising that having facilities in our fastest growing suburbs that will help families get health care closer to home is the one policy they are deadset on opposing. If they want to talk about numbers and figures, there is one number—zero. There were zero dollars spent on satellite hospitals under those opposite. They want to talk—

**Mr Bleijie:** You don't have to yell.

**Ms FENTIMAN:** I take the interjection from the member for Kawana. I would rather not yell, but I literally cannot be heard over the wall of noise from the blokes on that side of the House. I would much rather address you, Mr Acting Speaker, and members of the House in a reasonable tone of voice. If those opposite genuinely want to understand how we are going to get pressure off our emergency departments, they might listen but they clearly do not. They are opposing our satellite hospitals. They are travelling right across the state, denigrating our hardworking frontline staff.

The other way to reduce blockages in our emergency department is to get our long-stay patients into aged-care and disability facilities, and that is what I am interested in talking to the federal government about. We have 750 long-stay patients in our hospitals who should be in an aged-care facility or disability care. That is the QEII three times over. We will be working on all of these strategies to divert category 4 and category 5 patients to our satellite hospitals. We will be working to get the workers who we are now incentivising—

**Mr Bleijie** interjected.

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

**Ms FENTIMAN:** Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker. I might actually save my voice now that the member for Kawana cannot yell over the top of me.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** Mr Acting Speaker, I rise to a point of order on relevance under 118(b). I asked: when will those numbers return to what they were before the Palaszczuk government was elected? The minister has not—

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Order! The House will come to order. I will hear the point of order in silence.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** The minister has refused to answer the question directly asked. I want a date and I want to know when.

**Government members** interjected.

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Order, members! The minister has been broadly responsive to your question.

**Ms FENTIMAN:** It would probably happen sooner if we had the support of the opposition for satellite hospitals, but they are content on opposing our plans. Shame on you.

*(Time expired)*

## Housing

**Ms PUGH:** My question is of the Premier and Minister for the Olympic and Paralympic Games. Can the Premier advise the House what action the Palaszczuk government is taking to help Queenslanders feeling national housing pressures?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I thank the member for Mount Ommaney for the question. The member for Mount Ommaney is well aware that there are people in her electorate, which is adjacent to my electorate, and right across Queensland who are feeling the impacts of those increased interest rates as well as people who are having to suddenly move house because either it has been sold or someone else is moving in. That is putting incredible pressure on families, who are having to pack up and restart their lives all over again.

The member for Mount Ommaney is also aware that there was a priority development area in Oxley, which is fantastic. A disused site that had asbestos has now been completely cleared and there are houses going up there. There are about 80 new residential lots and there will be a retirement village. Once again, we are satisfying that broad spectrum, where people can move in, there is housing supply that has been opened up and people who want to retire can live closer to their home and their families.

We recognise that there are these issues and that is why I have said publicly in this House that, through a whole range of assistance, we are now helping around 200,000 households. Not only that, it was great to see the federal government increase the Commonwealth Rent Assistance by 15 per cent, and that is the largest increase to Commonwealth Rent Assistance in 30 years. We know that the federal LNP cut the funding to remote Indigenous housing, and once again we had to pick up the slack and we are helping there.

It is so encouraging to see the men and women and apprentices working at our QBuild who are now doing those prefabricated homes that can be transported across Queensland. I received a text from the mayor of Longreach just the other day who sent me a photo of some housing that has gone up there for frontline service workers. They are very proud that that is happening. That frees up more properties for members of the community living there. That is what we will see over the coming weeks and months. We will see more and more of those houses going out far and wide across regional Queensland. Once again, we are yet to hear any policies from those opposite. On this side—

**A government member** interjected.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I will take that interjection—just whingeing. We know the disdain they had for people living in our social housing properties. These are some of our most vulnerable people, and they wanted to force them to share and force them to tell them when they were taking leave to go on holidays. That is not the way you treat families with respect and with dignity. On this side of the House, we will always respect people and treat them with dignity. We will ensure that as many Queenslanders as possible get a roof over their head.

*(Time expired)*

## Southport, Hospital Services

**Ms BATES:** My question is to the Minister for Health. Whistleblowers have advised the opposition that Queensland Health's new Southport lower acuity accommodation facility is the Sea World Nara resort. Has the situation become so dire in Queensland Health that hospital beds are now being replaced with hotel beds?

**Ms FENTIMAN:** I thank the member for the question. When the Premier asked me to do this very challenging job, I said, 'Absolutely. You bet. I'm up for it,' because there is no better way to make a difference than in this portfolio. However, I have to say the icing on the cake was having the member for Mudgeeraba back as my shadow spokesperson. I have missed you, member for Mudgeeraba.

**Dr Miles** interjected.

**Ms FENTIMAN:** That is right. I take that interjection, and I will put my ministerial record against that of the member for Mudgeeraba any day of the week. As the member for Mudgeeraba well knows, because she has heard it in this House time and time before, we have a \$9 billion hospital infrastructure plan with our hospitals plan, including a new northern hospital for the Gold Coast. That is how you get more beds into the system—you build more hospitals. Not only do we have our satellite hospital program—which they do not support—but we are building three new hospitals and expanding 11 hospitals. There are thousands more beds coming into the system.

What did the LNP deliver for the Gold Coast in terms of health infrastructure?

**Mr POWELL:** Mr Acting Speaker, I rise to a point of order on relevance under standing order 118(b). The question was about the Southport lower acuity accommodation facility at the Sea World Nara Resort.

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** The minister is broadly outlining general policy responses.

**Ms FENTIMAN:** To be fair, the member for Mudgeeraba also asked about beds into the system, and that is exactly what I am addressing. Our Health and Hospitals Plan delivers \$9 billion of infrastructure. We know they did not put any money into the Gold Coast when they were in government, but what did they do in 2020? What did they take to the last election to deliver for all of those people they represent on the Gold Coast? Zero. Another zero. Not one dollar promised at the last election for health infrastructure on the Gold Coast. The member for Mudgeeraba should be embarrassed to get up here and ask a question about infrastructure and beds.

**Ms BATES:** Mr Acting Speaker, I rise to a point of order on relevance under standing order 118(b). If the minister is not across her portfolio and cannot answer the question—

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Order! Resume your seat.

**Ms BATES:** The question is: are hotel beds being used as hospital beds?

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Member for Mudgeeraba, I was on my feet. You are an experienced member of this parliament. You are warned under the standing orders. Also, points of order are not an opportunity to engage in debate. I had already ruled in relation to that. I will ask the minister to come to the substance of the question. I appreciate you have been talking in broad policy terms, but I will ask you to come to the substance of the question.

**Ms FENTIMAN:** Clearly from that attempt from the member of Mudgeeraba on that point of order, she is happy to have me back as her minister, it would seem.

**Government members** interjected.

**Ms FENTIMAN:** That is right. I am very happy to get some advice. I obviously do not have any information about Sea World Nara Resort, but what I can tell you is we have \$9 billion to deliver the beds that Queenslanders need. Those opposite went to the last election not promising one dollar. The member for Currumbin does not even support the satellite hospital in Tugun. It is embarrassing.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Pause the clock! Members, you have raised several points of order about relevance and I have ruled on those and the minister has responded, yet you continue to interject. I warn the member for Whitsunday, who was interjecting there.

**Ms FENTIMAN:** No support for satellite hospitals in their own community, not one dollar promised on the Gold Coast. Shame on the member for Mudgeeraba.

*(Time expired)*

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Time has expired. The member for Chatsworth can join the warning list as well.

### Job Creation

**Ms PEASE:** 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. Could the Deputy Premier please advise the House how the Palaszczuk government is creating opportunities for Queenslanders in new industries, and is the Deputy Premier aware of any alternative approaches?

**DR MILES:** I thank the member for Lytton for her very good question. As the member for Lytton well knows—and I know she has been very supportive of the range of new industries and technologies that are coming to her electorate, leveraging off the existing energy assets there, the port, whether it is hydrogen or biofuels. Lytton is one of the areas benefiting from the jobs that the Palaszczuk government is delivering in new industries.

We have an opportunity here in Queensland to lock in the economic prosperity that we are benefiting from right now—to take that as a platform to build prosperity and jobs for decades to come. It all starts with the renewable Energy and Jobs Plan, a world-leading detailed plan to decarbonise our energy network. Who could forget that when we announced that we would deliver 50 per cent renewable energy by 2030, those opposite said it could not be done and said we would not achieve it. We will achieve it two years early, in 2028. We are going to take that renewable Energy and Jobs Plan—and today I outline how we will build on it with the new industry development strategy, attracting and growing the industries of the future, focused on regional Queensland. We have co-designed this program with the mayors of regional Queensland because they, with quite some vision, have seen the opportunities for regional Queensland—in renewable energy manufacturing, in critical minerals, in battery development, in green hydrogen, in the circular economy, and in biofuels. Across all of these industries, the renewable Energy and Jobs Plan, the new industry development strategy, the Palaszczuk government is doing what we said we would do.

We will never ever do what the Leader of the Opposition has done. We will never come in here and say one thing and then promise Peter Dutton another thing. I was disturbed to read in the *Australian* today that LNP MPs have promised Peter Dutton they will kill off the treaty if they are elected. What a cruel con on Queensland's First Nations people, to come in here and say one thing and then go to water under the slightest bit of pressure from Peter Dutton and their branch members. The Palaszczuk Labor government will never do that. We will always do what we said we would do, including delivering new industry jobs off the back of our renewable energy and jobs strategy.

### Southport, Hospital Services

**Mr LANGBROEK:** My question is to the Minister for Health. Is Queensland Health transferring patients to receive hospital care at Sea World Resort because there are not enough hospital beds on the Gold Coast, and where else are hotels being used as hospitals in Queensland?

**Ms FENTIMAN:** I have been advised that, coming into flu season, Gold Coast Health is looking at improving patient flow by offering care in the community for consumers who do not require hospital-based care, who are preparing for discharge as part of the lower acuity accommodation, and it does offer consumers comfortable accommodation where they will be cared for by nurses and doctors 24 hours a day, seven days a week. This model of care complements several hospital avoidance and discharge programs and helps with bed flow pressures to ease wait times in emergency departments. This is not a new concept—

**Government members** interjected.

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. Order! Members on my right, you have raised concerns and points of order in relation to volume in the chamber and now you are making it difficult for me to hear your own minister.

**Ms FENTIMAN:** Lawrence Springborg's plan to transfer hospital patients into five-star hotels—

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Minister, do not wave that around. Please table it.

**Ms FENTIMAN:** I will table that for the benefit of the member of Surfers Paradise.

*Tabled paper:* Article from QLD News, dated 24 February 2014, titled 'Lawrence Springborg's plan to shift public hospital patients into five star hotels' [\[692\]](#).

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Dr Miles** interjected.

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Deputy Premier, you will cease your interjections.

**Mr Crisafulli** interjected.

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** The Deputy Premier and Leader of the Opposition, I was trying to gain your attention, but you were too busy arguing with each other. You are both warned under the standing orders.

**Ms FENTIMAN:** I note that this week the member for Kawana had referred to Lawrence Springborg as the best health minister Queensland had ever had. Coming from the worst attorney-general Queensland has ever had, I think that is a bit rich because Lawrence Springborg's

legacy as health minister was to absolutely destroy frontline workers in this state and, it seems, his legacy was to start the policy of transferring those patients that do not require a hospital bed into accommodation that is suitable—

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Order! Pause the clock! Resume your seat, please, minister. Order, members! You would be unsurprised to find that professionally I am interested in the response to this question, but the minister has been directly responsive to the question asked. I ask members opposite to listen in silence.

**Ms FENTIMAN:** It appears we do not need whistleblowers to tell us of a policy that was started by Lawrence Springborg about how to care for patients in a very safe, comfortable way that frees up our hospitals so more people are seen quicker in our emergency departments. It seemed it was fine for Lawrence Springborg and the former LNP government and the Gold Coast Hospital and Health Service. It is another example of the LNP not doing their homework. That is a wonderful strategy from the LNP!

The member for Kawana talks about a reheated lunch with our reshuffle. Their plan yesterday was a reheated question time strategy and this is a reheat of Lawrence Springborg's policy, so it is all being reheated over there with the member for Kawana.

*(Time expired)*

### Regional Queensland

**Mrs GILBERT:** My question is of the Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment. Will the Treasurer please update the House on how the Palaszczuk government's revenue measures are delivering for regional Queensland, and is the Treasurer aware of any alternative approaches?

**Mr DICK:** I take that question, very genuinely asked by the member for Mackay, and I thank her for it. I know the LNP fights amongst themselves, but I never thought Lawrence Springborg would leak against the member for Broadwater.

**Dr Miles:** Whistleblower!

**Mr DICK:** I take the interjection. I never thought that Lawrence Springborg would be the LNP whistleblower leaking and tipping out against the member for Broadwater, but they do like brawling amongst themselves.

I am pleased to take the question from the member for Mackay. The member for Mackay knows, as all members of this House know, that Queensland's coal industry is going from strength to strength and I have reported that to the House on many occasions. The royalties generated by Queensland coal are delivering for regional Queensland like never before, delivering CopperString 2032—something I know the member for Traeger welcomes—a \$5 billion investment in the north and north-west which absolutely dwarfs the investment in the improvement of the Gabba; the Fitzroy to Gladstone pipeline; and the new Moranbah Hospital. All of those things are being delivered by our government, and the revenue measures I announced in last year's budget are delivering for Queensland. That is because of our world-leading response to COVID, a world-leading response that was opposed every step of the way by the member for Broadwater. In fact, the member for Broadwater said the former chief health officer was 'power hungry' and 'a punch-drunk bureaucrat'.

The reason we had such a strong response in our economy was because of our strong health response. That means the Queensland budget is not labouring under \$30 billion of COVID debt like Victoria is. Queensland families and businesses can be confident our revenue settings will be unchanged in next month's budget. That is more than the Leader of the Opposition can say because we know he stands to rip out whatever revenue he can for regional Queensland, depriving them of infrastructure and services.

I have been asked frequently about revenue measures. In fact, 18 times in this House I have been asked about revenue measures and 18 times I have backed in our progressive coal royalties. What have we heard from the Leader of the Opposition? Absolutely nothing! He has made his choice clear. We know the Leader of the Opposition will cut progressive coal royalties and all of those benefits such as CopperString 2032, the Moranbah Hospital, the Gladstone to Fitzroy pipeline. All of that will go under the Leader of the Opposition, a man who claims to represent regional Queensland. What a double standard. That is the reality.

We heard Peter Dutton attacking the 'whips and chains' of Labor governments, our regulation and taxation. That is what they think. They will cut those coal royalties and everything that flows to regional Queensland. There is a very clear choice coming up at the next election: a government in this state that supports regional Queensland and an opposition leader who wants to cut, sack and sell.

*(Time expired)*

### Southport, Hospital Services

**Mr O'CONNOR:** My question is to the Minister for Health. Rod was recovering at Gold Coast University Hospital after breaking his pelvis in a car accident. Rod was then suddenly transferred to a hotel room at Sea World. The hotel bed could not be height adjusted and the chairs were not suitable for an elderly patient with hip breaks. Is it acceptable that Queenslanders like Rod are receiving care in a hotel instead of in a hospital?

**Ms FENTIMAN:** I thank the member for the question. I am more than happy to hear from Rod about his experience and talk to him about any review that is required and of course—

**Mr Janetzki** interjected.

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Member for Toowoomba South, you are warned under the standing orders. The minister is being directly responsive to the question, has barely started and you are already interjecting.

**Ms FENTIMAN:**—work with the member if there does need to be a referral to the Health Ombudsman, because we have these positions in place for exactly these kinds of cases.

Can I make the very important point that decisions about how and where these patients are cared for are led by doctors and, for those opposite, the Leader of the Opposition's sole health policy so far as I can tell, because there has not really been very much, is that doctors and nurses should be put back in charge. However, when they make these decisions to transfer patients to more suitable accommodation, they come in here and they criticise them. Of course, we will always take complaints from constituents very seriously, but these are decisions that are made by clinicians and we respect them.

I also want to say that this is a policy, as I said before, that was started by those opposite. As Lawrence Springborg said at the time—

**Mr Power:** Tell us what Lawrence Springborg said.

**Ms FENTIMAN:** I will tell you what Lawrence Springborg had to say.

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Order! Member for Logan, you can go on a warning.

**Ms FENTIMAN:** I appreciate the member for Logan's interest in what Lawrence Springborg had to say about this policy. He said, 'We want to look at it elsewhere.' The LNP absolutely have no leg to stand on when they come in here and criticise a policy that has been in place for many years.

**Mr POWELL:** Mr Acting Speaker, I rise to a point of order. It is on relevance, 118(b). The question was about—

**Government members** interjected.

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Order, members. I have just indicated I would like to hear the point of order in silence. What is your point of order?

**Mr POWELL:** The question was about a patient with a broken pelvis being moved to a hotel room.

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** There is no point of order. The minister has been responding to that question.

**Ms FENTIMAN:** How do honourable members think these patients would have fared with the 1,800 fewer nurses and midwives who were cut by those opposite? We have put back thousands more nurses, doctors and midwives because we know that the key to patient safety is having dedicated frontline staff.

**Mr Head** interjected.

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. Member for Callide, you are warned under the standing orders.

**Ms FENTIMAN:** Again, it would seem that their question time strategy is, unable to think on their feet, they keep talking about a policy as if it is somehow a new policy from Queensland Health when, in fact, it was started by Lawrence Springborg way back when they were in government. It is important that clinicians make these decisions. On this side of the House we back the clinicians; we back the doctors, we back the nurses. We back them; we do not sack them.

## STEM Education

**Ms LUI:** My question is of the Minister for Education, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing. Can the minister update the House on the STEM Girl Power Camp and advise how such events can benefit female students seeking a career in STEM; and could the minister further advise if the minister is aware of any alternative approaches?

**Ms GRACE:** Education is providing some great opportunities in STEM for young girls, and there is nothing better than the girls camp. It was great to see this question from the member for Cook as there were representatives, First Nation girl students, from her electorate from Bamaga, Thursday Island and Weipa who were on the girls STEM camp. There were 59 of them who came from all over Queensland: Biloela, Pimlico, Middlemount, Bundaberg, Blackwater, Proserpine, Toowoomba—and the list goes on. It is fantastic to give them those opportunities about a career in STEM.

I thank the 12 teachers who came down with them. They enjoyed every second of it. This is going to give these young girls a career and an opportunity in STEM, and it has turned their mind towards that.

We had two students from Papua New Guinea, and we are also very proud that two Queensland students have been selected to represent Australia at the prestigious United States Space & Rocket Centre's Space Camp in Huntsville, Alabama. These are Arabella from Cavendish Road State High School in your electorate, Mr Acting Speaker, and Toby from Mareeba State High School in the Cook electorate. These students will be proudly training in astronautics, undertaking engineering challenges and team building—and the list goes on. These are fantastic opportunities to place Queensland and Australia into the 21st century.

While these students are reaching for the stars, those opposite are on another planet. I do not need a whistleblower to tell me that when they were in government they did not employ the teachers that we needed in STEM to provide those opportunities for students. They cut 500 teachers. I do not need a whistleblower to tell me that, because they did not employ these teachers, the student-to-teacher ratio worsened—

**Dr Rowan** interjected.

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Member for Moggill, you are on a warning.

**Ms GRACE:** Those opposite were given three opportunities to list one of their policies. It was embarrassing. When they were asked to outline an alternative policy, we heard, 'Blah, blah, blah.' Then they were asked, 'No, give me an alternative policy.' Not once, not twice but three times they were unable to list one. I do not need a whistleblower to tell me that we have tripled the infrastructure budget. We air-conditioned every school six years ahead of any alternative policy from those opposite. They can travel under the radar, they can be smug and they can be arrogant, but Queenslanders will not be fooled by those opposite, who have no ideas, no plans, no policies and are 'back to the future'.

## Health, Data Reporting

**Mr MICKELBERG:** My question is to the Minister for Health. On health data the minister said—

Performance data is there to get a measure of where the biggest pressures are in the system.

Given the minister's view that data is 'to be washed', will the minister commit to not changing the way that important health data such as ambulance ramping and lost time, elective surgery waiting lists and specialist outpatient waiting lists are calculated and compiled?

**Ms FENTIMAN:** I thank the member for the question. The performance data will be released, as it always has been, every quarter. I look forward to releasing more performance data so that Queenslanders can understand where the pressures are in the system.

Whilst I am on my feet, I have received some further information about patients staying in accommodation. I also want to remind the members opposite—

**Mr POWELL:** Mr Acting Speaker, I rise to a point of order on relevance under standing order 118(b). Before the minister moves on to another topic, the question was specifically asking if the data will be changed, not whether it will be released.

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** I will take some advice. The minister has been responsive to the question.

**Mr BROWN:** Mr Acting Speaker, I rise to a point of order. There have been numerous points of order on relevance, and each and every time you have ruled that the minister has been directly relevant. I believe that these are frivolous points of order designed to interrupt the minister because—

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** I will hear the point of order in silence. Member for Capalaba, thank you for your point of order. There is no point of order.

**Ms FENTIMAN:** I want to update the House, because we have had a number of questions about this policy of offering patients accommodation. There are two private hospitals that have for many years been allowing mums who have just given birth to stay in accommodation. We have not heard from the member for Mudgeeraba about this. The private hospital at Pindara on the Gold Coast—

**Mr POWELL:** Mr Acting Speaker, I rise to a point of order on relevance under standing order 118(b). If the minister wants to answer a previous question, the minister can make a ministerial statement at a later point. The question was about data and whether the metrics are being changed.

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** I will take some advice. Thank you for your point of order, Manager of Opposition Business. Ministers have always been given latitude to provide additional and supplementary information as they become aware of it, so long as they are responsive to the main part of the question that has been asked, and that is the case in this case.

**Ms FENTIMAN:** I have important qualitative data for members opposite on the issue of being offered accommodation after giving birth. Montana on the Gold Coast said that she was so much more relaxed in a hotel than having—

**Mr MICKELBERG:** Mr Acting Speaker, I rise to a point of order on relevance under standing order 118(b).

**Government members** interjected.

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Order!

**Mr MICKELBERG:** Mr Acting Speaker, I specifically asked about the metrics—

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Member, resume your seat.

**Mr MICKELBERG:**—and whether they would be changed.

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Member—

**Mr MICKELBERG:** The minister has not answered the question.

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Member, resume your seat!

**Government members** interjected.

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** The House will come to order. Member for Buderim, that was extremely disrespectful. I clearly asked you on several occasions to resume your seat. You heard me, you were looking at me and you continued. You will withdraw that statement. There is no point of order, and if that behaviour occurs again I will name you.

**Mr MICKELBERG:** I withdraw.

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** You are on a warning.

**Ms FENTIMAN:** I was providing important qualitative data from Hannah, a mum who said, 'It's just been so nice having quality time to bond with baby Hugo before having to go home, and Raymond and I have had time to reconnect with each other and also just spend time with our baby.' There are so many other mums who want to talk about what a great policy this is. I thought it was very important for the House to understand that there are many reasons that patients are offered accommodation outside of the hospital. It is a long-running practice and these decisions are made by doctors.

## Social Housing

**Ms McMILLAN:** My question is of the Minister for Housing. Will the minister update the House on how the Palaszczuk government is increasing social housing options in Brisbane?

**Ms SCANLON:** It seems to be only members of the Labor side who are interested in asking questions about housing, so I thank the member for Mansfield for the question. I know that she is a big supporter of more housing, particularly in her electorate. I was really pleased to join her this morning to see the construction of a new 32-unit social housing dwelling that we are working with the Brisbane Housing Company to deliver. Over the coming weeks, tenants will be welcomed into that new



development, which is wonderful to see. This is in addition to the 69 properties that we have built in the Mansfield electorate since coming to government. I am very proud to say that we have built almost 1,000 homes across Brisbane since coming to government.

While looking at some of these statistics I became interested in another electorate in Brisbane. I was particularly interested in the Everton electorate, because the member for Everton was the housing minister under the LNP and he has been reappointed as the opposition's housing spokesperson. I am pleased to say that the Palaszczuk government has commenced, built and delivered 47 new social homes in the Everton electorate. How many were started over the member for Everton's time? Zero.

**Mr Mander:** They're all voting for me.

**Ms SCANLON:** There were zero new social homes in his electorate when he was the minister. How many were completed in his electorate when he was the minister? Zero. That is the member for Everton's track record. It is not surprising that none were commenced, because we know that the member for Everton as minister slashed the social housing construction budget by 90 per cent. That is his track record.

The Leader of the Opposition, when he was looking at who was going to be on the front bench, decided to bring that bloke back to the front bench to take up the housing portfolio. That made me wonder which of the policies it was that the Leader of the Opposition most liked under the member for Everton's leadership. Was it the fact that he decreased it by 428 houses? Was it that he defunded the tenant advice and advocacy services? I know he has a bit of a weird thing about me renting, but it appears to be that he has a bit of an issue with everyone else renting as well and he does not want people to know what their rights are. Then in an extraordinary move, not only did those opposite defund it; they stopped the Commonwealth government from providing millions of dollars. It had to go around the Newman government to give that organisation funding. That is their track record. Those opposite have brought back the very same faces. Half of the shadow cabinet are ex-Newman government ministers with the same old policies and no plans. The member for Mudgeeraba and the members for Kawana, Nanango, Surfers Paradise, Chatsworth, Clayfield, Moggill and Maroochydore are all sitting there ready to cut again.

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Before I call the next speaker, I just remind all members that the correct use of parliamentary titles is required at all times.

### Gas Supply

**Mr KATTER:** My question is to the Minister for Resources. For years Incitec Pivot has appealed to the Queensland government to make its gas both affordable and available to local manufacturers, with CEO Jeannie Johns warning high energy prices risk hollowing out Australian manufacturing and exporting our jobs to countries with affordable energy. Given Incitec Pivot has decided to close the Gibson Island manufacturing plant in 2023, will the government finally answer KAP calls for a genuine gas reserve policy?

**Mr STEWART:** I thank the member for the question. I think we need to put this into context. Queensland gas producers supply the entire east coast of Australia and it is about time the other states started to step up and supply some of these other retail areas as well. When we look at what is happening in New South Wales, that has been sitting there for 11 years. If that was open over those 11 years, we would see 70 petajoules of gas being supplied back into the market. What we have always said is that the best way to drive down the price of gas is to bring on more gas, and that is why our domestic gas policy is the best in Australia.

Just last week I was speaking at the APPEA national gas conference and those attending that conference recognised that the best way of lowering prices for domestic gas is to bring on more gas, and it is our domestic gas supply policy that is making the difference. There is only one state that has a gas reservation policy, and that is Western Australia. The reason it has a gas reservation policy is twofold: one, it produces a lot of gas and, two, it is stranded from the east coast of Australia. What can Australia and the east coast do to get more gas? It could build a gas import facility where it could import gas from Western Australia into Victoria and into New South Wales rather than just relying solely on us producing the gas and sending it down the pipeline to the southern states.

We know that there will continually be this desire and this need for gas to supply the southern markets. Queensland is doing the heavy lifting when it comes to gas and we will continue to do the heavy lifting when it comes to gas. When it comes to Incitec Pivot, those are commercial decisions that are made by Incitec Pivot around the ability to purchase the gas. We will continue to work with both the federal government and other states for ways that we can bring on more gas, but we are doing the

heavy lifting and we will continue to do the heavy lifting. It was the Palaszczuk government that introduced the domestic supply policy where we have around 80,000 square kilometres of gas tenements and around about a quarter of those are designated for domestic supply. We are doing the heavy lifting. We are doing the hard work. It is because Queensland is setting the trend that we will continue to lead in terms of gas supply not only in Queensland but right around Australia.

### Mental Health

**Mrs McMAHON:** My question is of the Minister for Health, Mental Health and Ambulance Services and Minister for Women. Can the minister update the House on the Palaszczuk government's record investment in mental health initiatives and is the minister aware of any alternative approaches?

**Ms FENTIMAN:** I thank the member for Macalister for the question—a huge advocate for more investment in mental health across our state. I am so proud to say that the Palaszczuk government has a long track record of investing in support for mental health, alcohol and other drugs and suicide prevention. In the last budget we announced a record \$1.64 billion over five years and that investment is only possible because of our payroll tax levy. It just makes sense. A small amount is chipped in by very big businesses and in return we ensure that there is sustainable funding for mental health services for all Queenslanders.

Sadly, not everyone in this House is supportive of our levy to fund mental health services. When we introduced the levy, experts, people who work in mental health and clinicians all welcomed the levy. However, it would seem that the Leader of the Opposition 'David Crisafulli hits out at Palaszczuk government's new mental health levy'.

**Mr NICHOLLS:** Mr Acting Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The health minister knows about waving pieces of paper around. You may not have been able to see it, Mr Acting Speaker, as you were in discussion with the Clerk and the Clerk would not have been able to see it.

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Thank you. I have provided guidance to several members in relation to this matter. If that was occurring, I would ask you to read from the document or table it. There is no other option.

**Ms FENTIMAN:** Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker, and I was reading from the document, and I am happy to read it again: 'David Crisafulli hits out at Palaszczuk government's new mental health levy'. It is absolutely shameful that those opposite would oppose a levy that ensures sustainable funding for mental health for all Queenslanders.

I am astounded about the sorts of things those opposite oppose. When they make a policy of not standing for anything and for not telling Queenslanders what they believe in or what their policy is, the two things that they have decided to oppose are a mental health levy on some of our biggest businesses and satellite hospitals. What is going on with the LNP in health that it decides to take a stand against a mental health levy and satellite hospitals? It is absolutely outrageous that these are the two things that the Leader of the Opposition has in terms of a policy for health. We will stand up for more investment in mental health services and for Queenslanders' health and wellbeing every day of the week.


**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Members, the time for question time has expired.

## WASTE REDUCTION AND RECYCLING AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

### Second Reading

Resumed from 23 May (see p. 1550), on motion of Ms Linard—

That the bill be now read a second time.

 **Mr McDONALD** (Lockyer—LNP) (11.17 am), continuing: I appreciate the opportunity to continue my contribution to the debate. As I left off yesterday evening, 77 local governments across Queensland are the major stakeholders when it comes to waste recovery and the waste program across the state and it is very disappointing after speaking to many of the local governments just how poor the consultation has been by the government in that space. There is obviously a silo mentality happening around the environmental programs as opposed to the local government programs and it certainly is something that is brought to our attention very regularly.

As I also mentioned last night, clean earth is one of the greatest resources that the waste program across the state makes use of. A number of the submitters and stakeholders raised the issue that clean earth itself should be recognised as one of the greatest contributors in the resource recovery space.


Right across the world people do not talk about waste recovery now; it is resource recovery because of all of the different materials that are available, whether it be the gas that is produced from it, whether it be the solid fill or whether it be other useful items that can be made into energy.

As I said, many of the stakeholders who contributed to this mentioned that clean earth is something that should be used as more of a resource. We recognise that there has been an improvement in that it has reduced to a use of 3.9 million tonnes, but that still is a very large amount of clean earth that is going to fill. With so many housing estates occurring across the state, they are making use of clean earth all of the time and it could be something that could be transferred from some of the resource recovery areas.

As I also mentioned briefly last night, in the resource recovery space only two of the nine metrics were met by this government, which is a sad indictment on it. I challenge the new environment minister to improve those metrics. As I stressed, if this government is serious about improving outcomes in the waste space then it needs to be serious about genuinely consulting with the resource recovery sector. It is a very organised sector and none more so than the seven local governments. As the LGAQ stated in their submission to the inquiry, it would be very valuable to our local government sector if they are strongly consulted in order to deliver better outcomes for the state.

Last night I mentioned the amendment that will be moved by our shadow minister. I believe that we need more detail around that. Declaring how much councils get back through the waste program is an issue for them. Right across the state councils are very concerned that that amount of money will be reduced. You could argue very strongly that it is another indirect tax. It is a cost shift from the state government to local government. At every annual conference local governments raise those concerns.

I was very proud to be a member of the Lockyer Valley Regional Council whilst I was a police officer. The Lockyer Valley won some wonderful awards, including for the very large volume of cardboard that is recycled in the region. It was a pleasure to be on hand for that. I thank very much the Lockyer Valley Regional Council and the Somerset Regional Council for the work that they do in the waste recovery space.

 **Mr TANTARI** (Hervey Bay—ALP) (11.21 am): I rise to speak in support of the Waste Reduction and Recycling and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023. In my contribution I will restrict my comments to that part of the legislation that amends the act to introduce a ban on the outdoor release of lighter-than-air balloons and sets an expiry date for the current exemption on single-use plastic items.

In her introductory speech, the minister stated that in 2022 the Palaszczuk government launched a five-year road map to phase out problematic single-use plastics and control littering brought about by the release of lighter-than-air balloons, amongst other things. This bill keeps to that commitment and road plan by introducing a provision to ban the outdoor release of lighter-than-air balloons. These balloons are inflated with gas such as helium, which allows them to float for long distances.

It goes without saying that having these type of balloons in the environment has had and continues to have considerable impacts on our planet. With wildlife—be it land, marine or air—problems caused by the entanglement in and/or swallowing of remnants of lighter-than-air balloons, or the potential entanglement from attachments such as strings, ribbons et cetera that come with the product, are well known to scientists and animal carers. Those people have to deal with the fallout of those escaped balloons which damage the environment and find their way into animal or marine species that are not built to sustain the by-products of this seemingly harmless, mainly recreational item.

Within a marine environment, particularly in my region of the Fraser Coast and electorate of Hervey Bay that encompasses the pristine waters of the Great Sandy Strait and the UNESCO designated island of K'gari Fraser Island, having products such as lighter-than-air balloons drifting from the mainland of Hervey Bay across into that environment can create havoc to land, sea and birdlife. Having a process to clean up the damage done by escaping balloons is an excellent step towards slowing the decline within those species and the duress suffered by nature from encounters with the remnants of these balloons.


This bill manages the control of the release of lighter-than-air balloons by creating a penalty if a person releases or allows the release of any number of lighter-than-air balloons. I note that this is not a ban on all balloons but on the release of balloons once they are filled with a form of gas, which, as we know, is mostly helium. This is basically a ban on the balloons that float for some distance. The bill does provide exceptions to the ban for balloons that are used for science and research such as balloons that can be remotely operated or controlled so are not actually unleashed into the environment. These balloons are controlled on release into the environment and subsequently, one would assume, could be retrieved before they become an issue within the environment. Obviously, some balloons, such as

scientific balloons, will go their own way, but given that they are released mainly for the collection and retrieval of data for any number of scientific and other reasons then this bill allows an exemption for that to happen.

When it comes to the geography of an electorate such as Hervey Bay, without doubt this bill takes another step towards ensuring that we do not release manmade substances that are so impactful on the environment that they create further ongoing problems on top of the ever-present dangers of changing climate. As I have just mentioned, the Hervey Bay electorate contains one of the more pristine, UNESCO listed environments on the planet. Any attempt to remove and limit some of these manmade issues has to be applauded. I congratulate the former minister for environment and science for moving on this, particularly regarding the impacts these products have on land, marine and birdlife. The science on this is clear and it backs the changes enacted by this bill as it has been found that when these types of balloons eventually land they work their way into the food cycle or have an immediate impact on land, marine and birdlife. With this bill we are going a little way towards removing more of the human damage done from these associated practices on those lifeforms, which is a good thing.

The other aspect of the bill that I would like to briefly touch on is the provision to set an expiry date of 31 December 2025 for the current exemption for a single-use plastic item that is part of a shelf-ready product. This provision aligns with the agreed national packaging target that 100 per cent of all Australian packaging will be re-usable, recyclable or compostable by 2025 and that includes attachments such as plastic straws on juice boxes. These provisions are on top of the refinements that came about from the Environmental Protection Act 1994 and the Waste Reduction and Recycling Act 2011 and adds to the suite of environmental legislation that the Palaszczuk government has put in place to protect our environment from microplastics. The date proposed gives consideration to and plenty of time for manufacturers and retailers to sell their current stock that may become noncompliant after this set date. Manufacturers and retailers would already be aware of the coming change and the setting of this date gives them the lead-in time needed to redesign packaging to meet the new standard.

I emphasise that science shows that the damage that microplastics are reaping on the environment is huge. We need to reduce and eventually eliminate this matter from our food chain, our oceans and the stomachs of many species on this planet. The setting of this date sets the clock running and finally sets us on a path where animals, marine and bird wildlife will not have to face the constant barrage of microplastics that have become a scourge within their nature environments. When it comes to my part of the world—Hervey Bay, the Great Sandy Marine Park, the beautiful pristine K'gari Fraser Island and surrounds—I cannot recommend these amendments strongly enough and I ask all members to support the bill before the House. This legislation will help to create a cleaner state and does clean up—pardon the pun—some of the major contributors of waste in our environment. Finally, I acknowledge the work done by the former and current ministers for the environment as well as the Health and Environment Committee and their secretariat in formulating and reviewing this legislation. I support the bill.

 **Mr KNUTH** (Hill—KAP) (11.28 am): I rise to give my contribution to the Waste Reduction and Recycling and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023. I am always careful to consider how legislation presented to this House will impact regional and rural Queensland. Often what might sound logical to those living in Brisbane is the exact opposite to those who live in rural and regional Queensland because of how it will affect them. I, and indeed the majority of Queenslanders, certainly support initiatives to better manage waste and encourage recycling but that has to be sensible and achievable. I know that many Queenslanders actively visit their local recycling outlets and are very aware of and conscious about protecting the environment where possible while getting 10 cents returned on various cans, glasses and plastic bottles. I believe that recycling is one of the best things that has ever happened to the country.


I had the privilege of growing up in the small mining town of Collinsville. Our pocket money basically came from recycling items. For example, a milk bottle would fetch five cents. You could get 10 lollies with five cents! Three one-litre Coke bottles would get you into the picture theatre. A bottle of Schweppes would get you a jelly tipped iceblock. They were the good old days. We had golden opportunities to make a bit of pocket money. I remember that a car battery would get you \$2, which could buy a lot of things back then. We no longer have those opportunities, but it is great to see that we still have a recycling program and there is a return.

Although I agree with most of what this bill proposes, I note the objections to the clean energy amendment from Cleanaway and the Local Government Association of Queensland, representing councils throughout the state. Any changes which have not been communicated properly to councils

could result in increases to waste management costs being passed on to the wider community. For example, the Waste Reduction and Recycling (Waste Levy) Amendment Bill 2019 caused significant disruptions to businesses throughout the state after it came into effect in 2019. The waste levy was described at the time as underpinning the new waste management strategy being developed for Queensland and would act as a price signal that would encourage waste avoidance and resource-recovering behaviours and discourage disposals to landfill as the first option. It was unaffordable and people were just dumping their rubbish. In reality, it was purely another tax and revenue-raising exercise by the state under the guise of being environmentally responsible and friendly.

At the time, the KAP warned of the levy's impact on councils and regional businesses. One business in my electorate that was hit hard is the Northern Iron and Brass Foundry in Innisfail. It was established in 1934 and employs 74 people. Being based in a small regional centre, the foundry did not have easy access to waste disposal facilities—like many other facilities—and infrastructure required by the new regulation. Its waste costs increased over 200 per cent overnight. This meant the business was placed in a precarious financial position and was in real danger of closing down, taking with it regional jobs and creating a domino effect on associated local businesses. We had to fight very hard for this foundry. This is an example of ignorance towards regional communities, which often do not have the infrastructure that the majority of centres have to manage waste.

There are some very good aspects of this bill, but we must be mindful of the impacts it will have on rural and regional areas, particularly when they do not have the waste infrastructure available in many city areas. I support recycling 100 per cent. I just wish that we were in those good old days where we had those opportunities.

 **Hon. DE FARMER** (Bulimba—ALP) (Minister for Employment and Small Business, Minister for Training and Skills Development and Minister for Youth Justice) (11.33 am): I rise to speak briefly to the Waste Reduction and Recycling and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023. I do so knowing that this is an issue which is very dear to the hearts of the people in my community. The bill deals with a range of issues which we now will mandate for industry and for Queenslanders in general. I am very proud to say that people in my community have been adopting many of these practices for quite some time.

I refer to the ban on the outdoor release of lighter-than-air balloons and to the exemption from the ban on a single-use plastic item that is an integral part of a shelf-ready product. I know that part of the commitment from the Minister for the Environment—part of the broad range of initiatives encompassed in this and related strategies—is about behaviour change.

I want to shine a light on a couple of significant players in my community that have done a lot to change behaviour, to change the way of thinking and to have the conversation more broadly across the community. One of those is Tangalooma EcoMarines. Although not based in my electorate, it is present in almost every one of my schools. In fact, I think Bulimba State School has been represented since the beginning of the Tangalooma program. I was very proud to have the previous minister for the environment launch the statewide commitment of having Tangalooma EcoMarines in every single school. She chose Morningside State School as the place to launch it because of the commitment of those students and teachers. We had a great time showing the then minister for the environment what that school—and, of course, all of our local schools—is doing around the environment. The purpose of Tangalooma EcoMarines is to raise awareness of the management of plastics and the disastrous effects they can have on our marine life.


I also want to shine a light on the eco forums I have held several times in my electorate. I will be holding another one this year. We have schools, businesses and other organisations exhibiting the work they are doing to make a difference in their own space. We all know that it is really important to pass this legislation and to put systemic practices in place, but every single action that an individual, school, business or organisation takes can make a difference in itself. I am so proud to have 20 or 30 stalls from people the minute I put it out there. People want to show how they make a difference. One of the key players that will be there this year is Circonomy. I do not know whether many members remember the World's Biggest Garage Sale, which started off as a tiny business but is now a massive social enterprise. Now it is called Circonomy and it is based in my electorate. It is a big business. While retaining its status as a social enterprise, it is now a big business that works with major retailers to ensure that not one single thing they might have otherwise disposed of is ever thrown out. They recondition or repurpose items, making them available to pay it forward for people who might be vulnerable and to ensure that nothing at all is wasted. If ever there were a high-profile example of the

circular economy principles that we all should be thinking about, it is Circonomy in my electorate. The impact it has had on people's behaviour, way of thinking and practices simply cannot be measured. I am so excited at the impact it continues to have.

I want to comment briefly on the review of the state's waste management strategy. I remember very clearly the committee of which I was a member just before the 2012 election looking at the waste management levy. We put the levy in place to stop Queensland from being a dumping ground for other states. Quick as a flash, as soon as the LNP returned to government that was reversed. 'Big money' did not want the then government messing with that. Almost as soon as the LNP came to government, we had people dumping in Queensland again. It is so good to see that this government has really taken that by the horns. We were on to it straightaway.

I acknowledge the great work of the previous environment minister and the excellent work that I know the new environment minister will be doing. I am really proud of the Palaszczuk government's record in terms of the environment.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms Lui): Before I call the next speaker, I remind the following members that they are on a warning: the members for Warrego, Southern Downs, Nanango, Kawana, Mudgeeraba, Whitsunday, Chatsworth, Toowoomba South, Logan, Callide, Moggill and Buderim, the Deputy Premier and the Leader of the Opposition.

 **Mr MICKELBERG** (Buderim—LNP) (11.39 am): I rise to address the Waste Reduction and Recycling and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023, a bill that seeks to address several shortfalls in the state government's existing legislative and regulatory framework to facilitate recycling and the management of waste. We have heard from the contributions of members that it is basically a bill that seeks to deal with the mechanics and the failures of the state government's waste levy and the state government's waste strategy.

Having sat on the Natural Resources, Agricultural Industry Development and Environment Committee last term—it considered a bill quite similar to this one—I had the opportunity to receive submissions from many of the interested parties right across the state. That bill did not get debated, but it forms the basis of the legislation we are debating today. One of the main concerns that stakeholders involved in that inquiry raised was in relation to compostable plastics. Many of those plastic replacements end up in landfill in exactly the same way as single-use plastic do.

Consumers are trying to do the right thing. Consumers are actively seeking products that are recyclable and they are paying more for those products in many cases. In many cases that recyclable product is treated exactly the same as single-use plastic and ends up in landfill. There are lots of different reasons for that. There is a lack of infrastructure in many regional centres. We went to the Cairns resource recovery centre—the transfer station—where compostable plastics simply cannot be processed. There is a process required to do that, and many regional areas in particular do not have that infrastructure.

We have the Containers for Change scheme—and many people have spoken about the benefits of it—but we have 126 million poppers going overseas. That is not a circular economy. That does not seek to achieve what the community expects and, indeed, what one of the principles in this legislation seeks to achieve. I question the government's commitment to genuinely addressing some of these issues when much of it looks like window-dressing.

We have seen that compostable plastics are just substituted for single-use plastics. That is what the legislation requires, but if they are dealt with in the exact same way then we achieve nothing. If anything, it is a detrimental action because people are hoodwinked into believing that they are doing something for the environment when there is very little benefit. Clearly the problem needs to be addressed through a more comprehensive approach than just removing single-use plastics from the supply chain.

During the previous committee's inquiry we heard from Alison Foley, who is the director and founder of Ten Little Pieces. Ten Little Pieces is an education and empowerment movement for ordinary people, in particular young people, to make a big difference in the places they visit by collecting 10 pieces of litter anywhere, anytime. They have a strong focus on educating children. Collecting 10 pieces of litter is an easy concept that even the youngest child can grasp and it opens up conversation around conscious consumerism, circular economies and rethinking and reframing our concept of waste. I think it is safe to say that our young people in particular want to see action on protecting the environment. Too often the actions that this place debates and the measures that this government puts in place are simply window-dressing.

Organisations like Ten Little Pieces offer educational programs from preschool right through to year 12. They talk about the science of marine debris, environmental empowerment and solutions-based thinking in relation to the impact of plastic on the environment. Removing plastic from the supply chain is undoubtedly an important part of the process, but it is only one part of the process. Much of the government's approach to this issue has ignored the other parts of the process which are arguably more important.

It is important that the government considers the transformational effect that education can have, particularly in relation to our school system. Previous pieces of legislation have excluded schools from many of the provisions around single-use plastic. There are reasons for that. There are exclusions in relation to medical endeavours and the like, and there are important reasons for that. We are not going to achieve change unless those entities and industries—schools and the medical profession—are brought along on the journey. I think the community expect that as well.

The projections for plastic pollution entering our oceans are, simply put, a disaster waiting to happen. We need to do better at restricting and redesigning products and packaging that has such a devastating environmental impact. That is why I support removing single-use plastics from the supply chain where possible. It is policy that has been championed by the LNP over many years. We need to do better to facilitate the recycling of those products that are used as a substitute for single-use plastics.

The urgency of the transition required has been highlighted by the Pew Charitable Trusts' report, *Breaking the plastic wave*. In that report there was a revision of the current estimate of how much plastic is entering our ocean—11 million metric tonnes a year. The report also states that without action the annual flow of plastic into the ocean will nearly triple by 2040, to 29 million metric tonnes per year or the equivalent of 10 kilograms of plastic per metre coastline worldwide. Eighty per cent of that comes from land-based sources.

Madam Deputy Speaker Lui, I know that in many parts of your electorate, where I have spent quite a bit of time, beaches that are not regularly visited are often littered with considerable plastic—much of it not from Australia, I might add. Similarly, in many countries such as East Timor/Timor-Leste the problem is replicated. The reality is that the environmental damage in places that may not be seen by people every single day is just as great as that which occurs on the Gold Coast, the Sunshine Coast or in the centre of Brisbane.

Our environment is at risk. The government needs to stop wasting time and moving the goalposts to meet its deadlines. Too often the government's approach to environmental issues has been lip-service, whether it is on protected areas and not meeting its own goals or in not even meeting its own review and reporting requirements. It is pretty clear. We have heard those opposite criticise the LNP, but I think with a bit of introspection those opposite would acknowledge that Labor's response to these environmental issues has not been genuine.

Plastic is cheap and versatile. As the shadow minister for small businesses, I know that many businesses rely on plastic product because it is flexible, durable and has many positive applications, but we need to rethink the origin of many of the goods that we use, the destination of the goods that we consume and the packaging they come in. Simply substituting it for compostable plastics that do not end up getting composted is not the solution.

Some of the other issues that were raised by stakeholders concerning the bill were in relation to the lack of incentive to minimise household waste. The state government has shifted the burden with respect to waste onto businesses and local government. If we want to address this problem, we are going to need to tackle the problem of household waste. The state government has not shown leadership on addressing these issues. This is an opportunity for the current government to tackle those issues. I am sure that if it does not then a future government will. Queensland has a great opportunity to lead the way on these issues and to effect lasting change. The government could start by addressing the issues I have spoken about in our schools.


I do not believe that there has been adequate enforcement of the anti-littering law—certainly not in my part of the world on the Sunshine Coast. I have previously sought information from the Sunshine Coast Council and the Department of Environment and Science around the numbers of warnings and infringements issued by the Sunshine Coast Council for those littering. The data was, frankly, alarming. In 2017-18 one warning was issued by the Sunshine Coast Council. Bear in mind that this region has a population of over 200,000 and many visitors. Six infringements were issued across the whole Sunshine Coast. The following year, zero warnings and three infringements were issued. In 2019-20, five warnings and five infringements were issued.

We know that littering goes on. We understand that littering goes on. Many people littering do not even understand the impact their littering is having on the environment. State and local governments have an obligation to take every possible step to stop this, whether that is education, enforcement or the redesign of products. We need a genuine commitment if the Queensland public are going to take these issues seriously.

Education is an extremely powerful tool. People who litter are often ignorant of the harm their littering has on the environment. Many cigarette smokers who choose to litter—not all cigarette smokers litter—do not understand that there are 4,000 toxic chemicals in the cigarette butt they choose to throw out on the kids playground. They do not understand the consequence that has on the environment. With an enforcement approach, which crystallises the issue in the mind of those individuals, I am sure they will become more conversant with the challenges and issues that their approach to littering causes.

Far too often, particularly on the Sunshine Coast, people are not challenged on their littering behaviour. I would like to see the Sunshine Coast Council and the state government take a more proactive approach. Frequently when questioned on these issues the response is that it is a police responsibility. The simple fact is that the police are not dealing with littering unless it is an egregious issue. The police are dealing with, to be frank, far more serious matters such as domestic violence, violent robberies and the like.

It is a matter for the environment department and it is a matter for local government to take a proactive approach to enforcement. I call on the state government and local governments across the state to be genuine with respect to their commitment to tackling the waste problems in our community. I was going to speak to the concerns of local government with respect to the provisions to gag them from commenting on some of these issues, but others have addressed those. I share those concerns.

 **Ms PUGH** (Mount Ommaney—ALP) (11.49 am): Yesterday was World Turtle Day, and this bill is going to make them very happy indeed! Happy World Turtle Day for yesterday. It was also my mother-in-law's birthday and the Clerk's birthday, so happy birthday, Cathy and the Clerk! On 1 July 2022, the Queensland government announced its intention to ban the mass release of lighter-than-air—otherwise known as helium—balloons, to commence on 1 September 2023, following consultation to expand the ban on single-use plastics.

Others have spoken about stakeholders. I want to begin by acknowledging some key stakeholders in my community who have given some important early feedback on this policy, going back as far as 10 years. I will start with Dennis Taylor, who is the former president and current member of the Sumner Park Rotary Club. Dennis and the Sumner Park Rotary Club have advocated with me for years around the banning, where possible, of single-use plastics and the damage that balloons can do to our marine wildlife. In addition to Clean Up Australia Day, when we would clean up riverine environments in my beautiful community of Mount Ommaney and we would often find things like balloons that had been released in addition to other plastic detritus, they would do monthly roadside and riverside clean-ups where they would frequently find balloons and other items that potentially had been released as part of a symbolic release by a community group.

We know where these things can end up. That is why this legislation is so important to groups like the Sumner Park Rotary Club, the Pennywort Creek Bushcare Group, the Centenary and District Environment Action group and Oxley Bushcare. Like many Queensland electorates, I have a river that runs through my electorate. When you have a river or a water feature that runs through your electorate, you can see the kinds of things that can end up in your waterways when people are thoughtless about what they throw out and what they let go into the air.


On 1 July 2022, following community, industry and business consultation showing strong support to expand the ban of single-use plastics, a ban on the mass release of lighter-than-air balloons was announced, to commence on 1 September this year which, as I said, has strong support in my community. While releasing balloons is considered a littering offence under the current litter provisions, the proposed ban on the outdoor release of these lighter-than-air balloons prevents the action specifically of release. That will avoid the balloons becoming litter when they come back to earth when the helium runs out. This removes beyond a shadow of a doubt any confusion for people who might be planning events and memorials. It allows a consistent message to be provided through party supply businesses—of which I have plenty in my electorate—caterers and event organisers about the requirements regarding balloons.

I recognise that over the years balloon releases have been very popular at memorial events in particular, serving as a symbolic act of catharsis by those affected by grief or those wanting to express the physical act of letting something go up to the heavens. I can certainly understand that. I think it was the member for Noosa who yesterday outlined several fantastic alternatives that community groups are



now coming up with as a result of the restrictions that these laws will create. I think everybody understands that the act of releasing a balloon may result in the death or injury of precious wildlife. They agree that that is too high a price to pay, so they are coming up with alternatives such as butterfly releases or dove releases and things like that. They are beautiful alternatives that serve the purpose just as well.

It is really important to note that the ban is not a ban on balloons. It is a ban on the outdoor release of any number of lighter-than-air balloons. As I mentioned, I have many wonderful professional businesses in my community who I consulted about this bill in the lead-up, including a small business run by a local Middle Park mum, Delightful Moments & Balloons, and Unique Party Hire. They both do beautiful balloon arrangements. When I spoke to Emily De Vries, the owner of Delightful Moments & Balloons, about these changes and what kinds of balloons she is using in her business, she told me that businesses like hers are now increasingly looking into recyclable options. They do not even use a lot of helium anymore. They are fixing their arrangements to nets. It is great to see businesses keeping up with these kinds of changes. I know that my community is strongly in support of these changes. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr LANGBROEK** (Surfers Paradise—LNP) (11.54 am): I rise to speak on the Waste Reduction and Recycling and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023. As we have heard from others—and I want to acknowledge the contribution of my colleague the member for Bonney, the shadow minister—the bill proposes to amend provisions of the Environmental Protection Act 1994 and the Waste Reduction and Recycling Act 2011 to better embed goals for the practical implementation of the circular economy principles.

The opposition is generally supportive of this bill and will not oppose it. However, as we have heard from other members, we will be proposing two amendments to improve the bill further: firstly, to revert the definition of ‘misinformation’ to its current form. The Local Government Association of Queensland, LGAQ, raised how this could cause issues by limiting the political expression of elected local government members. Yesterday we heard a contribution I think from the member for Lockyer, a former mayor and councillor in the Lockyer Valley, about the potential restriction of political expression. He mentioned a prominent mayor who I think had that issue last year.

**Mr McDonald:** Barcaldine’s Sean Dillon.

**Mr LANGBROEK:** In Barcaldine—Sean Dillon it was. That is right. I remember reading that at the time. I take that interjection.

The change to the ‘misinformation’ definition without consulting with local governments has sent the wrong message to local government. I acknowledge the fervent contribution of the LGAQ in the way they work with local governments and then communicate with us as local MPs, under the leadership of Alison Smith, who has been recently appointed. It is greatly appreciated.

I note that the government are accepting our second amendment. Considering the need for longer durations between waste strategy reviews, it is essential for local governments to align their own waste plans with the state’s time line. It is unfair to have different measures for the state government and local governments. I draw the analogy of when the Premier was talking about donation laws and lobbying. The Premier said that on those sorts of issues, ‘If it is good enough for local government, it is good enough for the state.’ Therefore, we propose an amendment to bring local government waste strategy reviews in line with the new five-year time line.

We just heard the member for Mount Ommaney commenting on the ban on lighter-than-air balloon releases. I note, Madam Deputy Speaker Lui, in your other role in your electorate there is certainly an issue of waste, particularly in your waterways. In my electorate of Surfers Paradise we have some of Australia’s best beaches and more canals than Venice. We heard from the member for Buderim about the waste that turns up on often isolated beaches. People in environmental groups are doing great work. I have seen the work that they do as volunteers trying to remove some of that rubbish. It is an indictment on the people who are disposing of it. It is acknowledged that the rubbish is not always from Australia because of where the tides and watercourses go.

I note that with lighter-than-air balloon releases there can be a detrimental impact on our waterways and ecosystems. It is crucial that the government ensures there is ample education around this change so that the public is aware of the new regulations. To that end, I want to refer to an article from the AAP, dated 23 February 2023, titled ‘National ban call as state moves on helium balloons’. The article refers to the devastating toll the balloons take when they end up in our oceans. The article states—

It’s been estimated that more than 70 per cent of the plastic found inside dead turtles in Moreton Bay, off Brisbane, was from burst balloons.

Because the waterways and the ocean seem so large and cavernous, you do not imagine that that is what is going to happen with that plastic rubbish, but that is what can happen. I table a copy of that article.

*Tabled paper:* Article from *Shepparton News*, dated 23 February 2023, titled 'National ban call as new state moves on helium balloons' [693].

There are concerns as well regarding the removal of the automatic levy exemption for clean earth. While we agree with the removal of this exemption we believe more work needs to be done with waste operators to ensure a smooth transition.

The lack of clarity around the new exemption process and potential burdens on operators is a cause for concern. We urge the government to address these issues promptly and engage with stakeholders to find practical solutions.

I must highlight the government's failure to meet its own deadlines and targets. I know we have heard that from previous speakers. The missed waste strategy review deadline and subsequent change to the review time line in the act are clear indicators of the government's inability to meet its waste management goals. As in many other policy areas, we hear a lot of rhetoric from the government about what it is they are aiming to do, but we do not always have follow-through on reviews and their policy promises. The draft review revealed that only two of the first nine milestone products are on track to be met. This lack of progress is deeply concerning and calls into question the government's commitment to waste reduction and recycling.

I am proud of adopting regular recycling practices through the Containers for Change program at home and in my electorate office. Local MPs here in the parliament will know that, whilst I do not want to take away from the Hearts of Purple program, in my office we have pallets of bottles that we take to the Containers for Change program. I am looking forward to a particular depot being opened at Capri on Via Roma where my electorate office is—

**Mr O'Connor:** You're upset they don't do bottles there anymore.

**Mr LANGBROEK:**—and we are going to have bottles, as I understand it, by the end of the year.

**Mr O'Connor:** A whole year!

**Mr LANGBROEK:** I take the interjections from the member for Bonney. On a sidenote, the Gold Coast community returned a whopping 2,121,781 containers this week. It is quite amazing. As I say, being on the Isle of Capri and in the Surfers Paradise electorate, I see on some of my WhatsApp neighbourhood groups where people are collecting bottles from neighbourhoods. Just as I heard the member for Hill mention his fond memories of exchanging bottles for five cents back in the day so he could get lollies, we have inventive, entrepreneurial young people collecting bottles and cans throughout my electorate, including in areas such as Paradise Waters, Benowa Waters and Sorrento. It is something that we try to contribute to in my electorate office, and that is how we will fund the staff Christmas party this year.

**An honourable member:** A cheap party!

**Mr LANGBROEK:** No. We certainly get a lot of bottles, so we will be going high-end this year if we keep collecting those containers. It was revealed only earlier this month that the Brisbane Labor government has a poor track record when it comes to waste management. My colleague and fellow Gold Coaster the member for Bonney pointed out that 126 million poppers have been secretly shipped to India rather than being recycled in Queensland as they promised. I table this media statement.

*Tabled paper:* Email, dated 8 May 2023, from Opposition Media to the Surfers Paradise Electorate Office, regarding media statement by Mr Sam O'Connor MP [694].

I do know it led to a very good headline when that story appeared in the *Australian*. The headline was 'Harry Popper and the Container of Secrets'. I would have thought that could potentially win a Walkley award for best headline. Unfortunately, I table a headline from the *Sydney Morning Herald* from 21 May, 'Explainers in, headlines out in Walkleys reshuffle'.


*Tabled paper:* Article from the *Sydney Morning Herald*, dated 21 May 2023, titled 'Explainers in, headlines out in Walkleys reshuffle' [695].

Unfortunately, there will be no Walkley award for what I would have considered to be a nomination for a fine headline if that award still existed.

**Mr O'Connor:** The 'Goblet of Failure'.

**Mr LANGBROEK:** We may end up with one for the 'Goblet of Failure', as the member for Bonney says. When the Containers for Change recycling program was sold to Queenslanders, we were told that it would invest in recycling facilities to allow liquid paperboard to be recycled into new products locally, including announcing a new Gold Coast facility. As the member for Bonney has pointed out in his media release, five years later a site has not been built and waste is being shipped overseas. I return to my earlier point about the government being big on announcements and very poor on delivery.

As my colleagues have mentioned, waste management needs to be done correctly, involving all stakeholders in the process. Through kindergarten and school programs as my children have grown up I have noticed that awareness has grown through the years about the important issue of waste management. There are opportunities to create jobs across Queensland. I would like to see the state leading the nation in this area. Long-term environmental impacts will be inherited by future generations if we do not get it correct now. For those of us who come from the Gold Coast, one of the most beautiful parts of Queensland and Australia, it is imperative that we keep going with these types of initiatives.


 **Mrs GILBERT** (Mackay—ALP) (12.04 pm): I wish to support the Waste Reduction and Recycling and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. We do need to recycle and value-add to all products and build strong circular economies where we can. We often hear people say that things are not made to last, that they were made to throw away. That is a very decadent and wasteful way to manufacture goods. We now have an opportunity to stop and think about what we are doing with the resources we consume and what we put out into our waste.

This bill focuses on reducing the amount of waste that goes into landfill while bringing down greenhouse gas emissions, which is very important. The best part of this bill is that it will create more jobs for Queensland through the recycling resource recovery sector. This bill is not only about the environment; it also about focusing on the thousands of jobs that are going to be produced by the circular economy. The targets this government set will: reduce our food waste by half; stop 80 per cent of material from ending up in landfill; and recycle 65 per cent of our rubbish by 2030. This will produce a huge amount of resources that will need to be reprocessed. To achieve this there is significant investment back into our local councils and industries to roll out new green bins, introduce statewide behaviour change campaigns, and co-invest in more recycling infrastructure across our state. This is all part of the Palaszczuk government's \$1.5 billion Recycling and Jobs Fund. When a product is no longer used for its initial purpose there is an opportunity for it to be repurposed into a new product. It is time to stop the throwaway culture we have become accustomed to.

I would now like to comment on how the circular economy in our region has value-added to the agricultural industry. As I see it, this is the future in terms of how we recycle our rubbish. There is a lot of waste in cropping. With some of our crops there is a lot of food left to rot in the ground because supermarkets and points of sale want perfect fruit. This is just a waste, so there is more work to be done so it does not end up in landfill. Traditionally, in the sugarcane industry there was a lot of waste that was burned. Over the years in North Queensland we were famous for our cane fires. In the harvesting season people actually went on holidays to come and look at our cane fires. They bought postcards of them when they were travelling north. So we have changed, and we can change what we do with our crops.

As a result of the circular economy that is evolving in the sugarcane industry, other industries will take a leaf out of their book and evolve and value-add to their resources. For many years mill mud for fertiliser, molasses and bagasse were the main by-products of cane milling and processing. Now we have ethanol, which is also a by-product where the sugar is fermented. It is being used in our local buses. If this trial works, there will be more buses rolled out across North Queensland. This fermentation process can also be used to produce protein. There are many businesses knocking on doors around Mackay that want to use this process to value-add to food manufacturing.

For years, the bagasse was used to power steam boilers in our sugar mills, and Racecourse Mill used it for cogeneration to produce a third of Mackay's electricity. This by-product is now being used by Mercurius to make aviation fuel and marine fuel. Their trials in Mackay are about four years away from realising this fuel being used commercially in our planes. If this one crop in Queensland can produce all of these resources using every drop and every thread of fibre from its crop, I can see that there is so much opportunity for all of our other industries to take a leaf out of this industry. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr HEAD** (Callide—LNP) (12.10 pm): The Waste Reduction and Recycling and Other Legislation Amendment Bill aims to do a number of things. The LNP will be moving amendments to this bill to address some of the concerns a number of stakeholders raised. The circular economy is something

that I and many constituents understand. Rural Australians are the best recyclers we have. Whether it is tearing down an old shed and repurposing the steel and corrugated iron for a chook pen and new cattle yards, or turning a used chemical shuttle into a storage rack in the shed, packaging waste is still waste. If there is leftover waste of any sort, it means you have wasted dollars as well.

When Labor governments know nothing better than to tax the life out of rural and regional Queensland, we in the bush cannot afford one skerrick of extra waste. If only the Palaszczuk government could deliver on their waste reductions as much as they like to talk about them, especially their financial waste: Wellcamp—waste, excessive budget blowouts—waste, Jackie Trad's secret legal fees—waste. For a bit of context in relation to this bill, the definition of 'waste' is as follows according to Merriam-Webster:

a : damaged, defective, or superfluous material produced by a manufacturing process: such as

(1) : material rejected during a textile manufacturing process and used usually for wiping away dirt and oil

...

(2) : SCRAP

(3) : an unwanted by-product of a manufacturing process, chemical laboratory, or nuclear reactor

**Government members** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Krause): Member for Capalaba, you are not in your seat. Please refrain from interjecting, or sit down and interject if you so please.

**Mr HEAD:** It continues—

b : refuse from places of human or animal habitation: such as

(1) : GARBAGE, RUBBISH

(2) : EXCREMENT ...

(3) : SEWAGE

c : material derived by mechanical and chemical weathering of the land and moved down sloping surfaces or carried by streams to the sea

Funnily enough, this sounds a lot like many Labor policies and Labor governments in general. Maybe they should be added to this definition.

Recycling and the circular economy also form part of this bill. We know the Palaszczuk government talk a big game, but what do they actually do when it comes to recycling and the circular economy? As reported in the *Australian* in recent explosive media reports, their signature recycling program has secretly shipped up to 126 million—

**Government members** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Members to my right, your interjections are not being taken. Member for Pine Rivers, I particularly ask you to refrain. Your interjections are not being taken.

**Mr HEAD:** As reported in the *Australian* in recent explosive media reports, as just tabled by the member for Surfers Paradise, their signature recycling program has secretly shipped up to 126 million drink popper containers to India that it refunded Queenslanders \$12.69 million to return to deposit refund centres. Despite the container deposit scheme starting in 2018, Queensland has no capacity to recycle the poppers made from liquid paperboard, forcing the government to sell the waste to a private Brisbane company, Genuine Recycling Group, which then ships this waste to India.

The only recycling the Premier has done recently happens to be during her recent reshuffle of the cabinet. The only difference is that many of these ministers should have been relegated to the bin or at least the backbench but, no, through the recycling plant they went. Or was it the circular economy they went through? No, sorry, my misunderstanding. It was just another circus act. I do feel for the few competent backbenchers the government has, seeing such appalling waste being recycled—

**Ms LAUGA:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I ask if this member's contribution is relevant to the long title of the bill before the House.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I will take some advice from the Clerk. Member for Callide, you can resume your contribution but I ask you to bring your comments as you are making them back to the bill and relate them to the bill.

**Mr HEAD:** Thank you for your guidance, Mr Deputy Speaker. Regarding the circular economy, I think it is important to pick this issue apart a little more. There are a few omissions from the government both in Queensland and in Canberra about the inability of many renewable projects to be part of a circular economy. Waste from wind farms, solar farms and battery storage will, based off currently available technology, inevitably be destined for landfill. This will result in an environmental disaster and toxic local contamination to the communities being used as dumps. I believe the government must outline what their plan is for all this waste, as this is the most critical and pressing waste issue of the future. This bill will not address this issue. Projects that the government dub as ‘for future generations’ should not be leaving our children with contaminated wastelands and millions of tonnes of both toxic and non-toxic waste.


If I started to list all the renewable projects happening across my region, I would be here all morning. Think of the waste these projects will result in. Once again, this is a classic example of people in the metropolitan areas pushing an issue without fully comprehending the long-term impacts to communities they are forcing it upon, as well as the longer term impacts for themselves. There are millions of tonnes of equipment being trucked in for the construction of these projects, which ultimately means there are millions of tonnes of waste that will exist at the end of life for these projects.

I would also like to reinforce the comments made by the member for Bonney, especially in regard to the LNP’s commitment to genuine environmental outcomes and the environment portfolio. As a man who is the product of primary industry and having grown up on a farm, I know for a fact that farmers are the true environmentalists—that is right: farmers are the true environmentalists—for we understand the intricate needs of the environment in which we coexist. We do not live in a concrete jungle; we live in the natural landscapes of the bush. This is why farmers are the original recyclers and have always led the way when it comes to innovative ways to reduce waste.

When the local environment is healthy, so is the farm. As there are 13 bioregions across Queensland, what someone may dream of as a healthy environment certainly does not apply to the whole state. I have spent more days working alongside and with my local environment than many members opposite have combined. I have sprayed weeds that were strangling our natural landscapes and killed pests that destroy our native flora and fauna. It also pains me with the sheer amounts of litter I see end up in our natural environment as I travel around. Ultimately, society will always have some level of waste, but in terms of what we do with this and where it ends up, we can certainly do a lot better than we currently are.

Most of the litter I see in our natural environment comes from individuals who clearly do not have the respect for their surroundings that many on this side of the House do. Individual responsibility and respect are fundamental to the LNP core values, and I wish this was a value a few more people in society held. Maybe then, within only hours of a fast-food chain opening in a community, there would not have been rubbish from this store 20 minutes down the road. For all the talk of changes to the education curriculum, maybe rather than frightening children about issues they themselves cannot change, let us show them how to correctly dispose of waste, because non-toxic waste that is correctly disposed of is of little environmental concern when compared to waste that litters our natural environment.

I also want to briefly comment on the issues raised by the LGAQ. These are genuine and are of concern. My councils work hard and certainly need a lot more support than they are currently getting. Across Callide there are five different local government areas. The state government has already made it difficult for my local governments and many local governments across Queensland to exist. All these local governments and mayors and councils want to do is do what they know best—and that is look after their local communities. Now the government want to censor them further and censor them for raising issues of genuine concern about bad Labor policy.

 **Ms LAUGA** (Keppel—ALP) (12.19 pm): I rise in this place to speak in support of the Waste Reduction and Recycling and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023. The policy objectives of the bill are to: provide a head of power in the definition of ‘waste’ to prescribe through regulation that a thing is not a waste and move the definition of ‘waste’ from the Environmental Protection Act 1994 to the Waste Reduction and Recycling Act 2011; to remove the automatic levy exemption for clean earth and subsequent removal of the definition of ‘clean earth’; provide the head of power for a ban on the outdoor release of lighter-than-air balloons; provide the ability for the chief executive to make a decision about amending or suspending a resource recovery area declaration and making a payment to a local government; include the circular economy principle as a principle under the waste act; change the

review date for the waste strategy from three to five years; and provide an expiry of 31 December 2025 for the exemption from the ban for an otherwise banned single-use plastic item that is integral to a shelf-ready product.

It was interesting to hear the member for Callide stand up in this place and purport to be speaking about the environment and how we can save the environment. It was really just a recycling of his first speech that he gave in this place, speaking of recycling, telling that story about the fast-food store in Chinchilla. It must have been a copy-and-paste straight out of his first speech. I would love to be a fly on the wall and hear the back-room conversations between the member for Bonney and the member for Callide and how they can actually find common ground on things like recycling, given that one supports Containers for Change and the other one does not.

**Government members** interjected.

**Ms LAUGA:** He does consider it a tax. The Containers for Change is a very popular program in the electorate of Callide.

**A government member:** He is not in touch with his community.

**Ms LAUGA:** He is indeed very out of touch with his community, given that he considers the Containers for Change program a tax. He said in his first speech in this place that it is a shame that people are now picking up bottles and cans on the side of the road. I think it is a wonderful program that sees great benefits not only to our environment but also to the pockets of people, community groups, charities and sporting clubs right across our region, particularly those in Callide. I would hate to think what those sporting clubs and associations would do without the revenue that they receive from the Containers for Change program in the electorate of Callide. I know the electorate of Keppel greatly appreciates the revenue generated through the Containers for Change scheme.


I wonder though, since we are talking about waste, what the member for Callide would consider doing with nuclear waste from the generators that he and the Nationals plan to build in Queensland. The former member for Callide held a nuclear forum in Gladstone last week, talking to the community about the possibility of a nuclear industry in Queensland. It would be great to hear from the member for Callide about how he proposes to recycle or dispose of nuclear waste that his colleague the former member for Callide is now proposing to generate in the state of Queensland.

The Liberals and Nationals will do anything to oppose renewable energy because they are obsessed with building nuclear reactors. They have even been lining up with the Greens Party to delay and deny real action on climate change and, frankly, we are sick of it. Central Queenslanders care about the climate, they care about cost of living, they care about waste reduction and they care about protecting public ownership, but the LNP have a secret plan to take an axe particularly to the cost of living and public ownership.

The LNP's obsession with nuclear has nothing to do with energy security and emissions. It is part of their secret plan to privatise our energy system, delay real action on climate change, and keep energy prices high. I would love to know what the LNP's plan, though, is to dispose of nuclear waste. Perhaps it might be something that they propose to build in as amendments to this bill, as to how nuclear waste should be dealt with if they were to get their way and build generators in Queensland. In contrast, our Queensland Energy and Jobs Plan is all about a future of cheaper, cleaner and secure energy for Queenslanders providing good jobs in new regional industries.

I support this bill. I particularly want to make note of the lighter-than-air balloon releases being banned. We know that balloons are the leading cause of death for migratory sea birds. Also a large number of marine animals ingest these balloons that are let off at particular community events or funerals and that causes them great distress. I know, having visited a number of turtle hospitals, that when these balloons are ingested by these animals it makes it incredibly difficult for them to feed and to survive. These lighter-than-air balloons being banned is a really positive thing for our environment, particularly the marine fauna and flora on the southern Great Barrier Reef.

Whilst I am on my feet, I acknowledge the work of Councillor Neil Fisher from Rockhampton Regional Council. He is the President of Local Authority Waste Management Action Committee. He does an incredible amount of work in terms of waste reduction in our Central Queensland community. He is very passionate about the benefit of waste reduction and recycling policies, and he is a great champion for our community and for the environment in our region. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr WATTS** (Toowoomba North—LNP) (12.26 pm): I wish to make a brief contribution to the Waste Reduction and Recycling and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023. Firstly, let's start with the turtles. I would recommend everybody in Queensland, everybody in Australia, if they get the chance to get up to Bagara and those places. I certainly used to camp up there and would take my kids up there

and look at the turtles. It was a wonderful thing. I think sensible restrictions on balloon release to ensure that these species do not suffer anymore is something that we should be doing. I would add that it certainly needs to be publicised because I think some people may engage in that behaviour, not realising the consequences when quite innocently engaging in that. Clearly, if we are being told it is causing these kinds of problems in the marine environment, then it should be ceased. I certainly support that.

There are a couple of things I would like to look at. The circular economy is one. Recently I have been doing some landscaping. In Toowoomba we have an organisation called Zilch Waste. They take rubble. I broke up a bunch of concrete, put it in a skip, and they came and took it away. Unfortunately for me, I then needed some gravel back, so I then paid them to mulch up the concrete that I sent them and then paid them to bring it back as gravel for me. It seems to be quite a profitable business, I would suggest, but it was also good to know that this was not just going into landfill somewhere and that it was being used in a productive way because it had gone through that circular process: I needed gravel and the concrete I had broken up was of no use.

These are things that we can and should be supporting. Anything we can do to encourage a circular economy where all waste, or so-called waste, that we have presents an opportunity for us to recycle, repurpose and use that resource. That brings me to something that has concerned me greatly over the last few years. I do not think the opportunity has been fully embraced. As people are aware, we have been moving a lot to solar panels and wind turbines all across Queensland, but in particular we see a lot of this coming through Toowoomba as there are some massive opportunities for green energy production. The problem with that is the amount of packaging that comes, for example, with a solar panel and the reprocessing of that and how that is handled. This is material that comes in to Australia from China, and we then have to look at how we can recycle that as we do not want it going into landfill. One of the difficulties you have when you go into regional and remote Queensland with this kind of packaging, as well as other materials, is whether or not there are the facilities to reprocess.

That brings me to the solar panels themselves. My understanding is—and I would love someone to correct me; maybe the minister can—there is nowhere in Queensland to actually reprocess a solar panel. Solar panels comprise a collection of materials that have been put together that have a particular life span and the cost involved in reprocessing that panel is not considered when it is installed. Like I say, we can look at this as an opportunity for Queensland to become a hub for reprocessing these things. As they come to the end of their life, we are going to face the problem of where to put all the solar panels and how we unlock the resources inside the solar panels. My understanding is that currently they need to be chipped up or chemically dissolved and shipped to Japan. That is the closest place where these things can be recycled.

We have some time to deal with this issue, but we need to get on with it because a lot of solar panels have been fitted and a lot of promises were made about how good they are for the environment. This is an environmental disaster coming Queensland's way if we do not work out how to deal with it. Let's see it as an opportunity for resource recovery. Let's work out how to build in the cost of that recycling at the beginning of the process, as is done for other products, and make sure we can deal with that.

It is the same situation with the wind turbines. Anybody who drives along the Warrego Highway late at night, which I do a fair bit as I travel backwards and forwards to Brisbane and other locations, occasionally comes across the transportation of massive wind turbines, all made of carbon fibre and imported from China. The roads are closed down so they can be taken out west and installed.

**Mr Power:** Why do you hate wind turbines?

**Mr WATTS:** I do not hate wind turbines.

**Mr Power:** You do.

**Mr WATTS:** I take the interjection from the member for Logan. I certainly do not hate wind turbines. I think they should be used in a responsible and sensible way. The questions for me are: at the end of the life of those massive blades, how are they recycled, what are we doing with them and where are we putting them? Three or four of them take up a football field. Again, I love to be corrected by the minister but I would love to know and understand Queensland's position on the end of life for what could be a resource if we had the ability to reprocess it.

At the moment it is going to be a waste. What are we doing with it? How are we storing it and how is that protecting our environment in the long term? I ask the minister to please give me the answer because I do not know. I have been trying to find out what we will do with these things at the end of their life, whether it be a solar panel or a wind turbine. I am ambivalent about what source of energy we have, but everything should be able to be managed in our environment. There are two opportunities for

us here in resource recovery, but that is only going to happen if we take some action, scientifically and otherwise, to work out how to recover those resources in Queensland. There are a couple of areas that I am concerned about.

There is another area that I am concerned about. I will quote the LGAQ in making their strong argument about misinformation, which they say should not be used to 'censor councils from making public any concerns about'—

**Mr Power:** That's why you're worried about it.


**Mr WATTS:** It is identical because it is their quote that they gave in a public submission. I cannot change their quote. They state—

The LGAQ rejects any attempts to censor councils from making public any concerns about potential impacts as the sector and the State navigate the revised advance payment trajectory. This submission request that this amendment therefore does not proceed.

This is about making sure there is some openness and transparency. As people know, this government has been in crisis and chaos, so the last thing they want is some transparency and exposure about their failings.

In my remaining time I might go through some of the failings, and these are in relation to their own measures. We find they are not on track to reach the first milestone of 10 per cent reduction in household waste generated per capita. They are not on track to reach 55 per cent of household waste diverted from landfill. They are not on track to reach 65 per cent by 2025 of industrial commercial waste being diverted from landfill. They are not on track to reach 65 per cent of all headline waste diverted from landfill by 2025. They are not on track to reach household recycling targets of 50 per cent by 2025. That is the government's record, and I can understand why they would not want people to talk about that.

What we hear from this chaotic government, which has clearly been in crisis for a long time, is that they love announcements when they can go out there and tell everyone how wonderful it is going to be and how they are going to fix the world. One of the other things they are is incredibly cynical because they then want to hide the evidence that they have failed miserably in reaching their own targets. Either be more realistic and set better targets or do the job properly. What they cannot do or what they should not do as the executive that runs this state is hide the truth from the people of Queensland. If a report is required, publish the report, admit they have failed and either improve or stand aside.

 **Mr CRISAFULLI** (Broadwater—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (12.36 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the Waste Reduction and Recycling and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. I want to start by placing on the record that waste and the way we manage it is a real opportunity for Queensland. It is an opportunity to do the right thing by the environment and it is an opportunity to do the right thing commercially. If we work with industry, if we work with local government, if we work with the community, there is a genuine opportunity for this to be not only the right thing for the environment but also the right thing for our economy. It starts, however, with setting targets and holding people accountable.

Today during question time, again we saw a government that refuses to be held accountable for what they say they are going to do. Every time we ask a question and ask when something will be done, we get a parroted response to do with either a value of money or some other gobbledygook term. However, no minister is ever held accountable for setting a target. When a minister for the environment—or a former environment minister, who was also the minister for youth, but that disappeared because it does not matter anymore apparently—sets nine waste targets and it becomes obvious that only two of them are on track to be met, what do they do?

**Mr Nicholls:** Change the targets.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** They change the targets. Rather than fixing the mechanics of what they are trying to achieve, they just fix the targets.

I want to make a contribution about the percentage of household waste that gets diverted. The promise was to have a 55 per cent diversion rate by 2025. It went backwards every year for three years. Rather than fixing the amount of waste being diverted, the decision was made to fix the targets, and no-one wins when that occurs.

I will make a comment about industry. Industry is yearning for a bit of leadership in this space. At the moment they are getting it from the shadow minister but they are not getting it from the recycling parade of environment ministers in this state. They are looking for someone to listen to them, someone who is prepared to go and sit down and take the time—not race in and race out—to listen to them about the things they want to achieve.



I want to make a contribution about the changes to the definition of 'misinformation'. It has been done without any explanation and no consultation. To listen to the response of the Local Government Association of Queensland to this shows they have predicted exactly what this is about. This is not about tightening a definition; this is about muzzling local government officials. It is in the DNA of this government—

**Mr Power** interjected.


**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Krause): Pause the clock. Member for Logan, you are on a warning. I ask you to leave the chamber for one hour.

*Whereupon the honourable member for Logan withdrew from the chamber at 12.39 pm.*

**Mr CRISAFULLI**: Taking out the waste.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER**: Order, member for Broadwater. Please resume your contribution.

**Mr CRISAFULLI**: When I reflect on what has happened to elected officials and the push for this government to muzzle them, it is not good enough. The environment matters. The opportunity to do the right thing by the environment and the economy is real. We ask the government to set targets and to meet them.

 **Ms SIMPSON** (Maroochydore—LNP) (12.40 pm): I am pleased to speak in the debate of the Waste Reduction and Recycling and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023. Achieving better outcomes requires leadership, strategies that can be implemented and targets that are clearly transparent and not changed simply because the government has no strategy and no competency to achieve those outcomes. If we are truly to see better environmental outcomes, there has to be a better way than we have seen, which is this government changing the targets, hiding reports and massaging the truth. That basically means it is less than honest about the outcomes.

**An opposition member** interjected.

**Ms SIMPSON**: I take that interjection; they are recycling ministers and not necessarily seeing better outcomes. From what we have seen this morning, it is the same talking points in the hands of a different minister—the same excuses and the same lack of care for the outcomes of their actions. I do not think they intend to do harm, but the ethics of not intending to do harm and still doing harm are the same. This government is out of touch in terms of how to drive good outcomes—it just has very nice talking points about its intentions.

I refer to a matter referenced by my colleague the shadow minister for environment, the member for Bonney—that is, the target this government set for the diversion of waste of 55 per cent by 2025. That was in its 2019 strategy, yet in 2023 it has gone backwards. We want to put this under the spotlight, because the government has nice talking points—everything is hearts and flowers, warm fuzzies and puppy dogs—but it is failing in the key areas of target delivery. We have to call it out, because there is a need to drive strategy and be held accountable for good outcomes.

As my colleagues have mentioned, achieving good outcomes requires consultation with those who have the ability to deliver them and effective scrutiny of the best ways to achieve them. Government must work with industry and with local government. The amendment proposed by the government sounds an awful lot like muzzling and gagging local government by seeking to 'tighten up on misinformation'. It sounds like a government that is quite precious about how it allows people to speak. We have seen how the government has mishandled complaints against local government and how local governments have been tied up in the red tape of complaints against them. This government is now providing another mechanism to bind the hands of local government with vague and disingenuous attempts to 'address misinformation'. It is more about gagging them from speaking out.

Good information does need to go into the public arena, but this government is certainly not the gold standard. In fact, it is the lead standard with regard to information. It tends to hide things, then change definitions and not consult with those who are most impacted. The facts that this amendment did not go through a consultation process and that it has been not been able to be adequately explained are red flags. It is, in fact, a warning sign of the government's real intentions. There will be consequences that are adverse to good discussion and debate in the public arena.

I want to address a measure which I know is due to be implemented with a deadline of September of this year. That relates to microbeads or microplastics. I accept that in the plan the ban on microbeads is due to come into effect in September of this year, and I welcome that. I want to highlight one issue. People may still have cupboards of products containing microplastics. They may not have an awareness of what microplastics are and may not know that they have been in cosmetics and cleaning products for some time. I understand that New South Wales has already banned microbeads or microplastics, and a similar ban is due to come into effect in Queensland in a few months time. It really

is quite insidious how many plastics are within so many products. People may have a cosmetic or a cleaning product and not be aware of what it contains. You have to strain your eyesight to read the ingredient list for these products, let alone to understand what they are. That is a positive step forward, but we need more education about the whole-of-life impact of not just these products but also many other products—the detrimental impact not only on our environment but also potentially on human wellbeing.

Studies certainly have demonstrated that microplastics—and other types of plastics that are not micro—have resulted in tragic consequences within the marine system. There are growing bodies of evidence about microplastics being ingested by human beings. We still do not know the full impact of some of these microplastics on human wellbeing. There is research that has alluded to endocrine disrupters. There is research that has alluded to the impact of almost a type of oestrogen on human health. Let that research be presented.


The main thing I want to highlight today is that education is key so that people have awareness about the choices we can make. There is a need for legislation to drive change. Sometimes personal choice is not enough to drive outcomes, particularly in supply chains, when people may not know what is in the product and may not have a way to avoid it because of the types of products being produced.

There is a need to start looking more intently at whole-of-life systems for some increasingly popular products. Solar panels have been mentioned. They have been part of our lives for some time. It is not only the packaging but also the lack of recycling that is available in this country for solar panels. Most of us would have had solar panels on our roofs or in our communities for decades, but there is no ability to have them recycled. You only need a hailstorm in a community to see an awful lot of these panels being damaged before their so-called end of life. This is an issue we need to address. There needs to be more systems in place, and that requires leadership from government, working with industry in consultation, to drive the best outcomes.

Wind turbines have also been mentioned. Their effect might be quite a few years down the track. Parts of Queensland have seen that when approvals for major solar farms have been granted a whole-of-life approach has not been taken—it is different from the process that you would expect to apply to, say, a mine—in terms of rehabilitation and dealing with products when they reach the end of their life. I believe that is something that does need the leadership and attention of government so that it is not kicked down the road, becoming a bigger problem to deal with.

I certainly support moves with regard to the circular economy, but sometimes we have to give credit to earlier generations that did not have a lot of money and had different consumption patterns and, consequently, they wasted very little. There are generations of older Australians who did not waste energy—and it is a lot more expensive today—and who did not waste their consumables because they did not have a lot of them. They certainly did not have the wrapping that was around food that we have today.

Maybe we have to learn from some of these previous generations about what it is to think about avoiding the extraneous wrapping that there is around household products and to look for ways that we can better address household waste in our own homes. Food waste may not be part of this bill, but they certainly knew how to drive economic values and we need to give them credit in that a circular economy has been done perhaps in different ways by previous generations and we can learn from them.

 **Mr HART** (Burleigh—LNP) (12.50 pm): I rise to contribute to the debate on the Waste Reduction and Recycling and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023. Today we have heard from a number of members about what this bill is about. I want to focus my contribution on the removal of the automatic levy exemption for clean earth, the changes that have been made to rules around local governments and what they can and cannot say and generally talk about the government's failures on recycling.

We all know that those failures are far and wide, and we have heard other members talking today about the 126 million plastic poppers that were shipped overseas because there is, quite frankly, no recycling available in this country yet. I fear that that applies to a lot of the things that members of the general public think that they are putting into their recycling bins so that they may end up being recycled in some other fashion. Quite frankly, the intent of the waste levy was to provide some of this recycling and the government has just failed and failed miserably at that. It has had a number of years to get these recycling systems in place and it has not managed to do it.

We have heard that 126 million poppers have gone overseas somewhere and we do not know what has happened to them. We do not know if they have ended up in landfill. I would not mind hearing whether the minister can give us a guarantee that every other thing that we put in our bins that we think is being recycled in Queensland has not—

**Ms Linard** interjected.

**Mr HART:**—any minister will do—ended up in landfill. If one of the ministers could give me a guarantee that these things that people think are ending up being recycled are not ending up in landfill, I will sleep much better at night.

With regard to the changes that the government is making around the so-called misinformation that local governments may put in place, it is a shame that this government cannot accept that our elected local government officials are not misleading the people of Queensland. I imagine that this change has fully come around because local governments have been disclosing on their rates bills for a number of years now the state government bulk water supply and the government just does not like that. Local governments have been able to point out that the majority of the increase in costs has been led by the state because it could not manage state bulk water in an economical fashion and we all know the amount of debt that it has left behind.

To put these impositions on local government to the stage where a bureaucrat somewhere can make a decision that a local government should not get its money anymore because it has somehow misled the people of its electorate by telling them what this government is up to is just an absolute disgrace. To add to that, the government did not even talk to the LGAQ or local government about these changes before it made them. This is something that this government just keeps doing over and over again.

The government wants to talk about the circular economy. The only thing that has been going around and around in circles lately is the Queensland cabinet. We see ministers told at the last minute to get up and take a step to the left and then sit down again and the Premier has figured out which seat they are occupying and that is the ministry. That has to be pretty disappointing, I would have thought, for the members of the backbench here who apparently do not have the talent to get into cabinet. Then again, maybe that is because it is the unions that make the decisions in this state and not the government. We saw a union heavyweight hanging around 1 William Street just before these decisions were taken.

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

**Mr HART:** I will move back to the bill.


**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Krause): Pause the clock. What is your point of order, Minister?

**Mr BUTCHER:** I think you know what my point of order is—relevance. He needs to get back to the long title of the bill.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Burleigh, I think he may have a point. Could you bring your comments back to the bill or otherwise sit down?

**Mr HART:** Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. I have said all I want to say about the government's circular economy.

With regard to clean earth, this is another issue which greatly affects my electorate on the Gold Coast because there are lots of beachfront developments happening. Clean fill is coming out of the ground there and all of a sudden that automatic exemption is not happening anymore. There is no clear process that I can see for people to make that application, so, again, if the minister could explain to us how that process works that would be very beneficial to the people on the Gold Coast.

 **Mr BOOTHMAN** (Theodore—LNP) (12.56 pm): Today I rise to make a contribution to the debate on the Waste Reduction and Recycling and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023. At the outset I want to emphasise some of the comments that the member for Gympie made about the solar panels in his electorate which were heavily damaged on 8 December last year. What happens to solar panels after they have been damaged? Where do they go? Is there any type of recycling? That is something that I would love to hear the minister discuss to let residents know what happens to them.

At the 2020 election the Gold Coast experienced a severe hail storm which damaged a lot of vehicles. The cars of volunteers from both the LNP and the Labor Party were certainly peppered and quite a fair few were damaged. I often think to myself, 'What happens with the solar panels after all of the insurance claims to replace them?' It is a concern that many residents raise. With the circular economy, what actually happens with them? Are they getting recycled or are they just going straight into landfill?

I also want to touch on the topic of the poppers. My schools actively work with a recycling program to recycle through Containers for Change. I give out yellow bins for the schools so that the kids can put their containers in the bins. As the P&Cs can attest, sometimes they put a bit more than just products for recycling in there—which drives the P&C ladies absolutely bonkers—but they would love to know

what happens with them. An *Australian* report recently stated that all of these poppers are heading to India and I think that it would devastate a lot of children in our schools to know that we are sending our waste problems overseas to India. Many young people would be completely devastated with that fact. We need to address this and we need to—

**Mr Nicholls:** It's not very neighbourly.

**Mr BOOTHMAN:** Yes, it is not very neighbourly. This is an issue that students would be horrified about.


**Government members** interjected.

**Mr BOOTHMAN:** Those opposite can complain, but it was the LNP back in 2016 that came up with the idea of containers for change. The member for Moggill and the member for Clayfield were the leaders at the time. It took the Labor Party years to implement its own Containers for Change, but if it did what the LNP did at that time we would have had all of this solved long before this. It just shows us that those opposite always talk about these targets but never meet them. They never meet these targets. Only two out of nine targets that the government put forward in terms of recycling have been met. All the rest have not been met, so it is all hearsay.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Krause): Member for Theodore, it is a matter of great regret that it is now one o'clock and time for the lunch adjournment.

Sitting suspended from 1.00 pm to 2.00 pm.

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

 **Hon. LM LINARD** (Nudgee—ALP) (Minister for the Environment and the Great Barrier Reef, Minister for Science and Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (2.00 pm), in reply: First of all, I thank all honourable members for their participation in the debate on the Waste Reduction and Recycling and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. Before summing up the debate, I remind the House just how far Queensland has come since the dark days of the Newman LNP government when it comes to managing our waste and recovering the value from the waste we cannot avoid. Not only did Campbell Newman, David Crisafulli, Jarrod Bleijie and the rest of the LNP cabinet lack a vision in this important policy area; they introduced policies that set Queensland back. Their removal of the waste levy resulted in record levels of waste flowing across the border and being dumped here in Queensland, impacting communities and our beautiful environment. There was no incentive for the private sector to invest in the recycling facilities that a growing state needed and there was only a paltry government investment in new recycling infrastructure. The former LNP environment minister, the member for Glass House, backflipped on introducing a ban on harmful single-use plastic shopping bags—the same bags that have such devastating impacts on our wildlife and waterways.

The track record of the Palaszczuk government provides a clear contrast. Since we reintroduced the waste levy, the interstate transfer of waste is down 62 per cent and we are no longer a dumping ground for other states. The levy also sends a vital signal to encourage private investment in new recycling and remanufacturing capacity. Importantly, we have kept the commitments we made to Queenslanders when the levy was reintroduced. We made a commitment to reinvest at least 70 per cent of the levy revenue back into waste management and resource recovery initiatives and other environmental programs, and we committed to ensuring that there would be no direct cost to households as a result of the levy. We have done this through the annual payments to local governments so that households have not been impacted and we are working alongside industry and local governments to boost recycling.

Through the Resource Recovery Industry Development Program, 29 businesses and local government projects were supported with \$34 million worth of investment. An additional 1.34 million tonnes of waste will be diverted from landfill every year. The program has helped to attract \$193.8 million in private sector investment and create more than 360 jobs across Queensland. Our Food Waste for Healthy Soils Fund will support an additional 139,000 tonnes of organic waste to be processed each year, with 171 jobs created during the construction of new and expanded facilities and 33 jobs ongoing. Around 80,000 tonnes of additional recyclables were transported from regional and remote Queensland to processing facilities through the Regional Recycling Transport Assistance Package. That material might otherwise have ended up in landfill if not for this funding support.

The total volumes of both commercial and industrial waste recovered in Queensland improved ahead of our 2025 target trajectory over the first two years of the levy. However, our third year of data demonstrated a change in commercial and industrial waste that may be related to changed work and

consumption behaviours during the COVID response period. We know we need to do more, particularly around municipal solid waste and commercial and industrial waste. That is why we have worked closely with local governments across the state to develop regional waste plans. We will back the implementation of those plans through the \$1.1 billion Recycling and Jobs Fund and it does not stop there. So far, nearly eight billion containers have been collected through the container refund scheme. This is great for the environment and great for Queenslanders. Around \$620 million in refunds have been received by individual customers and more than \$10 million has gone to charities and community organisations. Local governments and material recovery facility operators share in the refund amount for containers that come through the kerbside collection system.

The WWF plastic scorecard already ranks Queensland second amongst states and territories in phasing out harmful single-use plastics. Our five-year road map and this legislation will see further bans introduced that will ensure we remain a leader in this space. We are acting, not dithering, and we are starting to see clear and measurable results. We are boosting resource recovery and helping to create new jobs and new opportunities for people to participate in recycling and the circular economy, not talking down Queenslanders' action on recycling.

The bill removes the automatic levy exemption for clean earth and subsequently removes the definition of 'clean earth', to take effect from 1 July. It bans the outdoor release of lighter-than-air balloons from 1 September and the amendments will also provide a head of power in the definition of 'waste' to enable a thing to be prescribed by regulation to not be a waste. Further, the bill outlines the issues to be considered before the minister can recommend the making of a regulation, including consultation on the proposed change, consideration of the results of consultation and whether the proposed changes achieve the objectives of the Waste Reduction and Recycling Act 2011 and the Environmental Protection Act 1994. The definition of 'waste' will be moved from the Environmental Protection Act to the Waste Reduction and Recycling Act.

This bill will include the circular economy principle as a principle under the Waste Reduction and Recycling Act and it will include the circular economy as a consideration in preparing a waste management strategy. Amendments in this bill will authorise the chief executive of the Department of Environment and Science to make a decision about amending or suspending a resource recovery area declaration and making a payment to a local government, including to mitigate the direct effects of the waste levy on households in a local government area. Under the bill, the review period for the state's waste management strategy will expand from three to five years. This bill will set an expiry date of 31 December 2025 for the exemption from the ban for a single-use plastic item that is an integral part of a shelf-ready product.

I will turn to some of the issues raised by members opposite. The member for Nanango pleaded for action in relation to solar panels, as did a number of other members. It would have been helpful if she had picked up the phone and pleaded with her federal LNP colleagues to act when they were in power. I will be clear: it was the federal LNP government, led by Scott Morrison, that did nothing to roll out a federal solar panel product stewardship program. In May 2018 there was an assessment of options to progress a national approach for PV systems in Australia.

We know that Queenslanders love the sunshine and have embraced solar. Per capita, Queensland has the highest installed panel capacity of all states and territories of Australia and in the world, including households, commercial premises and solar farms. The recovery and recycling of solar panels has been identified by the government and stakeholders, including local governments, as a priority end-of-life product. That is why the Palaszczuk government is working with industry to roll out a national first: a pilot solar panel product stewardship program led by industry. Once again, the LNP are so focused on whining that they miss the news and the real action that Queenslanders are taking.

I also want to address specific questions asked by the member for Bonney about clean earth. Yes, clean earth can be used for resource recovery activities. We want to see the recovery and re-use of clean earth maximised, and that is the core intent of placing a levy on disposal. Clean earth can also be used operationally, specifically at landfill sites where it can be used without the levy being incurred when the operator holds an operational purpose exemption. Landfill operators do not need to remove stockpiles of clean earth by 1 July and may continue to receive and use clean earth without paying a levy where an operational purpose exemption is held from 1 July onwards. I assure the House that clean earth material bought for use as a resource is not a waste. Additionally, I will be clear that, as was the case before the bill, the use of clean earth for fill at any location where no other wastes are included does not constitute a waste disposal activity by virtue of the existing definitions within the Environmental Protection Regulation 2019.

On the issue of waste targets, the member for Moggill claimed that Queensland has gone backwards, but the real question is: from where exactly? Members of the LNP have such short memories—or maybe they just hope that we do. Let me recap. Between 2014-15—the final year of the Newman government—and 2021-22—the latest publicly reported data—commercial and industrial recovery rates went up eight per cent, to 49 per cent, and construction and demolition recovery rates were up 22 per cent, to 78 per cent. It is only through the Palaszczuk government's actions, including the reintroduction of the waste levy, that we have seen the very significant improvement in C&I recycling rates and C&D recycling rates that have already exceeded the 2025 target.

We have once again heard from LNP members that the draft strategy review report was hidden to keep quiet the story about Queensland's progress towards its targets. This is rubbish. Having completed its annual recycling and waste report on time and published it in December 2022, it is a nonsense to claim that the department was hiding data from the public. The department could have done the easy thing and published the report with just two years data showing we were largely on track for 2025 targets apart from municipal solid waste. Instead, it was more accountable and transparent by taking the time to revise the report to ensure it reflects the story that the third year of data tells. This forms the basis of the proposed amendment in this bill to change the strategy review period from three years to five—not to hide the data but to tell the full story and ensure it is meaningful.

I also note that the shadow minister has been circulating amendments to the bill, one of which I have mentioned in my speech already and which the government will be moving and another which we will not be supporting. To be clear, this bill does not in any way censor local government. For the LNP to suggest this is a disgrace. Annual payments are directly linked with households. In fact, the Queensland government is the only state to pay councils these annual payments. The purpose of the annual payment is to mitigate the impact of the levy on households. Like all disputed administrative decisions, should a council wish to dispute the decision it can request a review, go to a judicial review and complain of course to the Ombudsman.

In respect of consultation with the LGAQ, a number of comments were made by members. In addition to the standing monthly waste and resource recovery working group meeting that LGAQ, WRIQ and WMRR are attending, I would like to commend DES for delivering the following consultation activities with those three bodies, including the LGAQ. The first is the resource recovery round table. Standing up this ministerial round table brought together 17 critical stakeholders across industry, retailers, councils and ENGOs. This group has met three times with stakeholders connecting from across the country. The most recent meeting was only a few weeks ago.

I acknowledge and commend DES for using this forum to engage with stakeholders. I take on the feedback from others where it was raised that that has not been occurring. It is important that there is ongoing consultation with these important groups. It is an expectation I have of the department, as I know the previous minister did. I commend DES for using the forum to engage with stakeholders. Stakeholders were notified of the levy efficacy review and invited to provide formal feedback through written submissions. They were also offered the opportunity to attend an information session on the review. Three peak bodies and their members attended the information sessions.

In respect of the clean earth process consultation, the LGAQ stood up with the previous minister in regard to this in December 2021. Stakeholders including the mayors were briefed on the announcement by the previous minister. The same key stakeholders were invited to attend a briefing regarding the proposed regulatory changes including the removal of the clean earth levy exemption. A further workshop was delivered and attended by the same three peak bodies on 5 December 2022. On 22 February this year, immediately following introduction of the bill, key stakeholders were contacted by the department and verbally briefed on the bill. That consultation has been ongoing, so I reject the comments that there has not been any discussion among the department and those important key bodies.

The Waste Reduction and Recycling Act provides a contemporary legislative framework for waste management and resource recovery in Queensland. The act provides for: consideration of the waste and resource management hierarchy and user-pays and polluter-pays principles; introduces a framework whereby waste can become an end-of-waste resource; allows for the development of product stewardship arrangements; introduces a ban on single-use plastic items including lightweight single-use shopping bags; and introduces the container refund scheme. Queenslanders have been at the forefront of change, directly benefiting from initiatives like the container refund scheme and Containers for Change and have welcomed bans on single-use plastic items.

Amendments proposed in this bill continue to strengthen the waste management legislative framework and to move towards a circular economy. Incorporating circular economy principles in the act will provide consistency with Queensland's Waste Management and Resource Recovery Strategy but also embed circular economy considerations as part of decision-making processes. Diverting clean earth from disposal by removing the levy exemption encourages alternative beneficial uses. The ban on the release of lighter-than-air balloons will prevent further harm to animals, particularly marine life. Avoiding, re-using and recycling waste to the greatest extent possible brings many opportunities for Queenslanders and Queensland businesses through jobs and more industries while reducing our impact on the environment.

In closing, I thank officers from the Office of Circular Economy in the Department of Environment and Science for their work in developing this bill. I would also again like to thank the chair, the member for Thuringowa, and members of the Health and Environment Committee for their consideration of the bill and thank all submitters to the bill inquiry. Again, I acknowledge the former minister's leadership with regard to the amendments in the bill before the House. I commend the bill to the House.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

### Consideration in Detail

Clauses 1 to 16, as read, agreed to.

Clause 17—



**Mr O'CONNOR** (2.16 pm): I move the following amendment—

**1 Clause 17 (Replacement of s 73D (Annual payment to local governments))**

Page 18, lines 25 and 26, from 'or households' to 'area'—  
*omit.*

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

*Tabled paper:* Waste Reduction and Recycling and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023, explanatory notes to Mr Sam O'Connor's amendments [\[696\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* Waste Reduction and Recycling and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023, statement of compatibility with human rights contained in Mr Sam O'Connor's amendments [\[697\]](#).

The amendment to clause 17 seeks to remove lines 25 and 26. The opposition is moving this amendment because we need to carefully consider any curtailing of the freedom of elected local government representatives to make comments and even criticise the government if they feel they have to. I believe that the current misinformation provisions in the act are adequate. We oppose the expansion this bill is trying to bring in. False or misleading statements cannot and should not be made. This levy should not be incorrectly blamed for rates increasing while councils are getting such large advance payments, but these amendments are unnecessary and could impact freedom of speech for councillors.

The advance payments are tapering off towards the end of this decade and there will be big challenges as we navigate the pathway forward for our waste system, but we should view local government as a genuine partner. We should work with them on this transition. We should not further curtail their ability to comment on this important policy area. If we on this side of the House are fortunate to be trusted by Queenslanders to become the next government of Queensland, we will not fear feedback from councillors.

The other issue with this is the way that it happened. On so many pieces of legislation and in so many other actions by the former minister for the environment there was a complete failure to consult, but this is one of the most staggering cases. The LGAQ was not consulted on these changes. It was completely blindsided. It said—

The LGAQ rejects any attempts to censor councils from making public any concerns about potential impacts as the sector and the State navigate the revised advance payment trajectory. This submission requests that this amendment therefore does not proceed.

These changes were not even explained in the explanatory notes to this bill and they were not even mentioned in the now former minister's introductory speech. That is not good enough. It is because of this bad approach that Queensland is failing so badly in so many of these waste targets.

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

**AYES, 36:**

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

**KAP, 2**—Dametto, Knuth.

**PHON, 1**—Andrew.

**Ind, 1**—Bolton.

**NOES, 47:**

**ALP, 47**—Bailey, Boyd, Brown, Butcher, Crawford, D'Ath, de Brenni, Dick, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Furner, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Healy, Hinchliffe, Howard, Hunt, A. King, S. King, Lauga, Linard, Lui, Madden, Martin, McCallum, McMahon, McMillan, Mellish, Miles, Mullen, O'Rourke, Pease, Pugh, Richards, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Scanlon, Skelton, Smith, Stewart, Sullivan, Tantari, Walker, Whiting.

Pairs: Bush, Gerber; Pitt, Millar.

Resolved in the negative.

Non-government amendment (Mr O'Connor) negatived.

Clause 17, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 18 and 19, as read, agreed to.

Insertion of new clause—

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** I note that the minister's amendment No. 1 and the member for Bonney's amendment No. 2 are identical and seek to amend the bill at the same point. As this is a government bill, the practice is that the government amendment will be moved first. Once the House makes a decision on the minister's amendment, the member for Bonney will not be able to move his amendment, pursuant to standing order 150.



**Ms LINARD** (2.25 pm): I seek leave to move an amendment outside the long title of the bill.

Leave granted.

**Ms LINARD:** I move the following amendment—

**1 After clause 19**

Page 19, after line 29—

*insert—*

**19A Amendment of s 126 (Review of plan)**

Section 126, '3 years'—

*omit, insert—*

5 years

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

*Tabled paper:* Waste Reduction and Recycling and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023, explanatory notes to Hon. Leanne Linard's amendments [698].

*Tabled paper:* Waste Reduction and Recycling and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023, statement of compatibility with human rights contained in Hon. Leanne Linard's amendments [699].

Amendment 1 inserts new clause 19A into the bill and will amend section 126 of the Waste Reduction and Recycling Act 2011 to change the review period for a local government to review the local government's waste reduction and recycling plan from three to five years. The purpose of this amendment is to create alignment with the state waste strategy review period, which this bill proposes to change to five years. This amendment will ensure that more time is provided for consideration of the effect of initiatives and local government private sector investments in helping to achieve the goals and objectives of the local government's plan and the state's waste strategy.

**Mr O'CONNOR:** The opposition will obviously support this amendment because it is the one we were going to move ourselves. We never should have been in the situation where the government was even proposing to have different requirements for local governments than it has for itself. If the former minister had consulted with the LGAQ, we never would have had to be here to have this amendment moved. I thank the minister for moving the amendment we were proposing. We will be supporting it.

Amendment agreed to.



Insertion of new clause—



**Ms LINARD** (2.26 pm): I seek leave to move an amendment outside the long title of the bill.

Leave granted.

**Ms LINARD:** I move the following amendment—

**2 After clause 19**

Page 19, after line 29—

*insert—*

**19B Amendment of s 136 (Review of plan)**

Section 136, '3 years'—

*omit, insert—*

5 years

Amendment 2 inserts new clause 19B into the bill and will amend section 136 of the Waste Reduction and Recycling Act 2011 to change the review period for reviewing a state entity's waste reduction and recycling plan from three to five years. The purpose of this amendment is to create alignment with the state waste strategy review period, which this bill proposes to change to five years. The amendment will ensure that more time is provided for consideration of the effect of initiatives and investments in helping to achieve the goals and objectives of the state entity's plan and the state's waste strategy.

Amendment agreed to.

Clauses 20 to 25, as read, agreed to.

Schedule, as read, agreed to.

### Third Reading



**Hon. LM LINARD** (Nudgee—ALP) (Minister for the Environment and the Great Barrier Reef, Minister for Science and Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (2.28 pm): I move—

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

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a third time.

### Long Title



**Hon. LM LINARD** (Nudgee—ALP) (Minister for the Environment and the Great Barrier Reef, Minister for Science and Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (2.28 pm): I move—

That the long title of the bill be agreed to.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

## TOBACCO AND OTHER SMOKING PRODUCTS AMENDMENT BILL

### Second Reading

Resumed from 14 March (see p. 333).



**Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (Minister for Health, Mental Health and Ambulance Services and Minister for Women) (2.29 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a second time.

On 14 March 2023 the Tobacco and Other Smoking Products Amendment Bill 2023 was introduced. The bill was referred to the Health and Environment Committee for consideration. On 5 May 2023 the committee tabled its report on the bill, making three recommendations. The first recommendation was that the bill be passed. I thank the committee for its thorough consideration of the bill. I now table the government response to their recommendations, supporting the recommendations in principle.

*Tabled paper.* Health and Environment Committee: Report No. 32, 57th Parliament—Tobacco and Other Smoking Products Amendment Bill 2023, government response [700].

I will also be moving some minor amendments during consideration in detail to address drafting issues.

Smoking remains the leading cause of preventable disease and deaths in Australia. In the past 25 years we have seen a steady downward trend in smoking in Queensland which is a direct result of concerted public health efforts across various levels of government over many years. We also committed ahead of the 2020 election to build on this record by strengthening tobacco legislation and increasing smoke-free places in this state. However, we have recently seen a rapid increase in the use of e-cigarettes and vapes and the illegal tobacco trade, both of which threaten the progress that has been made.

This bill will strengthen and modernise Queensland's tobacco and smoking products legislation and increase smoke-free public places. It will also make some immediate reforms to e-cigarette laws which will lay the groundwork for further reforms including in response to the Health and Environment Committee's inquiry. I will now turn to the key amendments in the bill.

In line with every state and territory other than Victoria, the bill introduces a licensing scheme for wholesale and retail sellers of smoking products. A special retail licence will also be available for liquor licensed premises in line with their existing licences. In addition, and in keeping with modern business practice, the licensing requirement will also apply to online shops.

Before being granted a licence, applicants must be assessed as being fit and proper to hold the licence. To ensure information about licensed sellers remains up to date and easily accessible, licences must be renewed every year and a public register of licences will be maintained. The application and renewal fees will be \$475 for a retail licence and \$675 for a wholesale licence. These fees will provide full cost recovery of delivering the scheme.

Businesses will have until 1 September 2024 to obtain a licence. From that date, the penalty for unlicensed wholesale or retail sale of smoking products will be 1,000 penalty units. The licensing scheme will provide Queensland Health with improved oversight of the smoking product industry, allowing it to engage better with sellers and design targeted enforcement activities. Retail stakeholders including the Australian Association of Convenience Stores and the Australian Lottery and Newsagents' Association have welcomed this reform as a way of ensuring only legitimate businesses are authorised to sell smoking products.

The licensing scheme established under the bill will complement the federal government's recent announcement that it will prohibit e-cigarette sales. The framework under this bill will be a way we can monitor and enforce compliance with the federal prohibition. If a retail licensee is found selling e-cigarettes in breach of this prohibition, or otherwise contravenes the act, the chief executive may suspend or cancel the licence. The bill facilitates federal policy change by making special provision for pharmacies to dispense on-prescription e-liquids and administration devices without needing a retail licence.

The new licensing scheme will also assist Queensland to combat the trade in illicit tobacco. These are smoking products which do not comply with Commonwealth requirements for plain packaging and health warnings including loose-leaf chop-chop grown overseas and illegally imported cigarettes. As no excise tax is paid on illicit tobacco, it may be sold very cheaply—at the expense of compliant businesses and taxpayers. The bill makes it an offence under Queensland law to supply illicit tobacco or for a retailer to possess illicit tobacco at their premises. This will empower Queensland Health to take direct action to enforce the Commonwealth requirements including forfeiture of seized illicit tobacco.

A supplier in breach of these new offences will face significant penalties. The breach may also be grounds for denying them a wholesale or retail licence or for suspending or cancelling a licence they already hold. The illicit tobacco provisions will also support new federal requirements for e-cigarettes including plain packaging, reduced nicotine concentrations and limited permissible flavours.

Specifically, the bill allows the definition of 'illicit tobacco' to be updated by regulation to include e-cigarettes or vapes which do not comply with Commonwealth requirements that may be introduced. This will mean all the illicit tobacco enforcement measures, including forfeiture of seized products and suspension or cancellation of retail licences, would also apply to businesses selling noncompliant e-cigarettes and vapes.

To effectively monitor and enforce compliance with both of these new offences and existing offences in the act, the bill provides authorised persons with expanded powers. For example, they will be able issue an improvement notice to immediately prohibit an unlawful activity which may have the practical effect of shutting down a noncompliant business.

To further assist authorised persons to enforce the new offences, the bill deems police officers to be authorised persons. This will formalise the role police already play in supporting efforts to combat serious smoking product offences. The bill also introduces information-sharing provisions to allow the chief executive to share intelligence with other state and Commonwealth law enforcement agencies.

The bill also clarifies and modernises the advertising, display and promotion restrictions in the act, especially where businesses have found ways of circumventing existing restrictions. For example, the bill clarifies that the existing advertising restrictions apply to online shops selling smoking products and prohibits using multiple business names to refer to different smoking products.

The bill will further protect children from exposure to smoking products. For example, we know that where people who are under 18 sell smoking products they may start to view smoking as normal behaviour. For this reason, the bill will prohibit the supply and handling of these products by children in the course of their employment. It will also remove an exemption that allows parents to supply smoking products to children without breaching the act. This important change brings Queensland into line with other Australian jurisdictions.

The bill will also protect children and families from exposure to harmful second-hand smoke by extending existing smoking bans to new situations where emerging or continuing public health risks have been identified. The bill prohibits smoking at organised children's outdoor activities such as Scouts or Girl Guides and at car parks adjacent to a school.

Other extended smoking bans in the bill increase protections at public places where families and the community gather. For example, the existing smoking ban at an outdoor eating or drinking place will be extended to include a no-smoking buffer zone around its perimeter. Similarly, new smoking bans will be introduced for outdoor markets, both inside the place and around any defined entrance or exit.

For liquor licensed premises, the bill removes the temptation posed by tobacco product vending machines by restricting the sale of smoking products to a service area. If the venue has a designated outdoor smoking area, the bill expands the existing no-smoking buffer zone requirements around it and makes it an offence for the liquor licensee to allow a child to remain in a designated outdoor smoking area.

I want to again thank the Health and Environment Committee for their thorough consideration of the bill. I want to thank the stakeholders who made submissions to the committee's inquiry including No More Butts, the Australian Medical Association, the Lung Foundation and the Cancer Council.

I now turn to the Health and Environment Committee's report and recommendations on the bill. As previously noted, the committee's first recommendation was that the bill be passed.


Recommendation 2 went to better aligning the Tobacco and Other Smoking Products Act and the Medicines and Poisons Act to remove barriers to executing warrants, searching premises and seizing contraband items. Queensland Health has established an internal working group to better understand how the powers under these two acts apply and interact in practical situations. It is intended that this working group will develop guidelines for the most effective use of these powers such as simplified and standardise processes for seizing evidence and applying for warrants. It is also intended that the working group may recommend amendments to either or both of the acts if required. In the interim, the bill facilitates stronger enforcement action by providing authorised persons with expanded powers. This will be complemented by increased compliance activities across Queensland.

Recommendation 3 was that the government consider resourcing enhanced and coordinated enforcement efforts targeting illicit tobacco and e-cigarette markets. Queensland Health is developing a monitoring and evaluation plan to assess the entire enforcement program, and identify and implement any operational revisions needed.

As I noted earlier, the bill promotes a more coordinated approach to enforcement between state agencies and between the state and the Commonwealth. For example, the bill deems police officers to be authorised persons to enforce the new offences of unlicensed sale of smoking products and supply of illicit tobacco. The bill also allows the chief executive to share compliance intelligence with other state and Commonwealth law enforcement agencies including the Queensland Police Service.

In closing, I again want to thank the Health and Environment Committee for its careful consideration of the bill. I look forward to the outcomes of the committee's inquiry into reducing the rates of e-cigarette use in Queensland when the committee tables its report in August.

The Palaszczuk government is committed to strengthening public health protections for all Queenslanders but particularly families and children. Queensland's smoking laws are comprehensive and among the strongest in the world. This bill will ensure that we stay this way, by expanding smoke-free places across the state, enhancing monitoring and enforcement of the retail industry, and supporting efforts to combat the trade in illicit tobacco. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Ms BATES** (Mudgeeraba—LNP) (2.39 pm): I rise to give my contribution to the Tobacco and Other Smoking Products Amendment Bill 2023. All of us in this place know the negative and damaging effects of smoking, and after many long years of public campaigns and public health efforts so too do the overwhelming majority of Queenslanders. Even with the many gains made over many years, the effects of smoking still loom large over our community. Preventable disease and death and the subsequent economic flow-on effects of that are costly. They are costly on a very personal level; for example, the trials and tribulations of having a loved one who is unwell because of smoking. The flow-on effects are costly on a macro level as well. It costs Queensland and Queenslanders somewhere in the order of potentially \$30 billion each year for things like the cost to treat and manage the associated illnesses which can arise from smoking. That is significant, and those numbers alone should be a deterrent to anyone who is even thinking about taking up smoking.

It is also just one part of the reason why the opposition will not oppose the passage of this bill through the House. It is not all adversarial in this place, and as a constructive and responsible opposition we will never stand in the way of things that make sense. The bill is largely uncontroversial and common sense. Increasing deterrents for smoking and adapting legislation to try and combat modern trends is a sensible move by the government. My colleagues and I acknowledge the government's intent to modernise the rules, adapt to changes and ensure that the work done to deter and reduce smoking across Queensland continues.

It is no secret that smoking is more prevalent amongst our First Nation population, lower socio-economic populations and rural and remote populations. We know that the health outcomes for each of these cohorts is already below that of other groups in Queensland, so efforts made to try and limit the uptake and prevalence of smoking, particularly amongst these groups within our community, are important. Above all, the changes to protect children and families from the effects of smoking as a result of things like second-hand smoke are good. I do not think many Queenslanders would disagree with that, and we as the opposition certainly do not, which again is why the opposition will not oppose this bill.

Turning to the bill itself, it amends the Tobacco and Other Smoking Products Act 1998. The provisions included as part of the bill include: establishing a licensing scheme for the wholesale and retail sale of smoking products and introducing new penalties for a failure to comply with the licensing scheme and new offences, including prohibiting the supply of smoking products by children and prohibiting the supply of smoking products to children by parents and guardians; enabling Queensland Health to monitor compliance with Commonwealth requirements for smoking products and improve intelligence-sharing with other state, territory and Commonwealth law enforcement agencies; modernising and clarifying the requirements for advertising, display and promotion of smoking products, including their application to online trading; expanding smoke-free public spaces, including community spaces for children, including prohibiting smoking at carparks adjacent to schools; enhancing offences protecting children from the dangers of smoking, including prohibiting children from being in a designated outdoor smoking area; and improving protections at liquor licensed premises, including tighter requirements for smoking areas and moving tobacco product vending machines to areas which cannot be accessed by patrons. The bill will also prohibit smoking in national parks and at places like outdoor markets, which of course we know are both family-friendly environments.

Unlike a great deal of the government's election commitments which remain in tatters, this legislation actually does try to meet two 2020 election commitments made by the government: to strengthen the retail supply, advertising and promotion provisions in the act and take direct action on illicit tobacco; and increase smoke-free public places. It is rare, but I will give the government some credit here. I acknowledge this legislation actually does try to meet a commitment made by the government, but just like my credit being rare, so too are election promises kept by those opposite. Remember the hospitals those opposite promised last election that are not really hospitals or the police they promised? Of course, now we know they are only funded positions, not actual officers. How could I forget?

**Ms FARMER:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I seek your ruling on relevance.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Lister): Member for Mudgeeraba, given your position as the shadow minister, the chair will usually afford you a bit of latitude. I would ask you to be mindful of relevance and encourage you to come back to the long title of the bill.

**Ms BATES:** The minister jumped a bit too early. I guess they had to get one eventually, but do not be fooled because it comes with some strings attached. I say that because there are very genuine concerns about how, and even if, the legislative changes can be enforced. I will come to that later. The bill itself is hardly a game changer, but it is an attempt at progress on trying to protect people from smoking and deter people from starting to smoke in the first place.

The Health and Environment Committee considered the bill. There were three recommendations made by the committee (1) that the bill be passed; (2) the improved alignment of the Medicines and Poisons Act 2019 and the Tobacco and Other Smoking Products Act 1998 to remove barriers to executing warrants, searching premises and seizing contraband items; and (3) that the government fully consider resourcing enhanced enforcement efforts coordinated between Queensland Health and the Queensland Police Service and between relevant state and federal agencies targeting illicit tobacco and vaping markets. Those recommendations are fair, particularly the third recommendation around enforcement, which the LNP has concerns about, as I have just mentioned, and will elaborate more on.

I think it is also important to make this point clear during the debate. This legislation will not really deal with the legality, regulation, sale or otherwise of e-cigarettes or vapes in any holistic way. There are many in the community rightly concerned with these products, but this legislation does not actually really deal with vapes or e-cigarettes. That needs to be transparent for all Queenslanders. The LNP acknowledges there was generally wide support for the bill among stakeholder groups; however, submissions made to the committee did question the government's ability to manage and enforce these laws, which is a concern. I agree with those views, as do my colleagues. It is one thing to have the laws in place, but it is another thing to be able to enforce them. We know the government has struggled to enforce the existing laws as they are, so increasing smoke-free spaces and limiting retail supply or changes to advertising laws for tobacco products will prove even more difficult.

Even Queensland Health itself admitted this during the committee's consideration of the bill. The West Moreton Hospital and Health Service indicated that funding to support the implementation of enforcement action will be required, estimating an additional two FTE positions would be required to manage ongoing compliance. The submission from West Moreton Hospital and Health Service states—

Funding to support the Public Health Unit (PHU) implementation will be required. While the licensing regime is not designed as a fee for inspection service, we anticipate a significant expectation from both business and community that inspections will be undertaken. We additionally expect a rise in complaints of unlicensed or non-conforming businesses and dealing with commonwealth related offences.

The submission goes on to say—

We estimate in the order 300 licensable businesses in the West Moreton PHU area which could conceivably require an additional two full time equivalent staff to ensure we do not reduce service expectations in other program areas. Appropriate recurrent funding should be provided to PHUs to ensure the sustainable implementation of the legislation.

That is it in black and white. If these changes are going to be effective and enforced, then it is going to take the government to put its money where its mouth is. That is just one hospital and health service covering one relatively small geographical region. It is over to the minister now to explain how that will occur across all of Queensland. It is something which the government and the minister have not adequately addressed in any significant detail.

Similar concerns were raised by staff from the Townsville Hospital and Health Service during a public hearing. At the committee hearing in Townsville on 12 April the director of the Townsville Public Health Unit said—

My very small team obviously have multiple acts—public health, food, water, radiation and pesticides—to deal with. They are completely overwhelmed. They go to a tobacco seller and most likely the person will refuse consent for entry. Therefore, you can only go in with a warrant which is really hard to get ...

Teams are 'overwhelmed'. Those are not my words: they are the words of someone working for Queensland Health. They are struggling to keep up. There is more though, and this is the worrying bit. Before I read this out, it is very blunt and it is very brave. I want to commend the director for being as open and honest as he was. He went on to say—

Fundamentally, this amendment bill is too little, too late, too weak, way too complicated and too slow, and the cost of trying to implement it is way beyond what we have resources for. I am not expecting an improvement ...

Well, I think that says it all—overwhelmed and under-resourced with a bleak outlook as to whether any tangible change can occur. It is damning feedback, so again I say this to those opposite: if you are going to change the law, no matter how well intentioned, you have to back it up with the resources. Evidently, from the submissions and evidence given to the Health and Environment Committee, it seems that will not occur. That feedback is being received by not just external parties; it is being received from Queensland Health itself. It is quite extraordinary really. I hope the government hears those concerns, because the opposition certainly has. It does follow a trend by this government—with a failure to listen about the laws they are enforcing. We heard it in the debate on the bill prior to this. We have seen this not just in health but in other portfolios as well—housing, public works and the environment portfolio. It is habitual.


I speak on this issue not just as shadow health minister but also as the member for Mudgeeraba. In the Mudgeeraba community, there are illegal tobacco shops—chop-chop shops as they are commonly called—which have been operational for years. I wrote to the previous health minister about this issue two years ago. In that email it cited 85 illegal chop-chop shops in 15 electorates in Queensland, and nothing changed. I wrote that these illegal chop-chop shops—there is one in Mudgeeraba, one in Worongary and one in Burleigh Waters that I know about—all have illegal signage. They have cigarettes on the front of them. They have tobacco on the front of them. They have smokes on the front of them. They are illegal chop-chop shops. They are not hard to recognise. When my licensed Cignall tobacconists, who are doing everything right, complained to Queensland Health, they had Queensland Health come down on them like a tonne of bricks and Queensland Health never even visited the illegal chop-chop shop. Those local businesses are losing up to \$30,000 a week. This is revenue which is taxable—it goes to the Commonwealth—but the only place it is going is into the pockets of the owners of the illegal chop-chop shops. They will keep doing it until there are laws that can be enforced to stop them from doing it.

The concerns that the laws were, and will be, too complex and cumbersome are legitimate because I have seen it play out in the community I represent. That also goes for the resourcing issues which have been raised. I feel that nothing has happened because those public health unit teams are not able to enforce the laws because they are not resourced properly. I take this opportunity to give my sincere thanks to the staff working in those public health units and the environmental health officers out there both on the Gold Coast and right across the state. They do a stellar job day in, day out—just like all our other amazing frontline health staff across the health system in Queensland. It is not just me who is concerned about illicit tobacco. This is what the Attorney-General said when she introduced the bill—

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

I could not agree more with those comments. It is why I was perplexed when I heard them because I have been raising this issue for years, since 2021, directly with the responsible minister about examples in my own community. I will be honest; it seemingly went nowhere. It was really disappointing. Sadly, I fear that, even with the changes made in this bill, nothing will actually change on the ground. I hope that is not the case, but time will tell.

I will round out my conclusion on the bill by saying this. For all the many and varied reasons I have mentioned about the health outcomes of Queenslanders, the opposition will not oppose the bill. We, like the government, want to see fewer people smoking, and we want to see those who do not smoke protected from the effects of it. We acknowledge the intentions of government—we really do. They are good intentions, but good intentions do not always deliver a good outcome. If the government is not serious about listening to the concerns of stakeholder groups about shutting down illegal chop-chop shops—and even Queensland Health itself has concerns about this legislation—then it will not get the outcome it was hoping for. It is as simple as that.

 **Mr HARPER** (Thuringowa—ALP) (2.53 pm): I rise to contribute to this debate supporting the Tobacco and Other Smoking Products Amendment Bill 2023. Smoking remains a significant cause of death, disease and health inequality in Queensland. In recent years, the trade in illicit tobacco has exacerbated the negative impact of smoking on the community, and it also has a huge cost to our health system in Queensland. We should be very proud of the reduction in smoking rates in Queensland that has been achieved over the last couple of decades. This should be a positive contribution, as opposed to the member for Mudgeeraba's negative, whingeing and whining contribution. She is just rushing off to have a quick smoke, I understand.

On behalf of the committee, I want to thank those individuals and organisations who made written submissions to the bill and who appeared at public hearings. I also thank our parliamentary service staff and officers from Queensland Health. I particularly want to thank and acknowledge those submitters and witnesses we heard from in my home town of Townsville. The illicit tobacco industry is having a notable impact on licensed retailers in North Queensland and other parts of the state. Those who came before us bravely provided their concerns to the committee about the worrying criminal element involved in the illicit tobacco industry. It is clear that more must be done to combat this growing trend and I thank all committee members for working in collaboration to make recommendations in our report to tackle the serious issue from an enforcement point of view.

The Tobacco and Other Smoking Products Amendment Bill aims to reduce smoking rates in Queensland and better protect the community from second-hand smoke and the illicit tobacco trade. Townsville is always No. 1. To achieve this goal, the bill proposes the introduction of a new licensing scheme for the wholesale and retail sale of smoking products. This change will facilitate more effective enforcement of the Tobacco and Other Smoking Products Act 1998 and align Queensland with other Australian jurisdictions.

To achieve its objective, the bill also proposes: prohibiting the supply and possession of illicit tobacco; strengthening enforcement capabilities and powers under the act, including by facilitating intelligence sharing with other jurisdictions; modernising and clarifying restrictions relating to the advertising, display and promotion of smoking products, including their application to online trading; prohibiting the supply and handling of smoking products by children; extending the prohibition on supplying smoking products to children to include supply by parents and guardians; expanding smoke-free places, including community spaces used by children; and improving restrictions and protections that apply to liquor licensed premises.

This bill aims to strengthen, modernise and futureproof the requirements, restrictions and protections in the Tobacco and Other Smoking Products Act 1998. The bill will improve monitoring of the smoking product industry and enable more effective enforcement of the act. It will also assist smokers to quit, discourage youth uptake of smoking and further protect the community from exposure to second-hand smoke.

I was pleased to chair the committee inquiry into this bill. We heard from medical staff, scientific specialists, health advocacy non-government organisations, retailers, businesses, community groups and individuals. Their strong support was clear. They had clearly been involved in the policy development process, and I think the health department should be commended for their work on this front. Similarly, I want to acknowledge two submitters in Townsville—Pam Wright and Deb Soley. They are retailers who came before us and shared their concerns about that illicit trade. I thought it was quite brave of them.


I want to pick up on the comments from the member for Mudgeeraba. Perhaps she should talk to her own public health unit because I do not think she is across what they have achieved. They have seized over 10,000 products and have had convictions in the courts. They are doing a stellar job with a team of 12, which is proportional to the population. Townsville has a team of six with 200,000 people, while the Gold Coast has close to 600,000 people. I think the Gold Coast Public Health Unit is doing a stellar job and I commend it on its work.

The illicit tobacco industry is having a notable impact on retailers across Queensland. The bill establishes a licensing scheme for the wholesale and retail sale of smoking products. This will enable Queensland Health to identify and monitor businesses supplying smoking products in Queensland more effectively. It will also send a clear message that selling smoking products must only be entrusted to legitimate businesses to deter the unlawful supply of smoking products. The bill introduces significant maximum penalties for noncompliance. The bill modernises and clarifies existing restrictions on the display, advertising and promotion of smoking products, including in relation to online sales. It improves protections from second-hand smoke at outdoor markets as well as other outdoor eating and drinking places where families and children gather, including through new smoke-free buffer zones both inside and immediately outside those places.

There is clearly strong support across the community to make sure children do not start smoking or vaping. Our vaping inquiry is underway and, as indicated, the report will be tabled in due course. The bill restricts children's access to smoking products and reduces their potential exposure to harmful second-hand smoke. As we heard, our committee made three recommendations to strengthen the bill: firstly, to pass the bill; to summarise the second one, to streamline the search-and-seizure powers of

authorised officers; and to summarise the third recommendation, to take a tougher approach to enforcement. I note the minister's comments around recommendation 2 and certainly support the working group that will make further recommendations to government in regards to the better aligning of the Medicines and Poisons Act and the TOSP Act to provide officers more opportunities to conduct the activities they do. I am pleased to see the government has accepted these recommendations in principle and I am sure these issues will emerge in our continuing inquiry into reducing e-cigarette use.

As I said when I started my contribution, the rate of smoking in Queensland has decreased by more than half over the last decade. This has been the result of committed and continuing reforms by our government that restrict supply and reduce demand. The bill will continue that work. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr MOLHOEK** (Southport—LNP) (3.01 pm): I rise to my feet today as the member for Southport and the deputy chair of the Health and Environment Committee to speak on the Tobacco and Other Smoking Products Amendment Bill 2023. The LNP will not be opposing this bill. The bill sets up a regulated framework for both wholesale and retail selling of smoking products with the addition of fresh penalties for noncompliance with this system and new offences. This includes a ban on the distribution of smoking products by minors and forbidding parents and guardians from providing such products to children. The legislation authorises Queensland Health to track adherence with Commonwealth prerequisites for smoking products and enhance the exchange of information with law enforcement agencies across states, territories and the Commonwealth. It modernises and clarifies the requirements for advertising, display and promotion of smoking products, including their application to online trading.

The bill broadens the scope of public spaces free from smoking, particularly those frequented by children. For example, it prohibits smoking in car parks adjacent to schools. The legislation also amplifies the crimes related to safeguarding children from the perils of smoking. This includes a ban on children's presence in designated outdoor smoking areas. The bill boosts safety measures at venues with liquor licences. This encompasses stricter rules for designated smoking areas and the relocation of tobacco product vending machines to places outside of a patron's reach. Additionally, the legislation imposes a prohibition on smoking in national parks.

The proposed amendments are comprehensive. They strive to create a robust licensing scheme for wholesale and retail sale of smoking products. Moreover, they usher in penalties for noncompliance with these licensing regulations and introduce fresh offences, including the prohibition of supplying smoking products by minors, and the supply of these products to minors by their parents or guardians. These are significant steps towards safeguarding our younger generations from the health risks associated with smoking. These proposed changes empower Queensland Health to vigilantly monitor the alignment of smoking products with Commonwealth requirements. In an era where information is king, these changes promise to enhance intelligence-sharing amongst state and Commonwealth law enforcement agencies. This could be instrumental in curbing the black market for these products.

The bill also makes strides in updating and clarifying requirements for advertising, display and promotion of smoking products while taking into account their digital presence through online trading. It significantly expands smoke-free public spaces, especially those frequented by children. Think about car parks adjacent to schools. The bill prohibits smoking in these areas, shielding children from the harmful effects of passive smoking. Liquor licenced premises will see tighter regulations concerning smoking areas, and tobacco product vending machines will be moved to areas outside of a patron's reach. It even addresses environmental health, prohibiting smoking in national parks, a significant step towards preserving our unique biodiversity. Unlike some of the government's election promises that remain unfulfilled or have crumbled, this legislation is a step in the right direction: strengthening the retail supply, advertising and promotional provisions in the act and addressing the illicit tobacco issue head-on and amplifying the number of smoke-free public spaces.

The Health and Environment Committee on which I serve made three critical recommendations after considering the bill: firstly, that the bill should be passed; secondly, that the alignment of Medicines and Poisons Act 2019 and the Tobacco and Other Smoking Products Act 1998 need to be improved to remove obstacles to executing warrants, searching premises and seizing contraband items; and lastly, that the government should consider committing additional resources to enhance enforcement efforts, a task coordinated between Queensland Health, the Queensland Police and relevant state and federal agencies targeting illicit tobacco and vaping markets. While the LNP acknowledges broad support for this bill amongst stakeholder groups, we share valid concerns about the execution and enforcement of these laws.



I asked questions about the amount of enforcement activity across the state, and in particular the South East, because I wanted to understand—and I think the House deserves to understand—the extent of the problem of the illicit sale of tobacco products, as we heard from the member for Mudgeeraba and other members in the House, and these so-called chop-chop shops that are springing up pretty much everywhere from Far North Queensland all the way to the border at Coolangatta.

In the South-East Queensland region, we heard from Queensland Health that there had been 362 complaints in the last eight months—July to February—and of that, there were 343 inspections that were undertaken by public health units. The majority were proactive inspections of retailers located close to schools or transport routes and students, and as a result of that, there were 220 enforcement actions recorded, 62 written warnings, 32 improvement notices and, more importantly, 125 PINS issued, and also one legal case that is currently in progress.


As at July 2021, the penalty for these PINS was the small amount of \$143.75. One of the questions raised and discussed in the public briefing with Queensland Health was: did they believe that the increased penalties and penalty units proposed in this legislation were adequate? I would suggest that it was the view of the committee that it was certainly a significant step forward to increase potentially what would have been fines from as little as \$143 in the past to a more realistic level of \$500 or \$600 per breach.

Queenslanders need more than just laws on paper; we need these laws to be enforced. It is so important that we provide resources and support to our health units to enforce these laws. Alongside that, as we have heard with the illicit trade of tobacco products being brought in across our borders, there needs to be greater enforcement and a strengthening of our borders to ensure that the supply of these illicit products are not streaming into the country in contravention with these proposed laws.

It was also our privilege as a committee to travel to a number of places around Queensland. We spent a day on the Gold Coast and chose to combine the public hearing for the vaping inquiry and this particular bill, and I have to say that it is a little bit difficult to separate the two issues because the sale of illicit tobacco and illegal vapes are significantly interlinked. At the Gold Coast hearing, we heard from the Gold Coast Public Health Unit. Dr Anne Cowdry, the Associate Director of Public and Environmental Health, and Dr Candice Colbran, the Public Health Physician, talked about some of these investigations. The statistics that they shared with us were that of the vapes that were seized which had undergone chemical testing, over 80 per cent failed the nicotine test, and all of the vapes that were seized contained significant amounts of toxic substances and presented a real threat to our young people.

In fact, just in the last few years they have seized almost 800 kilograms of vapes comprising more than 10,000 individual items. Of the 150 smoking product retailer inspections conducted just on the Gold Coast since the beginning of 2022, 72 were shown to be noncompliant. These issues are interlinked. I understand it is probably not appropriate to spend too much time talking about vaping in the context of this particular legislation. However, I do have to say that the two are significantly intertwined and represent some significant risks and concerns for the health system and for our young people.

It would be remiss of me not make special mention of Joanne Sheehy, the Principal of AB Paterson College on the Gold Coast, one of the few principals who was keen to appear. She talked a little bit about the strategy they have employed at that school. Of the three points she made in the public hearing, she said the foremost issue was education. The challenge before this House, government and all of us as members of parliament is to make sure our children, our young people, are well educated about the risks of not only illicit tobacco products but also vapes.

 **Hon. MC de BRENNI** (Springwood—ALP) (Minister for Energy, Renewables and Hydrogen and Minister for Public Works and Procurement) (3.11 pm): I want to briefly place on record my support for the reforms in the Tobacco and Other Smoking Products Amendment Bill 2023. As we all know, the harms of smoking are a significant health issue here in Queensland and around the world. We know it is the leading cause of preventable disease and death leading to poorer health outcomes, particularly amongst the poor and the working class amongst us. We know that it leads to poorer health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders and other Australians, and we know it has a particular impact on Queenslanders living in regional and remote areas.

We also know that whether it is smoking, vaping or the use of e-cigarettes, it does place massive pressure on our health systems. We know the risks of smoking and we know about the dangers of traditional tobacco products. We also know that since the introduction of reforms in 1998 there has been a significant reduction in the rates of smoking. However, we also know that with new products


that are on the market now and the activities of some in the marketplace, the ground that we have made in this important public health area and the outcomes for some of the most vulnerable in our community that I mentioned earlier have been put at risk.

I want to particularly place on record the interactions that I had with legitimate retailers from the electorate of Springwood, Anuj and Leo, who told me of their concerns they are seeing in relation to illegal tobacco sales. They made it very clear to me that there are those who take business away from legitimate retailers like them but, most alarmingly, that those illegitimate retailers are marketing products directly to young people, targeting teenagers. I committed to the constituents I represent that I would support reforms that see greater consequences for those doing the wrong thing, especially because I think we can all agree we do not want to see children exploited by predatory activity or shadowy importers. I worry mostly for young Queenslanders, many of whom are still of school age, who make decisions that have lifetime consequences without the life experience to make the appropriate ones.

We have seen experts and stakeholders agree that there is a need to legislate to protect young people and families. The reforms we are considering today will achieve the strengthening, the modernisation and the futureproofing of our laws by improving monitoring powers of both smoking products and the industry. I think it will also help existing smokers give consideration to quitting.

I know the residents of the electorate of Springwood would expect me to stand here today in support of these reforms, especially in support of better health outcomes for young people. That is ultimately what we are here to do: work to protect our community. Whether it is the new measures that mean smoking is prohibited near organised children's activities or there being greater capacity to catch and fine the retailers who choose to do the wrong thing or the new licensing scheme for the wholesale and retail sale of smoking products that enables Queensland Health to identify and monitor businesses supplying smoking products in Queensland more effectively, these measures are designed to keep Queenslanders safe.

I am proud to support these reforms. I am proud to send a message to our community that we stand with them in keeping them safe and a message to those who seek to profit from causing harm that we will find them and we will stop them. I commend these important public health measures to the House.

 **Mr ANDREW** (Mirani—PHON) (3.15 pm): I rise to speak on the Tobacco and Other Smoking Products Amendment Bill 2023. The bill amends the Forestry Act 1959, the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000, the Recreation Areas Management Act 2006 and the Tobacco and Other Smoking Products Act 1998. The bill's primary aim is to significantly expand the current laws and restrictions on smoking as contained in the state's Tobacco and Other Smoking Products Act 1998. To achieve its objective, the bill seeks to: establish a licensing scheme for the wholesale and retail sale of all smoking products in Queensland; impose stronger restrictions on the unlawful supply of smoking products; introduce harsher penalties for noncompliance; enable Queensland Health to share data and intelligence with other law enforcement agencies; increase the additional restrictions on the marketing of smoking products; expand restrictions on smoking in public spaces; create new antismoking offences under the act; and impose tighter laws and penalties for noncompliance.

The bill's changes are expressly aimed at further reducing smoking rates in Queensland as well as toughening the laws on second-hand smoke and the illicit trade in tobacco. Over the past 25 years smoking rates in Queensland have more than halved. This huge reduction in smoking is attributable to the significant cost increases and the strict antismoking provisions already implemented under the act.

From 2001 to 2020 the level of excise duty generated from tobacco sales in Queensland increased from \$4.5 billion to around \$17 billion in 2020. Queenslanders are smoking much less and yet somehow they are still forced to pay more taxes than anyone else in the community. Cigarette prices in Australia are rated the highest in the world. A pack-a-day smoker in Queensland now spends over \$10,000 a year to maintain their habit. According to the latest figures, only 10.4 per cent of Queensland adults continue to smoke daily with most being males.

Despite the falling smoking rates, the practice is still cited by Queensland Health officials as the No. 1 risk factor contributing to preventable death and disease in Queensland. According to the health minister, the annual cost of smoking to the Queensland taxpayer is \$27.4 billion. Exactly how this figure was calculated is not clear. Given the fact that smokers supposedly die earlier than everyone else, they must logically spend a lot less time on the aged or disability pension and far less time in aged care. Even their drain on the health and hospital system must be a lot less than that of elderly non-smokers once the cost is aggregated over the course of their brief lifetime. Surely this must be saving taxpayers bucketloads of cash. Was that factored into the \$27 billion? I am just wondering. It probably was not. I return to the bill.

Another significant challenge the bill addresses is the growing number of suppliers who are engaged in the illicit trade of tobacco products, and we have seen this firsthand. The sale of these cheap products does not comply with the laws on plain packaging or health warnings and successfully manage to circumvent the state's many excises and duties on the trade. According to the testimony of witnesses who appeared before the committee, the illicit trade in tobacco has a hugely negative impact on the profitability of many law-abiding businesses. To secure better compliance and enforcement, therefore, the bill creates a number of new offences and harsher penalties.

Currently, there is no requirement for sellers of smoking products in Queensland to be licensed. This restricts the government's ability to identify and monitor the number of locations of businesses that are engaged in selling them. This impedes the ability of authorities to effectively run various surveillance, compliance and enforcement programs. To address this, the bill introduces a licensing scheme for all wholesale and retail industries where these products are sold.

The scheme creates two types of licences—one for sales at physical premises and one for online trading side. Both licences must be renewed annually and both involve the payment of yearly fees and charges on a cost-recovery basis. In granting a licence, the regulator must be satisfied that the applicant is a fit and proper person to hold a licence. If a licensee ceases to be a fit and proper person or breaches the act, the regulator is authorised to take disciplinary action against them. The regulator may also impose conditions on the licence which will be listed on a register of licences and published online. The new licensing portal will go live on 1 September 2023, and suppliers will have 12 months from then to become licensed.

Over the past 25 years, Australian governments have doubled down on their efforts to eliminate smoking. These efforts usually involve the use of escalating price signals and increasingly restrictive laws and penalties. This strategy is now under threat, with the hugely successful uptake—particularly amongst young people—of new and allegedly safer smoking products such as e-cigarettes or vapes. For those who are not aware, electronic cigarettes—known as e-cigarettes—do not contain tobacco and do not involve the burning of any substance. Instead, they are fuelled with a liquid that usually—but not always—contains nicotine. We found out differently. A small heating element inside the device turns the liquid into vapour, which is then inhaled through the mouthpiece. There is no combustion, no tobacco and no smoke. This is known as vaping. It is very different to lighting up a cigarette and considerably cheaper. Vaping costs around \$1,500 a year compared to the \$10,000 an average smoker spends.

The vaping industry generates about \$2 billion for the national economy each year, but, of course, this does not come close to the amount pouring into government coffers from taxes on smoking. As vaping products are mostly imported, they are unlikely to meet Australian safety standards, particularly in relation to ingredients and concentration. The fact that the sale of liquid nicotine e-cigarettes is banned in Australia is puzzling. Most people probably do not know that it is illegal to buy liquid nicotine even though, ironically, it is perfectly legal to import it from overseas, where we do not even know what we are getting.


The bill will enable the appointment of authorised persons under the act to monitor and enforce compliance with its provisions. The bill provides authorised persons with expanded powers including the power to make inquiries, issue improvement notices, immediately prohibit an activity and remain at the premises for a reasonable period to check compliance with an improvement notice. The bill empowers authorised persons to seize products without first taking any prosecution action. The bill further authorises the chief executive to share intelligence and data with other law enforcement jurisdictions. In accordance with the bill's changes, police officers will be deemed authorised persons who may take compliance action under the act.

The bill significantly increases the maximum penalties for noncompliance. The maximum penalty for the unlicensed wholesale or retail sale of smoking products will now be 1,000 penalty units, which equates to \$143,750. For supplying illicit tobacco the bill prescribes a penalty of up to 300 penalty units, which equates to \$43,125. For the offence of possessing illicit tobacco at a retail premises the maximum penalty is 140 penalty units, equating to \$20,125. Other measures include new restrictions on the display of vaping products, whether or not they contain tobacco. These restrictions will also apply to the packaging of hookahs and non-tobacco substances smoked in a hookah. Employees under the age of 18 will be prohibited from the sale or handling of smoking products. Smoking will also be prohibited from children's outdoor activities such as outside Scout halls or car parks adjacent to schools.

The act already allows liquor licensed premises to have a designated outdoor smoking area. Amendments in the bill, however, will add a new requirement for the creation of a no-smoking buffer zone around its perimeter. The bill expands the existing prohibition on smoking in outdoor eating areas

and drinking places to include outdoor markets and a buffer zone around a market's entry and exit points. The person in charge of an outdoor market is permitted to set aside a smoking area; however, the smoking area must be clearly signed and surrounded by a buffer zone, with no food or drink to be served within the smoking area or its buffer zone. Any person creating such an area, however, should know that they will be held liable under the act for any persons in the buffer zone.

I thank my fellow committee members and everyone who gave information to these inquiries. It was interesting to hear about the methods schools are using to stop vaping within and adjacent to their grounds. I thank the department for the breakdown of information on vaping and the chemicals within vapes. The committee has made this information public knowledge so that people can access it. I strongly advise all members to take this information, which shows the concentration of poison and chemicals within vapes, and allow it to be used in schools to show people, including parents, just what these vapes contain and how dangerous they can be. Hopefully this will make people understand that what seems an innocuous pastime compared to lighting up a cigarette is just as dangerous when it comes to vapes imported from overseas in terms of their ability to kill, to harm people medically and to give and pass on disease.

 **Ms PEASE** (Lytton—ALP) (3.25 pm): Smoking remains a significant cause of death, disease and poor health conditions. It is the leading cause of preventable death and disease, including cancer, in the developed world. In Australia, smoking causes around one in five cancer deaths. In fact, each year there are up to 24,000 deaths in Australia. More than 3,400 deaths in Queensland each year are directly linked to smoking. Sadly, included in these figures are my parents, Jack and Agnes Pease, who both passed away from chronic airway diseases. Both were from an era when smoking was encouraged—it was the norm—and they both smoked until their deaths. My mother-in-law, Lily Smith, passed away after many years battling a number of primary cancers that were all a result of smoking.

The only thing we should be putting in our lungs is air. Queensland has been a world leader in the reduction of smoking rates. The adult smoking rate in Queensland has halved over the past 25 years. Smoking remains, as I mentioned, a significant contributor to death, disease and health inequality in Queensland. Further, higher smoking rates, and therefore poorer health outcomes, remain more common among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders and persons in low socio-economic circumstances or living in regional and remote areas.

The annual cost of smoking to Queensland, including hospital and other medical expenses, has been estimated at \$27.4 billion a year. Queensland Health advised the committee that the downward trend in smoking is at risk from the increasing trade in illicit tobacco, emerging smoking products and business practices targeted at children and young people. This includes e-cigarettes. That is creating a whole new generation of smokers. We have worked very hard in Queensland—we are the world leaders in this matter—to reduce the number of smokers, and now we are breeding a new cohort of smokers.

Illicit tobacco products do not comply with Commonwealth requirements for plain packaging and health warnings. They also circumvent excises and duties. The trade in illicit tobacco has exacerbated the negative impact of smoking on the community. The Tobacco and Other Smoking Products Amendment Bill 2023 aims to ensure the rate of smoking uptake continues to reduce and, further, to better protect the community from second-hand smoke and the illicit tobacco trade. To achieve this goal, the bill proposes the introduction of a new licensing regime. This will be for the wholesale and retail sale of smoking products. This change will facilitate more effective enforcement of the Tobacco and Other Smoking Products Act 1998 and align Queensland with other Australian jurisdictions. The bill will prohibit the supply and possession of illicit tobacco. It will strengthen enforcement capabilities and powers under the act, which include facilitating intelligence sharing with other jurisdictions. It will also modernise and clarify restrictions relating to the advertising, display and promotion of smoking products including their application to online trading.


The bill will also prohibit the supply and handling of smoking products by children which means that retailers will have to ensure that the staff who are handling smoking products are over the age of 18. Interestingly, it also extends the prohibition on supplying smoking products to children to include that of smoking products being supplied by parents or guardians to children under the age of 18. It will expand smoke-free places, including community places used by children, and improve restrictions and protections that apply to liquor licensed premises.

The Health and Environment Committee heard from a diverse range of stakeholders during its inquiry into the bill, including members of the public, academic experts, health professionals, antismoking organisations, smoking product retailers, organisations representing liquor licensed

premises and major tobacco companies. While some stakeholders made some suggestions for improving certain aspects of the bill, overwhelmingly the majority of submitters offered strong support for the proposed changes. Notably, there was almost universal support for the introduction of the licensing scheme for the sale of smoking products. I want to thank the submitters for their honesty and for speaking so plainly with regard to that. I also want to thank those witnesses who spoke very plainly and shared their experiences, particularly with regard to the many pop-up tobacco shops or the chop-chop shops.

Many members in the House would have seen the increase of tobacco shops that are selling illegal smoking products. What I mean by that is that these retailers are selling smoking products that are without warning labels and that have been illegally imported into the country so we have no idea what is contained in these cigarettes. There is no information regarding the content of these products and, most alarmingly, they are being sold at a mere fraction of the cost of the main lines of tobacco products. What they are doing is targeting vulnerable people and encouraging them and contributing to the uptake and increase in smoking, so they are profiting at the expense of Queenslanders.

Like many Queenslanders, we are proud of our state's history in the reduction of smoking. The number of Queenslanders who smoke now sits at around 10.4 per cent, so I want to take a moment to thank all those before me who had the vision and the determination to protect Queenslanders and our health to ensure that we are living in a smoke-free state. We are all benefiting from this commitment and I am delighted to support this bill. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr O'CONNOR** (Bonney—LNP) (3.32 pm): The LNP is of course not opposing this legislation, but I want to make a few comments on it. The worst decision that you can make for your health is to be a smoker. It is the No. 1 cause of preventable death or serious disease for Australians. Half of all lifelong smokers will be killed by this habit and the other half will experience horrific diseases for the rest of their lives. The people around smokers often do not have a choice, so I welcome the expansion of smoke-free public spaces, especially with regard to school car parks but also with DOSAs at pubs and other licensed venues as this legislation will ban minors from going into those areas.

As the shadow environment minister, I want to put on record my support for the ban on smoking in national parks. On that point, with the lack of resourcing the government provides towards managing our protected estate, many of our parks are tinderboxes and there is a real risk that a single cigarette on its own could ignite a destructive and widespread bushfire. There are legitimate questions about how this will be enforced though, so any further clarity on that would be welcomed as we are talking about some pretty big areas of land. Enforcement in general will be vital to the success of this legislation in curbing smoking.

The bill itself will establish a licensing system—and I was certainly surprised that one did not already exist—and those licences will be \$475 for a retail licence and \$675 for a wholesale licence every year. The health department said that this would raise enough money to make the measures cost neutral. It projected that it would bring in around \$3 million annually, which to me does not seem like it will go anywhere near employing the number of inspectors who will be required to properly enforce this. Another question on the licences that I have is that around half of all venues with a liquor licence currently sell smoking products and they will all get an automatic approved licence under this scheme. I do question whether that automatic granting was the best decision and whether other approaches or an opt-in basis with a free licence was considered.

As the shadow health minister very adequately pointed out in her contribution, the biggest issue with this will be enforcement. In Townsville the committee's public hearing heard how that region has seven approved positions for environmental health officers but six actual positions. They are overwhelmed—self-described as overwhelmed—and covering so many different areas of responsibility. That was just a really tough message we got from this essential preventive health service. Illegal tobacco is rampant across the state and just one stakeholder to the committee said that they really doubted whether these changes will be adequate. On the Gold Coast in my home city we heard that there are 12 of these environmental health officers who cover tobacco, medicines and poisons, which is a surprisingly low number of positions for the second largest city in our state and the sixth largest in the nation.

I want to commend the comments from Dr Steven Donohue, the Director of the Townsville Public Health Unit. He was exceptionally open and provided probably the most useful contribution to the consideration of these laws. He essentially summed this up by saying that these laws are too little too late, too weak and too slow and he highlighted how under the current laws there has not been a single successful prosecution in North Queensland. He said this is because—


The hoops that you have to go through to determine an offence and prove each of the elements of the offence, if you even get in there, if you even get any cooperation, are so complex and time-consuming that my small team has not even bothered to try to get a warrant. As I say, for example, a warrant would have to be for a specific purpose under a specific act. If you go in there and do anything else or see anything else, then it cannot be used ...

Again, his contribution was just exceptional and we are so fortunate to have someone of his calibre working in Queensland Health doing all he can to contribute to the health and wellbeing of Queenslanders.

I also want to put on record my support for the excellent submission from Shannon Mead from No More Butts. I caught up with him recently at the regional sitting of parliament in Cairns with our fantastic candidate for that seat, Yolonde Entsch. Shannon talked about how cigarette butts are the most littered item in Queensland, with 1.9 billion of them littered annually across our state. He estimates that that means that 5½ thousand tonnes of plastic filters are sitting in our environment at any one time, so that means that each cigarette butt pollutes between 40 to 1,000 litres of water for each butt. The key point that he wants people to remember is that this is plastic. It takes 15 years for filters to break down. Even the biodegradable ones have a two- to three-year time frame for breaking down, by which point they can do substantial damage, and the filters have 12,000 to 15,000 fibrous strands of cellulose treated with acetone and they break into tens of thousands of pieces of microplastics which, if ingested by marine life, can be potentially fatal or problematic for marine life and obviously in terms of the consumption of seafood as well. That can be a huge problem for people who enjoy seafood, but that is not me. I have heard that some research from Griffith University has said that each of us has roughly a credit card sized amount of plastic in each of our digestive systems, mostly from ingesting it from marine life.

In his submission Shannon made a good, simple suggestion about better environmental signage, on top of the signage provisions in the bill, that he thought would provide a better way to highlight to smokers the impact that they can have on Queensland if they do not do the right thing with their waste. His suggestion of eventually including cigarette butts in the single-use plastic ban framework should certainly be considered or at least discussed with industry to see how it could work, what alternatives there might be and what the efficacy or the health benefits, if any—I do not believe there are any—of these filters are.

In conclusion, the government must explain how they will resource the people who will have to enforce this. They are essential Queensland Health workers and they should be supported in the work they do.

 **Ms KING** (Pumicestone—ALP) (3.40 pm): The Tobacco and Other Smoking Products Amendment Bill is an important milestone in our Palaszczuk government's ongoing work to safeguard the health of Queenslanders. It contains robust measures to regulate the sale of tobacco and other smoking products, protecting Queenslanders, especially young Queenslanders, from facing a lifetime capture by nicotine addiction and it contains measures to expand smoke-free zones.

I have been reflecting on the impact of this legislation and all that has gone before it. As I get older, more and more often I am asked about the health histories of the women in my family, as we all are as we engage in our own preventive health care. Quite literally, my siblings and I do not know what our genetic predisposition to a whole range of diseases may be because both my grandmothers died too young of smoking related illness. One of them was in her 50s and the other was in her very early 60s. While as a young person that seemed a fairly advanced age, now that I am in my mid 40s it seems less so and I reflect on what a loss that is. For decades and decades that has been the story for many Queensland families across generations. It is a story of the lost lives of those we love.

I cannot continue without reflecting on the absolutely bizarre insight that we received into the world according to the member for Mirani following his ruminations about how smoking saves the health system money and saves on the payment of pensions because people die sooner. I do not even know where to go with that except to say that it is absolutely untrue. Smoking costs our economy well over \$20 billion a year and that is on every measure: years shortened, the cost of health care, the provision of sick days to people and all of the constraints on our economy. It is not a cost saver for people to smoke.

Historically, Queenslanders have been over-represented in smoking statistics. More Queenslanders smoke and over the past decade it has taken a concerted effort between our state and the Commonwealth government to bring the level of Queenslanders smoking down by about 50 per cent to just over 10 per cent. I acknowledge the contribution of the former chief health officer and now Governor of Queensland, Dr Jeannette Young, in that really important work. It included the introduction of plain packaging, requiring product warning labels to be visible, banning tobacco advertising and

legislating smoke-free places, and it made a slow but steady difference. The biggest benefit of those measures comes from delaying or preventing new cohorts from taking up smoking rather than convincing existing smokers to quit. We can support people to quit, but nicotine is so addictive that people are likely to remain addicted and lapse in and out of smoking throughout their whole lives. Sadly, the health impacts of smoking are disproportionately experienced by First Nations people and those facing socio-economic disadvantage.

That is why it is tragic that recent trends in the tobacco industry have created a whole new generation of people who are dependent on nicotine. During COVID, when our public health units were completely overwhelmed with contact tracing and all of the other work of fighting a pandemic, communities across Queensland were gradually infiltrated by shadowy retailers selling tobacco products that do not meet product safety standards, have been smuggled into Australia without the payment of tax, do not meet plain packaging requirements and often contain dangerous additives. Now in Queensland it is likely that there are more illegal chop-chop shops than legitimate tobacconists and we know that they are doing real harm through practises such as selling products to underage children and selling individual cigarettes.

Frighteningly, those retailers are universally selling illegal non-prescription nicotine-containing vapes without coming clean to consumers about the fact that those vapes do contain nicotine. We have seen that vapes contain nicotine in frighteningly high percentages. Queenslanders who decide to smoke or vape deserve to clearly understand what it is that they are taking into their bodies. Illegal tobacco products have been found to contain pesticides, high levels of mould and preservatives that are not safe for human consumption, and vapes have been shown to contain chemicals such as formaldehyde and very high nicotine levels.

Generally, chop-chop outlets are cash only. To purchase, they require people to withdraw money from high priced ATMs on site. They evade tax and there are well-established links with organised crime. They evade public health inspectors, leading to much of the frustration and despair that we heard about in our committee hearings. They use every possible loophole to evade scrutiny, whether that is scrutiny by police, taxation authorities or public health officials. At our health committee hearings, stakeholders described threatening behaviour towards other retailers and there were even some reports of competing illegal tobacco establishments firebombing each other. There is big money in tobacco and it is time we take steps to shut down this illicit trade. That is why key measures in this bill are so important in our fight against illegal chop-chop shops and the sale of dangerous nicotine products.

Until now, the lack of a licensing scheme has hindered Queensland Health's ability to identify and monitor businesses that sell smoking products and it has left public health units struggling to implement compliance programs. The bill introduces a licensing scheme for both wholesale and retail sales. Licences will need to be renewed annually. To be granted a licence the applicant must pass a fit-and-proper person test, which will go some way towards severing relationships with organised crime. The fees for the licence will fund additional compliance activities conducted by Queensland Health throughout the state. This licensing scheme creates a strong incentive for the industry to maintain compliance standards. Breaches of the act or an unsuitability to continue as a licensee can result in a licence suspension or cancellation. The bill brings Queensland into line with other Australian jurisdictions. I note that the licensing scheme has been enthusiastically received by the industry, including tobacconists, newsagencies and supermarkets. Stakeholders expressed a degree of comfort with the proposed level of the fees.

Importantly, the bill makes it an offence under Queensland law for a person to supply smoking products that do not comply with Commonwealth requirements. As the member for Southport said, there was overlap between our inquiry into vaping and its impacts and our inquiry into this bill. However, the fact that the bill implements those relevant Commonwealth laws that we have seen foreshadowed by the federal health minister relating to banning non-prescription vapes, introducing plain packaging and banning flavoured vapes overall does greatly assist in the public health goals of our government. It futureproofs our laws ahead of the introduction of tighter national requirements in relation to e-cigarettes, in particular. I welcome the Albanese federal Labor government's strong action to curb the harms of vaping.


Throughout this process, every committee member was intensely lobbied by people with a financial interest in the continuation and legalisation of vaping and that included a lot of false and misleading information about its safety. That is why, to me, it was very concerning to hear calls by the

federal National Party leader David Littleproud for vapes to be legalised and even to be sold legally in our supermarkets. The CEO of the Public Health Association of Australia, Adjunct Professor Terry Slevin, said this of the Nationals policy—

It is dangerous and is guaranteed to commit today's children and future generations of Australians to lifelong nicotine addiction.

It is not surprising to hear those really dangerous policy proposals given the shameful fact that the federal Nationals still accept very substantial donations from big tobacco. Since 2017 they have taken over \$245,000 from donors such as Philip Morris.

If the Nationals really care about the health of Queenslanders, it is time for them to refuse to accept these dirty donations. If members of the LNP really care about the health of Queenslanders, as they say they do, it is time for them to call on their federal Nationals counterparts to stop taking these filthy donations. This bill meets our Palaszczuk government's election commitments and it takes action to strengthen and modernise our responses to the harms of nicotine use. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr MICKELBERG** (Buderim—LNP) (3.49 pm): I thought we were going alright there for a bit, until the member for Pumicestone decided to talk about something completely unrelated to the bill—that is, vaping, which is not addressed by this bill—and then make a cheap political attack with respect to the federal parliament. I note that the member for Pumicestone likes to talk about handing back political donations, but she is silent when we talk about the CFMEU—the worst recidivist offenders in the country, marching down the street here this morning, and the member for Pumicestone is silent—

**Ms KING:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I question the relevance of this contribution from the member for Buderim under standing order 118(b).

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Martin): Member for Buderim, I appreciate what you have said. The member for Pumicestone was talking about vaping, which has been discussed by other members. The CFMEU is not part of the long title of the bill. You have made your point. I ask that you come back to the long title of the bill.

**Mr MICKELBERG:** Thank you for your guidance, Mr Deputy Speaker. Until the contribution from the member for Pumicestone, I was going to say that the bill is largely uncontroversial. As I said, despite the rhetoric of those opposite, this bill does not deal with the regulation of e-cigarettes or vapes. There is an inquiry dealing separately with vapes, discussion of which I suggest anticipates debate on that inquiry.

The area I would like to focus on in my contribution is with respect to the government's resourcing of Queensland Health and the Queensland Police Service to enforce the legislation that we are debating today. Many members on both sides of the House have spoken about the prevalence of illegal tobaccoists and chop-chop in our communities. When I speak to businesses right across the state, they tell me that it is having a marked effect on their trade. Legal tobacco retailers, who seek to comply, tell me that the illegal trade is affecting their viability as supermarkets and local community corner stores. They are suffering because this government has under-resourced public health units. This government does not enforce existing legislation let alone anything proposed in this legislation.

Committee recommendation No. 3 addresses this issue. I commend the committee for making the recommendation in terms of the need for enhanced enforcement and resourcing of those who undertake enforcement. Illicit tobacco is a considerable issue within our communities. It is an issue for all of the health reasons that have been spoken about. It is an issue because it is unregulated. It is facilitated by organised criminal elements, which our communities justifiably repudiate. You do not have to look too hard to see the correlation between break and enters of supermarkets and legal tobacco retailers and a chop-chop retailer coming into town. It has happened in my community and I know that it has happened in the Ninderry electorate. It has happened time and time again across this state.

I personally do not like smoking, but that is my decision. I recognise people's individual choice to make those decisions. I want to talk about what it means for business and what it means for youth employment. Like it or not, many of the businesses that form the backbone of our communities rely on the sale of tobacco to prop up their trade—to get people through the doors so that they also buy bread, milk and other incidental products. Any of the small IGAs or independent retailers will tell you that, like it or not, a large driver of their foot traffic is tobacco sales. I do not like it, but that is the reality of the situation. Through COVID, the importance of those businesses came to the fore when the supply chains of the big supermarkets collapsed. Our local IGAs and FoodWorks were able to continue to provide the



goods and services that our communities rely on. They are also amongst the largest employers of young people. By virtue of the fact that they are open longer hours they have more casuals, and it is those young people who will be and are being affected by a reduction in trade associated with illicit tobacco.

Interestingly, in the Pumicestone electorate I spoke to a small independent supermarket owner who told me that his trade on all products this year was down 45 per cent. It is not down 45 per cent because people are substituting his products for Coles and Woolworths products; it is down 45 per cent because people are buying tobacco from the illegal tobacconist down the road. Existing provisions have not been enforced and continue to not be enforced. A supermarket owner in Bundaberg told me that his trade is down 30 per cent this year for the same reasons—as a direct consequence of illicit tobacco sales. The government cannot even enforce the existing framework and it is not allocating additional resources to ensure greater enforcement. It begs the question: what is going to be achieved?

One retailer representative group told me that there are about 200 registered legal tobacconists in Queensland and, by its estimation, 220 illegal tobacconists in Queensland. There are more illegal tobacconists than legal! You would expect that there would have been considerable prosecutions as a consequence of all of this illicit activity, but there have not because there are shortfalls within the legislative framework. I acknowledge that the bill seeks to address that. However, there are also insufficient resources, and this bill does not address that. I think there has been one case on the Gold Coast where an individual was prosecuted under 'receiving stolen goods' provisions.


**Ms Bates:** And fined \$20,000.

**Mr MICKELBERG:** I take the interjection from the member for Mudgeeraba and shadow minister. This is an important issue for our communities. We should be ensuring that we crack down on illicit tobacco. Like so many things that this government does, it is just hollow rhetoric. If you are not going to put in place the resources to enforce the legislation, why introduce it in the first place? It simply beggars belief.

Let us be clear: the legal tobacco industry is a \$21 billion industry. Let's think about the forgone tax revenue because people are substituting their legal tobacco purchases for illegal tobacco. I would prefer that no-one smoked, but that is just my personal view. If people want to smoke, they should buy it from a local supplier and comply with the laws—not enable the organised crime elements that hold our communities to ransom day in and day out. The message for the government is: take action on these issues. Take action on illicit tobacco. Do not just talk about it. I know that this was an election promise from 2020. We are now in 2023. It is hardly at light speed that we are now debating what I suggest is a relatively straightforward bill.

The member for Pumicestone spoke about the licensing framework. From my perspective, it has been well supported by businesses. When I talk to existing retailers they are supportive of the licensing scheme, but only if it is enforced—if those who choose to do the wrong thing are penalised as a consequence. That is not happening now. It needs to happen. The government needs to give this more than lip-service.

We will not be opposing this legislation, but unless we see real action on illicit tobacco it all means nothing. Our communities will continue to be held to ransom by these organised crime elements. We will continue to see 16-year-olds and 13-year-olds in the main street of my electorate—I accept that my electorate has fewer challenges than other electorates across this state—no more than 300 metres away from my office, buying chop-chop from an illicit tobacco shop. I could walk in there on Friday morning and buy some if I were of a mind to, which I am not, but that is simply not good enough. The police know it is there. The public health units know it is there. I have written to them. They tell me that their hands are tied, they do not have the ability or the resources. My view is that the government does not have the inclination to ensure the laws are enforced. The government needs to get on board and to start enforcing the laws; otherwise, it is just more hollow rhetoric.

 **Mr McCALLUM** (Bundamba—ALP) (3.58 pm): I rise in support of the Tobacco and Other Smoking Products Amendment Bill. Over the last 25 years concerted public health efforts have more than halved adult smoking rates in Queensland. While we have some of the strongest tobacco laws in the world, smoking is still a significant contributor to death, disease and health inequity. Smoking remains the No. 1 preventable cause of death and disease in Queensland. The measures that are contained in this bill will help further reduce smoking rates in Queensland and help better protect the community from second-hand smoke and the illicit tobacco trade.

These reforms will help deliver stronger enforcement action on illicit tobacco sale and supply, with the introduction of a licensing scheme for the sale of tobacco. We have heard from other speakers that this is widely supported. Certainly that was the feedback from the consultation that was undertaken in relation to this bill and from stakeholders. Importantly, these reforms also include the expansion of smoke-free areas and tougher restrictions on cigarette sales in licensed venues.

Under these reforms, Queensland Health will be established as the lead agency to enforce the measures and crack down on people who sell illicit tobacco and ensure that only fit and proper people are licensed to sell tobacco products. Queensland Health officials will have the support of police for investigative and enforcement activities. I know that some members' contributions, particularly those of members opposite, have gone to the issue of enforcement resources. This addresses that directly along with the record number of frontline health staff that we have in Queensland thanks to the Palaszczuk Labor government. There will be more on the way because this is a government that backs our frontline health workers and does not sack them.

Currently, the framework that exists to crack down on illegal operators requires participation from multiple agencies across different levels of government. These new laws are going to streamline the response from authorities to help keep illegal tobacco off our streets.

As I mentioned, the bill expands the number of smoke-free public places to help protect people from the harms of second-hand smoke. With these reforms what we will see is that Queensland is going to continue to be a national leader when it comes to effective measures around tobacco control. It is through these reforms that we are continuing to deliver on our commitment to take stronger action against smoking.

Our policies and laws have been effective to date, with smoking rates continuing to drop in Queensland, but we cannot rest on our laurels. We must do more. With these stronger compliance and enforcement measures, agencies will be able to get on with the job of reducing access to illegal tobacco. We are delivering on the reforms that stakeholders have said that they need to be able to take further action to help reduce smoking rates. These reforms are the result of extensive consultation with key stakeholders and people who are engaged in making sure that we have an appropriate tobacco regulatory environment. That includes small businesses, public health agencies, retailers and hospitality businesses. It has been in partnership and in consultation with all of these stakeholders that this reform package has been designed and is now before the parliament.

The contribution from the member for Pumicestone did raise some concerning issues around the links between the tobacco industry and the federal National Party. The Labor Party stopped taking donations from the tobacco industry almost 20 years ago. I acknowledge that the Queensland LNP are on the public record as saying that they do not accept donations from the tobacco industry. I do not doubt the authenticity of the contributions from those opposite in the LNP when it comes to their support for this bill.

However, like the member for Pumicestone, I would encourage those members to raise with their federal counterparts the issue of accepting donations from the tobacco industry. There was a concerning report from the ABC in June last year which found that the national vaping lobby group 'donated a total of \$44,000 to the Liberal Party but the money was declared as personal gifts from its director on electoral returns'. I table that article.

*Tabled paper:* Article from *ABC News*, dated 28 June 2022, titled "'Personal' donations to the Liberal Party came from vaping lobby during debate over policy" [\[701\]](#).


These links are directly relevant to the debate that we are having. When we raise the issue of tobacco control in the regulatory and legal environment in Queensland—and those laws and policies obviously exist and work with federal policies and laws—this is a serious issue and it needs to be ventilated and discussed. In late March this year the Public Health Association of Australia put out a media statement in relation to the federal National's policy, that the member for Pumicestone referred to, supporting vapes where it detailed over \$200,000 worth of direct donations from tobacco company Philip Morris. I table that media statement from the Public Health Association of Australia.

*Tabled paper:* Media article, dated 21 March 2023, titled 'Nationals' policy will increase the vaping problem. Their history of receiving tobacco industry money means they're irrelevant in any vaping discussion: PHAA' [\[702\]](#).

I reiterate that I would ask the members of the Queensland LNP to not only take the action of supporting this legislation because it is good legislation that will improve the health of Queenslanders, but take action by talking to their federal Liberal and National counterparts to stop accepting donations of the tobacco lobby.

Queensland's adult smoking rate has more than halved over the last 20 years yet we know that smoking remains the leading cause of preventable death and disease, with one in five cancers attributed to tobacco use. There are many members in the chamber right now across all parties who have an orange heart on their lapels from Palliative Care Queensland in acknowledgement of Palliative Care Week. I doubt that anybody in this place has not been touched in some way by the reality of life-limiting conditions. It puts into sharp focus the importance of the reforms that we are debating today as we enter into Palliative Care Week. I acknowledge every single palliative care worker, particularly in my electorate of Bundamba, but right throughout Queensland. They do an absolutely amazing job.

Too many people in Queensland die from preventable deaths due to smoking. We have to do what we can to continue to reduce rates of smoking and we must do everything possible to ensure that the next generation does not get hooked on smoking products. These reforms are essential as we continue to drive down smoking rates in Queensland. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr DAMETTO** (Hinchinbrook—KAP) (4.08 pm): I rise to give my contribution on the Tobacco and Other Smoking Products Amendment Bill 2023. Smoking has had a long history in this country and in this state, and things have changed over the years. Smoking used to be promoted as a healthy thing to do and something that everyone should be involved in. Now we are at a point where we have been well educated in this state, not only through regulation and legislation but also through Queensland Health and the public health system, that smoking is not good for our health. There are a lot of preventable diseases including cancer which could be and have been attributed to smoking.

It is good to see the drop in the numbers of adults smoking across the country and the state. Halving the number of adults smoking in this state is a great thing. We have seen a number of reforms over the years. It started with not allowing people to smoke in pubs and clubs anymore. Some of us here might remember going to nightclubs when that came in. People were sent out onto the pavement to have a *darb*, or a cigarette, as they say. That was a hallmark decision that changed people's behaviour around smoking.

We then saw a ratcheting up of the taxes attached to smoking products. That has been interesting to watch and comment on in this House. After people who continued to smoke were pushed out of pubs and clubs and public spaces—and in their eyes ostracised—governments decided to drive up the price of smoking. It has been highlighted by many members in this House that the people who are most affected and the groups that have the highest number of smokers in our society are our First Nations groups and lower socio-economic groups across Queensland. Driving up the taxes on smoking products seems to affect those who earn less and those who have less to spend. For some reason, we have not been able to educate those people that smoking is something they should give away. We are penalising those people right now through driving up the cost of smoking.

The legislation we are debating today is trying to achieve a few policy objectives. We have seen a lot of illegal tobacconists pop up—the chop-chop stores as people have been calling them. I will address those in a minute. The state government's policy objectives are: to establish a licensing scheme for the wholesale and retail sale of smoking products; to ensure there are effective deterrents against the unlawful supply of smoking products, including strong penalties—it has been noted that they are already illegal tobacco products, so I do not know why there has been no enforcement.

The next policy objective is to empower Queensland Health to monitor compliance with Commonwealth requirements for smoking products and improve intelligence sharing with other state, territory and Commonwealth law enforcement agencies. Once again, those products are already illegal and enforcement would have ensured that they did not get out of control, as we see today. A comment from a member opposite earlier was that we have nearly more illegal tobacco stores in Queensland than legal. How did this happen? I say it was due to absolute complacency.

The next policy objective is to modernise and clarify the requirements for advertising, display and promotion of smoking products, including their application to online trading. I think that is probably a good thing. Once again, it shows that the smoking market is not well understood. I will explain that in a minute.

The next policy objective is to enhance offences protecting children from the dangers of smoking. There are some provisions in this bill that will now make it illegal for parents and guardians to buy cigarettes for their children. I think that is a good thing. As you read the explanatory notes, it seems to be more about being a deterrent. For anyone trying to achieve these policy objectives, who is going to police this? The police are already under-resourced.

The last policy objective is to improve protections at liquor licensed premises, including tighter requirements for smoking areas and tobacco product vending machines. Once again, pubs, sporting clubs and anyone organising children's groups will be the ones asked to police this. The state government is going to introduce new legislation to try to reduce the harmful effects of vaping. That is great but, once again, we are putting it back onto the public and onto those people who do not have the resources to do this. We are asking them to police it.

I want people to understand what has happened over the last five to 10 years. We have seen the rise in vaping. Vapes are not captured in this legislation, but it is important to add some context around why we have seen a rise in illicit tobacco stores. Vaping has pulled along a whole generation of kids whom the government was protecting from tobacco company advertising and from people smoking around them. They have let this industry go unregulated and largely unpoliced for so long that we now have this huge problem. We have 10-, 13- and 14-year-old kids who are hooked on cherry vapes because of the nicotine content all the way through to 30- and 40-year-olds who gave smoking away in favour of vapes because they thought vapes were a safer product. Now we have an inquiry into the harmful effects of vaping. Who would have thought that importing an unregulated nicotine product from somewhere like China that smells and tastes like strawberry was ever going to be safe?

The problem now is that all of these people are going to rush back to using tobacco. If you ban vapes—which is going to happen because I cannot see the government regulating the importation of them—people are going to run back to using tobacco. So the average person who is paying about \$3 or \$4 for a vape stick that lasts them two or three weeks will be back to paying \$40, \$50, \$60 or \$70 for their tobacco, whether they buy it in a pouch or a packet.

We have seen the rise in illegal tobacco stores—the chop-chop stores—with imported unregulated tobacco because people cannot afford to buy cigarettes. That is great but, when someone is addicted to a drug, driving up the price does not solve the problem. Driving up the price of illicit drugs like heroin and ice does not stop people from using. They find a cheaper product or they find the money to buy that product. If the state government were serious about stamping out tobacco, they would look at what they are doing in New Zealand. They are phasing out the ability to buy cigarettes. The state government seems to be more worried about making sure that people are deterred from smoking rather than being the big person in the room and stamping it out, which could actually work.

A lot of the money from taxation goes straight into our health system. If the state government really cared about the people who are buying tobacco, why don't they have someone from Queensland Health standing out the front of every tobacco store handing out a quit smoking brochure or asking people to go to a GP to get nicotine patches to get them off illegal tobacco, normal tobacco or vapes? That would be a great idea.


I note the comments about who has taken donations over the years from big tobacco companies. We have been talking a lot about small legal tobacco retailers benefiting from the banning of illegal tobacco stores, but guess who is going to win out of all this? It will be the big international tobacco companies. Guess what? The government has allowed vaping to run rampant for 10 years and those users are now addicted to nicotine. They are going to shut down the local chop-chop store. That is a great idea, but who is going to benefit? It will be the big tobacco companies.

**Mr Knuth:** It's always the case.

**Mr DAMETTO:** It is always the case that the corporations win. This legislation might have the best intentions, but if the government sunk its teeth into this and really understood how smokers feel and operate and how nicotine affects people they would have identified who the big winners were going to be. I think we should do everything we can to deter people from smoking, but taxing people and pushing people towards an expensive product as a deterrent is not going to work. We have to do more to get people off the cigarettes.

**An honourable member** interjected.

**Mr DAMETTO:** I am not taking that interjection. I would not even know what seat he represents. The KAP will continue to make sure that Queenslanders are represented in this House. The losers from this legislation will be the smokers. The smokers will be the ones affected and they are the ones who should be protected.

 **Mrs MULLEN** (Jordan—ALP) (4.18 pm): I rise to support the Tobacco and Other Smoking Products Amendment Bill 2023. I would like to begin by acknowledging the work of the former health minister, Yvette D'Ath, who has guided this legislation in a comprehensive manner, and that has

included providing a regulatory impact statement and listening to the concerns of stakeholders regarding further ways we can decrease the smoking rate in Queensland and also the need to stamp out the illicit tobacco trade.

Smoking in the mid-20th century was ubiquitous in Australia, as in other Western countries. A report in the *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Medicine* titled 'Trends in cigarette consumption in Australia' showed that in 1945 more than three out of every four men and one in every four women were regular smokers. We have certainly come a long way since then, and we should feel very proud that the adult smoking rate has halved in Queensland over the past 25 years.

The Queensland Preventive Health Survey reported that daily smoking halved in Queensland from 2002 to 2022 and is now at 10.4 per cent. This has not been a fluke: it is the result of hard work by successive federal and state governments through anti-smoking campaigns, support programs and via clear and strong legislative changes. The bill before us seeks to continue this work to reduce the smoking rate in Queensland and better protect the community from second-hand smoke.

The bill expands smoke-free public spaces to include outdoor markets and improves protections from second-hand smoke at other outdoor eating and drinking places where families and children gather, including through new smoke-free buffer zones both inside and immediately outside the place. The bill also prohibits smoking near organised children's activities and at car parks adjacent to schools. There are also improvements to the protections for patrons at liquor licensed premises. This includes extending the buffer zone between a designated outdoor smoking area and the enclosed area of the premise and restricting the sale of smoking products to service areas.

The bill also seeks to modernise and clarify existing restrictions on the display, advertising and promotion of smoking products, particularly in relation to online sales. Current provisions in the act regulating the advertising, display and promotion of smoking products were clearly designed primarily for the sale of tobacco products at bricks-and-mortar outlets and have not kept pace with what is happening in the online world where many—but particularly young—people are active. The legislation includes prohibiting practices designed to circumvent current requirements such as supplying smoking products for a nominal fee or displaying more than one mandatory or permitted sign at a premise to indirectly draw attention to the fact that smoking products are available for sale. The bill also clarifies that the advertising provisions prohibit the display of multiple different business names that each reference a smoking product and using colloquial names for smoking products.

The other key area of concern that is being addressed through the legislation is the increasing illegal tobacco trade. My husband's family were tobacco farmers in Far North Queensland and always had a very good idea about which of their fellow farmers were involved in the illegal chop-chop trade. What we are seeing now goes beyond these small-time provincial operators. There are a number of illegal tobacco and vape shops trading with impunity, selling untaxed illegal cigarettes as well as dangerous vapes. They are in every community.

I was approached a couple of years ago in my electorate by a number of legitimate retailers who sell cigarettes who wanted to talk about some concerns they were having with a number of vape shops which had opened nearby. They first noticed something was awry when their cigarette sales dropped quite dramatically. One of the retailers also noticed, through reports of the ATM in his store, that there had been a really significant uplift in cash withdrawals over a number of months. Then finally there was photographic evidence of illegal tobacco products being sold in some of these stores. I worked really closely with our local police when this was discovered. I did note there was a real constitutional division between federal and state government laws along with the challenges of coordinating the responsibilities of Border Force, state police, health inspectors, the Australian Taxation Office and our local council. I strongly welcome this legislation, which really would have helped in that situation. Certainly our local Queensland public health unit at West Morton and my local police station worked together on addressing the concerns despite issues around roles and responsibilities. What we are doing now via this legislation will go a long way in dealing with the very situation I encountered in my own community.


A new licensing scheme for the wholesale and retail sale of smoking products will enable Queensland Health to more effectively identify and monitor the number, type and location of businesses supplying smoking products in Queensland. It is expected that that application portal will go live on 1 September 2023. Suppliers will then have 12 months to become licensed. I think we are also sending the clear message that selling smoking products must only be entrusted to legitimate businesses. To deter the unlawful supply of smoking products we are introducing significant maximum penalties for noncompliance, including: 1,000 penalty points for the unlicensed wholesale or retail sale of smoking

products or where a wholesaler sells smoking products to an unlicensed retailer; 300 penalty points for supplying illicit tobacco, being smoking products that do not comply with Commonwealth packaging and warning requirements; and 140 penalties points—that is around \$20,000—for being in possession of illicit tobacco at a retail premise.

When you think about the financial penalties we are seeking to impose, it is important to remember the significant cost to taxpayers. According to Australian Border Force, the rampant black market cash trade leads to the leakage of an estimated \$2.6 billion in import excise alone, plus missing income tax revenue and GST. As we have heard, the annual cost of smoking to Queensland, including hospital and other medical expenses, has been estimated at \$27.4 billion. The illegal tobacco trade also sabotages efforts designed to encourage smokers to quit. As we now know, worst of all it acts as a gateway for young Australians to take up vaping.

I am particularly pleased to see that the bill provides authorised persons with expanded enforcement powers to make inquiries, remain on premises and issue improvement notices to immediately prohibit an activity. I know that my local police are really very excited about these laws and being able to enforce some of these measures. To prevent seized illicit tobacco from being used to commit further offences, I note that the chief executive will be empowered to forfeit those products without first taking prosecution action. It will also allow and facilitate the sharing of intelligence with other state and Commonwealth enforcement agencies. As I said, it is really important for our local police to assist Queensland Health to combat that illicit trade in illegal tobacco, and these police officers will be made authorised persons for the purpose of enforcing the new offences.

This is an important and very relevant bill. It recognises that we need greater oversight of what is happening in the tobacco trade. It ensures that those who are doing the right thing when it comes to the sale of cigarettes are not being penalised financially by those who flout the law. The bill also modernises elements of the act, particularly around the advertising, display and promotion provisions, especially in light of online sales, and also introduces new protections from exposure to second-hand smoke at places where families and the community gather. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Hon. MC BAILEY** (Miller—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads and Minister for Digital Services) (4.25 pm): I rise to support the latest tobacco and smoking reforms under this government. It is a little-known fact that as a 16-year-old one of my first political acts was to join the non-smokers' movement in Queensland. From a personal point of view, my father was a tobacco addict who smoked three packets a day. He was a chain smoker who, unsurprisingly, died early at 60 from throat cancer. It is a terrible way to die. Smoking is something that is very damaging to people's health. I am proud to be part of a government that is acting in this regard. We have to keep policy contemporary to the circumstances. Obviously, vaping is a new form of pushing nicotine and addiction. It may not have some of the health disbenefits but it certainly causes a lot of addiction, particularly amongst our younger generation. We have to keep health prevention in our community in check, and this bill does that. I am very proud to support the minister and be part of a government that is improving protections from tobacco addiction via this bill.

We know the harm that smoking causes to people's health, in particular the health of close family members and the broader health of our community. Reducing rates of smoking and addiction in Queensland, especially for young Queenslanders, is an important reform and one that I support to develop a healthier community so people can lead better and longer lives, because that is the inevitable outcome of less smoking and less addiction to nicotine.

It is a fact that action on smoking in Australia over the last 40 years has been one of the quiet success stories in health policy. When I was growing up, one in two adults smoked. Often there were no provisions, no restrictions. You would get gassed when you flew on a plane or entered any kind of venue. You used to hang up your clothes when you got home to air them out before the next morning. It was absolutely foul and terrible. To now see smoking levels at 11 per cent of the population—and we want to see that go down even further—is a significant health success in terms of policy over the last four decades. You really see that when you travel to Europe, for example, where you see other countries that are way behind Australia. Passive and second-hand smoke is still a normal part of going into restaurants and bars in some countries. The fact that Australia is one of the leading countries to bring smoking rates down per capita is something that many governments and leaders over time should be proud of.


This amendment will improve the monitoring of the tobacco industry and crack down on the illegal selling of tobacco products within our communities. There is absolutely no doubt that smoking kills, and we must ensure that when Queenslanders are going out to enjoy their lifestyle they should not be exposed to second-hand smoke.

This bill expands those smoke-free spaces to include outdoor markets, which are very common and popular in our current culture. They are good places but nobody wants to be breathing in second-hand smoke as they are buying their vegetables, grabbing a coffee or buying something at the markets. They should be free from that smoke and this bill is promoting that, especially for young children who are at outdoor markets on their own or with parents. They should not be subjected to that as well.

The bill also improves protections for other areas where children gather through new smoke-free buffer zones both inside and outside eating and drinking venues. This government knows how important it is to stop children from accessing smoking products and exposure to second-hand smoke. This bill will remove exemption from liability for an adult or a guardian supplying smoking products to a child, and that is a positive thing. We do not want to see adults encouraging the uptake of smoking in young Queenslanders by giving them access to products that we know can lead to a lifelong addiction and health complications.

Educating Queenslanders, especially young Queenslanders, of the health impacts from smoking and vaping will help divert a lot of people away from the addictive substances. We need to respond to the new strategies that are being used to get people into nicotine addiction not via smoking but via vaping. No longer will you be able to smoke near organised activities where young Queenslanders are out and about enjoying their lifestyle or at car parks near their schools. Children are great mimickers. They will often look to adults for cues about what is normal and not normal, and what we want to see is them not adopting smoking as a default.

It was this side of the House that implemented the smoke-free places across Queensland, and I am proud of the Palaszczuk government for showing leadership on that. This will go further to make more places smoke-free right across Queensland because smoking around young people especially is unacceptable. This bill strengthens our already tough laws. A range of speakers have spoken about other aspects of the bill so I am not about to repeat those. I am proud to support this bill. It is something that I am personally very passionate about. I am very proud that this government is legislating in this regard. I thank all members who will vote for this bill.

 **Dr ROWAN** (Moggill—LNP) (4.31 pm): I rise to contribute to the debate on the Tobacco and Other Smoking Products Amendment Bill 2023. It is widely acknowledged that smoking is the leading preventable cause of disease and death in Australia—in order words, morbidity and mortality. Despite adult smoking rates having halved in Queensland over the last 20 years, as our Chief Health Officer reported in 2022 the statistics remain alarming. In Queensland in 2022, there were 420,000 adults who smoked daily, while 23,000 schoolchildren aged 12 to 17 years reported having smoked at least one cigarette in the previous seven days in 2017. Daily smoking prevalence is more than three times higher in the most disadvantaged areas compared to the most advantaged areas in Queensland, with daily smoking prevalence 80 per cent higher in remote areas compared to major cities. It is against this background, as the legislation's explanatory notes indicate, that this legislation seeks to—

... strengthen, modernise and future-proof the requirements, restrictions and safeguards in the Tobacco and Other Smoking Products Act 1998 ... to continue reducing the smoking rate in Queensland and provide the Queensland community with further protections from second-hand smoke and the illicit tobacco trade.

To achieve this objective, this legislation seeks to: prohibit the supply and possession of illicit tobacco; strengthen the enforcement capabilities and powers under the act, including by facilitating intelligence sharing with other jurisdictions; modernise and clarify restrictions relating to the advertising, display and promotion of smoking products, including their application to online trading; prohibit the supply and handling of smoking products by children; extend the prohibition on supplying smoking products to children to include supply by parents or guardians; expand smoke-free places, including community spaces used by children; and improve restrictions and protections that apply to liquor licensed premises.

After this legislation was first introduced by the former minister for health and ambulance services and now current Attorney-General, it was referred to the Queensland parliament's Health and Environment Committee for further consideration and stakeholder consultation. Having listened to a variety of stakeholders during its inquiry—including members of the public, academic experts, health professionals and other directly impacted organisations, including 31 submissions and four public briefings and hearings—the Health and Environment Committee tabled its report No. 32 to the Queensland parliament on 5 May 2023.

The committee made three recommendations including: firstly, that the legislation be passed; secondly, that there is improved alignment of the Medicines and Poisons Act 2019 and the Tobacco and Other Smoking Products Act 1998 to remove barriers to executing warrants, searching premises

and seizing contraband items; and, thirdly, that the state government fully consider resourcing enhanced enforcement efforts coordinated between Queensland Health and the Queensland Police Service, and between the relevant state and federal agencies, targeting illicit tobacco and vaping markets. These recommendations are entirely fair and justified and align with concerns the Liberal National Party has previously expressed. I note these important recommendations were also largely backed and supported by a number of key stakeholders and experts.

I would like to take this opportunity to formally acknowledge and thank Professor Coral Gartner, director of the National Health and Medical Research Council Centre of Research Excellence on Achieving the Tobacco Endgame, in particular for the detailed submission provided to the committee along with her appearance as an expert witness at the committee's hearing on 17 April 2023. Professor Gartner is an international expert in tobacco control policy, an Australian Research Council future fellow and chair of the Interdisciplinary Tobacco Endgame Research Network. She leads a multidisciplinary international team of researchers developing the evidence base to identify the most promising policies to end the tobacco epidemic in Australia and to reduce the global toll of tobacco related disease.

Professor Gartner raised many significant and important issues and observations that are worthy of further exploration and consideration by the Queensland state government. In particular, I note Professor Gartner's evidence in relation to the strong correlation between mental health symptoms and smoking, matters around enforcement and not only the online sale but also delivery of tobacco products.

I also wish to highlight the submission provided by Dr Brett Dale, chief executive officer of the Australian Medical Association of Queensland. In relation to prohibiting the supply of smoking products to children by parents and guardians, I wish to note Dr Brett Dale's comments that—

AMA Queensland welcomes the statement in the Bill's Explanatory Notes that 'the intended enforcement approach will focus on monitoring, prevention and education, rather than prosecution of the parent or guardian'.

The data shows smoking rates are highest amongst First Nations people and lower socio-economic and regional or remote communities who are likewise overrepresented in our criminal justice system. It is imperative that these groups are supported to treat their addiction and other health problems (including mental health issues) and not further targeted by law enforcement agencies.

Further, I am also drawn to Dr Brett Dale's comments in relation to the prohibition on smoking at children's organised activities or car parks adjacent to schools, wherein it was submitted—

Whilst not part of the previous consultation on the Bill, AMA Queensland welcomes these proposed amendments. Given the increasing rates of smoking, particularly e-cigarettes, amongst children and young people it is essential that reforms are introduced urgently to reverse this trend.

Schools and adjacent areas are reported as key settings in which children are purchasing and using e-cigarettes. Prohibiting smoking at children's organised activities and around schools will assist in addressing this development and reduce children's exposure to smoking.

As the Liberal National Party shadow minister for education, I remain extremely concerned about the prevalence and use of tobacco and other substances in Queensland schools. There is no doubt that the Palaszczuk state Labor government is failing to comprehensively control and eliminate substance use in our state schools. In fact, figures I obtained this year in a question on notice revealed that total student suspensions and exclusions due to illegal tobacco and other illegal substances have skyrocketed 190 per cent since the Palaszczuk state Labor government came to power. Last year alone, total student suspensions and exclusions rose by over 15 per cent to more than 8,600 instances.

**Government members** interjected.

**Dr ROWAN:** Members opposite may interject about that, but these figures are deeply alarming and Queensland parents are rightly concerned, as are staff and principals within our schools. Parents have a right to expect that their children will be safe when they attend school and not be exposed to harmful substances, yet such exposure and harmful behaviours have only grown exponentially under the Labor minister for education. You cannot fix what you do not measure, which is why it is unacceptable that the Labor minister for education has admitted that this data does not accurately capture the types of drugs and substances, including tobacco, that students are caught using.


There must be zero tolerance when it comes to tobacco and drug use in Queensland schools because of both the physical and psychological harms that can result from using those substances. Queensland parents, students, teachers and staff deserve answers from the Palaszczuk state Labor government as to how they will fix this growing issue in our schools.

On a related matter, I wish to join with my Liberal National Party colleagues and make it clear that this legislation will not deal with the regulation of e-cigarettes or vapes. Queenslanders, especially Queensland families, are seeking leadership from the state Labor government to proactively deal with



this growing and largely unregulated market. We know that the Labor government has an inquiry in relation to this, but again they have been slow to act when it comes to this. This has been a growing issue over a long period of time and certainly action needs to be taken.

In concluding today, I thank and acknowledge all stakeholders and experts who contributed to the examination of this legislation. I also again implore the state Labor government, before the passage of this legislation, to comprehensively outline how it will ensure that relevant authorities are comprehensively resourced to ensure that these laws can be properly enforced. Whilst it is important to have laws, it is the practical action that follows from those laws, the implementation and the resourcing that goes behind that to make it a reality, that will ensure that the public health benefit is achieved here in Queensland.

 **Mr TANTARI** (Hervey Bay—ALP) (4.40 pm): I rise in support of the Tobacco and Other Smoking Products Amendment Bill 2023. This bill should not be underestimated in its impact in improving the health of many Queenslanders. It is our duty to protect the wellbeing and future of our respective communities and, in particular, our younger generation. It is important that we tackle these issues head-on, understanding the consequences they have for our society, and look at making sure that we continue to reduce our smoking rates, which has been very effective over the last many decades. It is very important that we do that to improve the overall health of our communities.

This bill we are debating achieves its policy objectives: by amending the Tobacco and Other Smoking Products Act 1998 to establish a licensed scheme for the wholesale and retail sale of smoking products; by ensuring there are effective deterrents against the unlawful supply of smoking products, including stronger penalties; by empowering Queensland Health to monitor compliance; by modernising and clarifying the requirements for advertising, display and promotion of smoking products, including their application to online trading; by expanding smoke-free public spaces, including community spaces for children, enhancing offences, protecting children from the dangers of smoking; and improving protections at liquor licensed premises, including tighter requirements for smoking areas and tobacco product vending machines.

Tobacco has long been recognised as a major public health concern worldwide. Its devastating impact on individuals, families and communities cannot be overstated. The detrimental effects on human health are well-documented with links to a range of life-threatening conditions such as lung cancer and heart disease. By introducing a licensing scheme for the wholesale and retail sale of smoking products, our state can take a significant step towards reducing the prevalence of smoking and its associated harms from second-hand smoke, while also ensuring that the controls are put in place to regulate and control the sale and distribution of tobacco products to restrict the illicit tobacco trade through what we call—and many have said here earlier—the chop-chop shops which have popped up throughout our communities. The amendments to the act will enable a stricter set of standards for retailers, ensuring that they adhere to responsible practices. Licensing will allow for increased enforcement of existing laws, leading to reduced accessibility for underage individuals and will ultimately achieve the goal set down by nearly all health authorities around the world in lowering the use of smoking products and smoking rates across our state.

The concerns regarding tobacco usage extend beyond licensing alone with education and awareness playing a pivotal role in deterring people, particularly young people, from taking up smoking in the first place. This bill modernises advertising because suppliers are increasingly using digital marketing to reach new consumers, both in schools and within our wider communities. Doing this is crucial to lowering the uptake of these products. Through educating our children about the dangers of smoking, highlighting the long-term health consequences and showcasing the benefits of a smoke-free lifestyle, we can empower children and young adults to make informed choices and say no to smoking products.


While we address the issue of tobacco licensing, we need to also confront the emerging threat of vaping which has gained popularity amongst young people in recent years. I understand that we currently have an inquiry into vaping being undertaken by our government, but I would like to reflect on vaping or electronic cigarettes being marketed as safer alternatives to traditional smoking. Mounting evidence suggests that vaping carries its own set of dangers particularly when it comes to our children. One of the major concerns is the aggressive marketing and the appealing flavours that are specifically targeted at our young people. Preliminary evidence is showing that many vape products currently on the market do not indicate the chemical make-up of the vape the consumers are ingesting which, frankly, is quite alarming. Moreover, the long-term health effects of vaping remain uncertain as the technology is relatively new and comprehensive research is still ongoing. Early studies indicate potential harm to respiratory and cardiovascular systems, along with detrimental effects on brain

development. We cannot afford to gamble with the health of our children and adolescents. The precautionary principle must guide our actions, urging us to take preventive measures before it is too late.

Protecting our youth from the dangers of smoking products needs a multifaceted approach. This legislation amends the act to regulate the marketing, sale and accessibility of all smoking products, mirroring the stringent measures we have implemented on tobacco, including banning the sale of e-cigarettes to minors. The current act prohibits the supply of smoking products to a person under the age of 18 years, but there is no restriction on the age at which a person may supply a smoking product to another person. The bill amends the act to prohibit the supply and handling of smoking products by children, with the prohibition commencing on 1 September 2024. For small businesses employing less than 20 people, the commencement day will be September 2025. Restricting marketing tactics that target young people and implementing clear warning labels highlighting the risks of nicotine addiction and potential health hazards from vaping are also important. It is important that we continue to invest in educational campaigns that educate our children, parents and teachers about the dangers of smoking products and vaping, equipping them with accurate information that debunk the misconceptions surrounding tobacco use and e-cigarettes and empowering them to make informed decisions.

I cannot recommend these amendments strongly enough and ask all members to support this bill before the House. This legislation does create a healthier state. It will further strengthen the protection of our children from the dangers of a potential lifelong addiction to substances that damage their health and brings premature death.

Finally I would like to acknowledge the work done by the former and current ministers for health, the committee and their secretariat in formulating and reviewing this legislation. I support this very timely bill and the amendments before the House.

 **Ms PUGH** (Mount Ommaney—ALP) (4.47 pm): I want to begin by echoing the sentiments of the member for Hervey Bay. I do not think we can underestimate the impacts that this legislation is going to have on health outcomes in Queensland because it is putting in place some really fantastic social scaffolding and structures to encourage people to smoke less.

I want to start by declaring that one of the earliest memories of my young life was watching my mum on what was not a journey but a battle to give up smoking. I think it took her two or three attempts to give up smoking. I remember that she and her sister, who also smoked, gave up the day that cigarettes hit a whopping \$3 a packet, back in the early nineties. I remember her saying that it was too expensive, she was not going to pay it anymore, and she and Aunty Anne decided to give up. I remember the importance of having the social structures and the scaffolding in place because it was at that time that we were starting to see some really strong societal attitudes around smoking change.

One of the key things we will see out of this legislation is the continued moving away from making it easy for people to smoke. That is really important because when somebody is trying to give up smoking, they do not want to be reminded about what it is they are giving up, they certainly do not want to see other people smoking, and they also do not want to be around any of the other cues like alcohol, or alcohol and smoking spaces, that would encourage them to lose that willpower temporarily and to take up smoking again.

I want to acknowledge at the outset that it is a really hard thing to do. We are not going to encourage people to give up smoking by heaping blame or shame on them. It is a decision that every individual has to make for themselves. However, as a government and as a parliament we have to put the supports, scaffolding and social infrastructure in place to ensure that when they do make that decision that decision is well supported. That is exactly what the changes in this legislation do.

This bill builds on the Palaszczuk government's 2020 election commitment to strengthen our tobacco laws and increase smoke-free places across Queensland. Like the member for Miller, although I am a little bit younger I can remember going out in my late teens and early 20s and coming home reeking of cigarette smoke. I cannot believe people could still smoke indoors back then. It beggars belief that was allowed back then. People could smoke inside in pubs, in nightclubs—

**Ms Boyd:** In McDonald's too.

**Ms PUGH:** Yes, people could smoke anywhere, even indoor at Macca's, when I was a kid. It is crazy to think that was socially acceptable. However, as attitudes and community change, so does legislation.

In the past 25 years we have seen smoking rates drop thanks to concerted efforts across all kinds and all levels of government. It is important to note, as I mentioned earlier, a lot of the initiatives to discourage people from smoking, to discourage young people from taking it up or to encourage people to quit have not been punitive. They have been based around great quit programs. They have

been based around ensuring it is more difficult for people to smoke. To a certain extent we have had those education programs, but in this case those education programs will also partner with some rules around parents not being able to provide cigarettes to their children, and I will return to that in a moment.

This bill is responding to the emerging challenges in preventing young people from starting or continuing to smoke. We know there is a range of reasons why young people take up smoking including in many cases that they have seen normalised smoking behaviour and they have always had access to smoking products. Maybe that is due to a parent who leaves them lying around the house. Sometimes it is also because a parent actually purchases cigarettes for their child, and presently there is no penalty for that under Queensland law.

As I said, one of the most common ways that young people take up smoking is because they see others smoking, be that friends, family or other loved ones. In my family when I was growing up I had four aunts and uncles, and three of them smoked and so did my mother. That is an 80 per cent smoking rate in my mother's generation when I was a young person, which is well in excess of the current average. In cases like that it is not hard to imagine how young people would take up smoking. I never have—I want to put that on the record—because I promised my mother I never would.


**Mrs McMahon:** Good girl.

**Ms PUGH:** That's right, member for Macalister; I am a good girl. This bill is going to introduce measures to ensure young people do not take up this habit because we know it is a dangerous addiction; it is a life threatening addiction, as the Cancer Council will tell people. It also costs the Queensland community \$27.4 billion every year. We are going to act to expand smoke-free areas across Queensland. There is currently a ban in place relating to children's sport. If parents go and watch their kids play soccer on a Saturday they cannot light up. If their children are participating in organised outdoor activities like Girl Guides or Scouts, those same rules do not necessarily apply. We are going to make sure that they do, because Girl Guides and Scouts are, of course, entitled to the same protections as our netball, basketball and soccer players, who are about to start a great winter season right across Queensland, especially in the electorate of Mount Ommaney.

The bill also introduces smoke-free buffer zones around the perimeter of outdoor eating and drinking places and around designated outdoor smoking areas, or DOSAs. Under this legislation it will be an offence for a licensee to allow a minor to remain in a DOSA. Obviously we do not want young children imbibing second-hand smoke. That is one of the key challenges with smoking and it always has been. When people consume alcohol, for example, they are only impacting themselves. However, when a parent smokes around a child or in the home, even if the child is not there, that second-hand smoke can and does impact their children. We know that smoking while pregnant can lead to issues like low birth weights and other kinds of complications, so there are really compelling reasons for us to do everything we can to stamp out smoking.

Another provision that I think is really important, although it might sound minor to some members, is related to social triggers. When I think of the smokers I know when they are trying to give up the last thing they need is that social trigger to start again. It is really important that we are limiting the supply of smoking products at liquor licensed premises to service areas. When we look at the quit lit—the quitting resources that are available online—a lot of them mention alcohol being a trigger. When somebody goes to a licensed venue and they have a drink and they can see cigarettes for sale, for many smokers, especially people who would describe themselves as social smokers—and I know a fair few of those—it is a trigger. If we can stop those social smokers from easily accessing that packet, it may well stop them buying that packet of cigarettes and taking up the habit. That is really important because, as I said about my mum's story earlier, she had three goes at quitting smoking before she was successful. By putting these provisions in the legislation we are going to give people a real opportunity when it comes to that trigger point when they are consuming alcohol. When they are in that licensed premises they will not be able to access those cigarettes as easily. That may just make the difference for some smokers.

We have done so much work in this state over the last 20 to 25 years to reduce smoking and we know that one of the most effective measures has been reducing the areas where people can smoke while simultaneously changing social opinion. I am sure members of the House would remember the 'nobody smokes here anymore' ad where the smokers went outside to have their cigarette. Instead of it being the social, cool thing to do, they now felt they were a little bit isolated and a little bit lonely. It was not shaming the smokers. It was not talking down to them. It was just saying the world is changing and if they want to be social, smoking is not the way to do it anymore; it is about being inside where the fun is happening. I think provisions in the legislation like this really speak to the importance of those social expectations. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr CRANDON** (Coomera—LNP) (4.57 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the Tobacco and Other Smoking Products Amendment Bill and also report No. 32 of the 57th Parliament's Health and Environment Committee. I note there are three recommendations in the report. The first is for the bill to be passed. The second states—

The committee recommends improved alignment of the Medicines and Poisons Act 2019 and the Tobacco and Other Smoking Products Act 1998 to remove barriers to executing warrants, searching premises and seizing contraband items.

The third states—

The committee recommends that the Government fully consider resourcing enhanced enforcement efforts coordinated between Queensland Health and the Queensland Police Service, and between the relevant state and federal agencies targeting illicit tobacco and vaping markets.

In that regard I believe we have broad support for the bill before the House. I note also that the report lists comments from people submitting witness statements to the committee. One such comment is that—

... placing more stringent limits on the sale of e-cigarettes and e-liquids, for example by restricting their sale to pharmacies, under prescription, regardless of whether they contain nicotine.

It also reports that in response to that the department said—

... more stringent regulation of e-cigarettes and e-liquids falls beyond the scope of the Bill, but may be considered in the future.

That is of grave concern to me, and the comments by the committee also reference that.

A major issue of concern to me is the vaping epidemic in our schools. We have certainly seen an explosion in the number of tobacconists in my area. In fact, it has roughly doubled over the last little while.

In fact, in the last six to nine months I have seen two additional tobacconists open. Just down the road—a few hundred metres in each direction—there are additional tobacconists. Let's not fool ourselves: they are not selling enough cigarettes to justify that number of tobacconists; they are selling vaping products and they are selling them to our youth in greater and greater numbers. I constantly receive complaints. In fact, I brought the matter to the attention of the health minister two years ago and, coincidentally, one of her responses to me was on 24 May 2021. Today is the two-year anniversary.

Debate, on motion of Mr Crandon adjourned.

## MOTION

### Palaszczuk Labor Government, Youth Crime

 **Mr NICHOLLS** (Clayfield—LNP) (5.00 pm): I move—

That this House notes:

1. Attorney-General D'Ath weakened the youth justice laws in 2015-16 including abolishing breach of bail and bringing back detention as a last resort.
2. The members for Barron River, Thuringowa, Townsville, Keppel, Maryborough, Pine Rivers and Mackay voted to support those laws.

and calls on the government to listen to community concern over escalating levels of youth crime and consider all options to tackle the issue.

This is a serious motion addressing the huge community concern about the incidence of youth crime since the now recycled Attorney-General was first appointed in 2015 and started systematically weakening Queensland's youth crime laws, including reinstating detention as a last resort. It is a concern that is ongoing, despite this chaotic and crisis-ridden Labor government's desperate attempt to reset—a politically motivated attempt so blatantly obvious that the Queensland public sees straight through it. They are not buying it. It is the same circus, the same clowns and the same result.

At the outset it is worth noting what the Childrens Court report for 2014-15 showed was the outcome of the LNP's strong laws before this chaotic Labor government, under this recycled Attorney-General, started watering them down. I will quote from the report, because it says that the incidence of youth crime fell by five per cent in that year. The report states—


The trend line in relation to the ten year comparison of the number of juvenile defendants disposed of in all Queensland Courts shows a slight increase, although in 2014-15, there was a 8.7% decrease from the previous year. The trend line in relation to the ten year comparison of the number of charges against juvenile defendants continues to rise, although in 2014-15 there was a 4.9% decrease from the previous year.

There was an almost five per cent decrease in charges in 2014-15, so the trend line had been up but the year in which the LNP's tough laws were introduced the numbers were going down. These are the numbers that a chaotic and a crisis-ridden Labor government does not want to hear in relation to the youth crime crisis currently pervading Queensland.

This is one of the most significant issues directly affecting Queenslanders. It affects them whether they are at work, whether they are at home or whether they are at play. It is important no matter where you are in this state—in Cairns, Townsville, Mackay, Rockhampton, Maryborough, North Lakes, Gold Coast, Toowoomba, Southern Downs, Chatsworth or even Clayfield. The numbers do not lie. This weak Labor Attorney-General's bill of 2015 that she introduced reinstated detention as a last resort, abolished breach of bail, reinstated restrictions on publishing identifying particulars of young people in the media, reinstated sentence review and abolished boot camps as an option. The figures show it has been an abject failure. That is why we say that we should unshackle the judiciary. We should give them the opportunity to make sure the sentence fits the crime by removing detention as a last resort—something that this Labor government has opposed every day for the last eight years.

There were other changes in 2016. They closed the Magistrates Court when hearing youth justice matters so that there could not be reasonable and supervised reporting in the media of what was going on in the courts. They increased the age at which young people are transferred to adult correctional facilities, from 17 to 18, leading to overcrowding. In 2016 they increased the upper age of children for the purposes of the Youth Justice Act, from 16 to 17, meaning more overcrowding in our youth detention centres and another \$500 million being spent on building more youth detention centres, because they had not planned for it. They did not know what was happening, even though they were warned about it.

The numbers are clear. There was a reduction in offences each year from 2011-12. In 2011-12 they were down by 175. The following year they were down 210. The following year they were down 115. In the final year of the LNP government, 2014-15, they were down 598. What happened in 2015-16? They went up, by almost 400. The following year they were up by almost 600. The following year they were up by 1,600, and in 2018-19 they were up by 3½ thousand. The figures do not lie. This Labor government has failed Queenslanders. It needs to bring back detention and make sure people pay the price for their crime.

 **Hon. DE FARMER** (Bulimba—ALP) (Minister for Employment and Small Business, Minister for Training and Skills Development and Minister for Youth Justice) (5.05 pm): I move the following amendment—

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

1. on 16 March 2023 the LNP voted in support of the Queensland government's stronger youth justice laws in the Strengthening Community Safety Bill;
2. the importance of providing strong laws, funding and intervention programs to tackle crimes committed by youths;
3. the strong legacy of justice and legal reforms of Attorney-General D'Ath over successive years compared to former LNP attorney-general Bleijie, who oversaw a litany of youth justice and other failures, including but definitely not limited to:
  - (a) failed youth justice boot camps;
  - (b) failed boot camp tender;
  - (c) cuts to youth justice conferencing;
  - (d) spending \$15,000 on chartering helicopter flights to visit the failed boot camps;
  - (e) orchestrating the sacking of the PCMC in the middle of the night;
  - (f) removing the CCC's corruption prevention function;
  - (g) failed sex offender laws;
  - (h) attacks on the judiciary;
  - (i) failed bikie laws;
  - (j) failed pink jumpsuit policy for prisoners;
  - (k) rushed outsourcing of court transcription services;
  - (l) abolishing the Drug Court;
  - (m) abolishing the Special Circumstances Court;
  - (n) abolishing the Murri Court;
  - (o) abolishing the Queensland Sentencing Advisory Council; and
  - (p) leaking private conversations with senior members of the judiciary.'

Where do I start? The member for Clayfield was talking about figures. I would like to quote some figures. I want to start with what they call the breach-of-bail laws. We all know that these were really pretend breach-of-bail laws; they were not real breach-of-bail laws. Those opposite talk about unshackling the judiciary. Not only did they not unshackle the judiciary; they actually shackled them, because they were laws that did not work. In fact, the courts found that those laws contradicted the Criminal Code rule against double punishment, so a child could be found guilty of an offence but not given any penalty. What did the figures look like for their breach-of-bail offence? Ninety per cent of the people who offended and were charged under this offence reoffended after one year and 94 per cent of them reoffended after the second year.

Let us look at that again in terms of what works and what does not work. Let us look at some figures. Over the entire 27 months that that offence was in place, 185 young people were charged. Those opposite voted for the strengthening community safety laws, so they must have thought that they were okay. In under two months since the new laws have been in place, 299 people have been charged while there were 185 under their Clayton's breach-of-bail laws. Let those opposite ask the community: which ones does it want? Does it want the laws that work—the laws that we introduced—or does it want the laws that those opposite put in place that do not work? What else can we talk about? How about boot camp? If we want to talk about the things that work, we know that the former attorney-general did sloppy work. His breach-of-bail law was just sloppy, so no wonder he is called the worst attorney-general ever. The boot camps were sloppy. He jumped over about eight other people because he tendered to pick an LNP donor.

**Mr Purdie** interjected.


**Ms FARMER:** What happened when kids went to boot camp? They were more likely to commit an offence if they went to boot camp.

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. Sorry to interrupt, Minister, but, member for Ninderry, you are warned under the standing orders.

**Ms FARMER:** Kids were more likely to commit an offence if they went to boot camp. If those opposite want to get started, they are the first two that I can think of in terms of what works and what does not work. When I go to members of the community I say, 'Do you want something that works?' If they say 'yes', I give them our figures and I give them those figures where they are more likely to offend—

*(Time expired)*

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Before I call the next speaker, I just want to take some advice from the Clerk.


 **Mr JANETZKI** (Toowoomba South—LNP) (5.11 pm): It is often said that past performance does not predict future results but there is always an exception to the rule, and we have heard it here tonight with the member for Bulimba and the long-term performance of the member for Redcliffe. I support the motion moved by my colleague the member for Clayfield and I want to go back to the Attorney-General's performance from when she was last there—the reheated Attorney-General from 2016. It is a measure of the crisis and chaos that has stricken this government that we have the failed and reheated youth justice minister, the member for Bulimba, and the Attorney-General back in their old positions.

Who can forget that the Attorney-General in 2016 removed breach of bail? After that, she brought in catch-and-release laws. Let us also not forget the performance of the Attorney-General on a whole range of other issues. In 2016 she junked Fitzgerald-era optional preferential voting reform. In 2017 she introduced a law that was never suggested by the CCC with the ban on property developer donations in the shadow of the election campaign. In 2020 she came in and finished the job with the financial gerrymandering of the electoral system. Who can forget that she showed such disregard for Fitzgerald-era reforms that she brought in 229 amendments in 100 pages at 9.30 the night before? Then how can we forget that she moved 17-year-olds into the youth justice system without any plan? We know that at that time that precipitated the watch house crisis that at one stage saw more children in the Brisbane Watch House than adults. We then saw the youth justice minister back in the old job now go on to give the most expensive TV interview in Australian history—a \$500 million interview with *Four Corners* as she tried to mop up the mess. We had children in watch houses in a most shameful chapter of our history. We had children with severed fingers. We had children lying on foam mattresses crying for their mothers dressed in smocks. We will not be lectured to by the youth justice minister and the Attorney-General in this state.

Who voted for all of this? Who voted for all of it but the member for Barron River. The member for Barron River voted for all of it while his community suffers with crime. You are three times more likely to have your car stolen in Cairns than you are in Brisbane. You are four times more likely to have your home or business broken into in Cairns than you are in Brisbane. What did we hear about crime from the member for Barron River in Cairns in the last sitting week? Nothing! Nothing! The member for Barron River in his home city for a home sitting said nothing about the issue that is consuming his community.

I want to turn now briefly to the events in the Toowoomba region this afternoon. This week we have had two significant ram-raiding incidents. Once upon a time offenders used to flee the police; now they are running at them. There has never been a more dangerous time for a police officer to serve and protect their community than right now in Queensland. There has never been a more dangerous time, so love and strength to the four officers who were injured today along with the three police cars that were damaged and the property damage that has been ongoing. We will not stop. We will not stop fighting for stronger laws. We will not stop because we will keep listening. We on this side of the House will keep listening to the people of Queensland. We will not stop fighting for stronger laws and better resourcing for the police and early intervention that works. We will not stop fighting for these things until everyone in the suburbs feels safe, until everyone in their streets feels safe and until everyone in their homes feels safe.

*(Time expired)*

 **Ms LAUGA** (Keppel—ALP) (5.16 pm): I rise to speak against the motion moved by the member for Clayfield and in support of the amendment moved by the minister. Tonight I am calling on the Leader of the Opposition to man up and apologise. He has been caught out telling lies about me on not one but now two occasions.

**Mr POWELL:** Mr Acting Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I understand the member for Keppel just used unparliamentary language.

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Member for Keppel, you have used unparliamentary language. I would ask you to withdraw.

**Ms LAUGA:** I withdraw. Tonight I am calling on the Leader of the Opposition to man up and apologise. He has been caught out telling mistruths about me on not one but now two occasions, and I will not stand for it. First, the Leader of the Opposition said that I was making up stories for Facebook about the LNP's attempts to halt the Yeppoon-Rockhampton road upgrade, but the Leader of the Opposition did not even know his shadow minister for local government had written a letter to the Minister for Main Roads wanting the engineering—

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

**Ms LAUGA:**—design—

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. Resume your seat please, member for Keppel. What is your point of order?

**Mr NICHOLLS:** My point of order, Mr Acting Speaker, is on relevance. This is not relevant to either the motion I moved or the amendment moved by the member's own side.

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** The point of order is upheld. Member for Keppel, there are other opportunities for you to make a speech of that nature. I would ask you to come back to either the amendment or the original motion.

**Ms LAUGA:** Yes, Mr Acting Speaker; I have raised this in the House before. Then just last week the Leader of the Opposition sent out a press release to Central Queensland media outlets accusing me of not using the word 'crime' once during parliament in Cairns two weeks ago. The Leader of the Opposition said in his media statement—

Shocking new *Hansard* analysis has revealed Rockhampton MP Barry O'Rourke, Keppel MP Brittany Lauga and Gladstone MP—

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

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Pause the clock.

**Mr NICHOLLS:** My point of order is the same point of order in relation to relevance. Just by saying the word 'crime' does not make it relevant to the content of either the motion that was moved by me or the amendment. Mr Acting Speaker, I would ask you to bring her back to the substance of the motion.


**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** I will take some advice. Member for Keppel, the point of order is valid. I was giving you some latitude to hear if you were going to bring your contribution back to either the motion or the amended motion. I will ask you to do that or I will sit you down.

**Ms LAUGA:** The Deputy Leader of the Opposition has raised, in this debate, words that were or were not uttered in Cairns during the last sitting week. I want to take this opportunity, whilst we are having this debate about words that were or were not used in the parliament in Cairns last week, to correct the record on the debate about crime. Clearly, the Leader of the Opposition and his media unit do not know how to correctly check the record—

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Member for Keppel, I will ask you to resume your seat.

**Mr WHITING:** Mr Acting Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I believe that the member for Keppel was referenced in the original motion specifically because of the issues that were raised by the member for Keppel. She was deliberately named in the original motion. Therefore, she is addressing what has been foreshadowed in that original motion.

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Thank you, member, for the point of order. I have reviewed the original motion. While the member was referenced in the original motion, the member is raising matters that in no way relate to the motion or the amended motion. She has been given guidance in relation to that on two occasions so I have now decided to ask the member to resume her seat.

 **Mrs FRECKLINGTON** (Nanango—LNP) (5.21 pm): When Queensland is in the grip of the biggest crime crisis that this state has faced—not only in Brisbane and Cairns but also in Hervey Bay, Bundaberg, Maryborough and Keppel—the member for Keppel stands in this House and spends two minutes talking about herself. This is not about the member for Keppel; it is about the victims of crime. It is about time that the Palaszczuk government members woke up and realised what is going on in their communities. In Hervey Bay, businesses are being repeatedly broken into. For elderly people in Hervey Bay, Bundaberg, Maryborough or anywhere in the Wide Bay, your chances of having your car flogged, your house broken into, your bag snatched or your business broken into has increased tenfold. It is unbelievable.

Let us look at the statistics on the unlawful use of a motor vehicle in the Wide Bay police district, which is a very large district. Hardworking police men and women are on the front line each and every day working their backsides off while this incompetent government has members who sit in this House and talk about themselves. Am I angry about this? You bet I am! I am angry because every single one of us on this side of the chamber receive the calls. We listen to the people and we go out and speak to them. Those opposite might think it is funny. The member for Pine Rivers should wait until her house is broken into or her car is flogged. Do not think you are exempt from this. Why the member for Pine Rivers actually believes she is above it all when every single person in this state—

**Ms BOYD:** Mr Acting Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I find the comments of the member for Nanango personally offensive and I ask her to withdraw.

**Mr Bleijie** interjected.

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Member for Kawana, you are warned under the standing orders. Member for Nanango, the member has found your comments personally offensive and asks that they be withdrawn.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** I withdraw. I will give a little history lesson to those opposite. In 2015 and 2016, when the now recycled Attorney-General was the Attorney-General, she came into this House and introduced the laws that removed breach of bail as an offence and removed detention as a last resort. The juveniles who were fronting the courts went, 'Yeehaw!' I remember this because I worked as a child lawyer in the criminal justice system with those juveniles. They rubbed their hands together and they said, 'We can now do what we want and there'll be no consequences.' Those juveniles have grown up under the Palaszczuk government's system. Those juveniles are now adult criminals and they are running around the streets because there are no consequences under the Palaszczuk government.

That is why we will always stand up for the victims of crime. That is why we will always say that we need to be tougher on crime. It is unbelievable that Palaszczuk government members are so ignorant of the fact that crime is happening on the streets. Where is the member for Maryborough, where is the member for Bundaberg and where is the member for Hervey Bay when they should be standing up for their communities? The member for Maryborough—

**Mr Saunders** interjected.




**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** Mr Acting Speaker, I take personal offence at the abuse that I just received from across the chamber. I take personal offence and I ask the member to withdraw.

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. Member for Maryborough, the member has found your comments to be personally offensive and asks you to withdraw.

**Mr SAUNDERS:** I withdraw.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** As I was saying, where is the member for Maryborough? He is certainly not standing up for the victims of crime within the Maryborough region. Where is the member for Bundaberg? He is completely silent when the crime rates have gone up. Under the Palaszczuk government, since 2015 there are two fewer police officers looking after the Maryborough region. How is that standing up for the community? Why is the member for Maryborough not going to the police minister and saying, 'Excuse me, we have an increase in crime by 237 per cent and the unlawful use of a motor vehicle is up by 246 per cent, but you've given us fewer coppers.'

It is no wonder that the people of the Wide Bay are upset with the Palaszczuk government. It is no wonder that they think their members do not voice their concerns in this place. We have just heard the member for Keppel speak for two minutes but it was all about her. It is the LNP that will keep this community safe.

 **Mr HARPER** (Thuringowa—ALP) (5.26 pm): I rise to oppose the opposition's motion and fully support the amended motion moved by the minister. The member for Nanango wants to give us a history lesson. I will give a history lesson to the member and all on the other side. I ask them to cast their minds back to 2013. The then member for Thuringowa, Sam Cox, said, 'Townsville is a war zone with 12- and 13- and 14-year-olds. Crime is out of control.' What did the then member for Mundingburra say? He was quoted in the *Townsville Bulletin* on 4 December 2013, after an 18-year-old stole a car with a baby in it. He said sentencing needed to be 'top of the discussion list'. He was outraged. He called for tougher penalties.

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr Krause** interjected.

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Order, members! Pause the clock. Member for Scenic Rim, you are warned under the standing orders.

**Mr HARPER:** He went on to say, 'We are seeing repeat offenders slapped on the wrist with a microwaved shallot.' There is nothing like a bit of self-reflection, member for Broadwater! What did the opposition do? I will tell members what they did. They set up a failed boot camp program. I will talk about the member for Kawana and his helicopter trips that cost taxpayers thousands of dollars only to find out, from the Auditor-General's report, that the program was a complete failure and 70 per cent reoffended. Under their breach of bail laws, 90 per cent reoffended in 12 months. It was a complete failure.

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Ms Camm** interjected.

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Order! Pause the clock. Resume your seat, please, member. Member for Whitsunday, you can join the warning list.

**Mr HARPER:** We saw a litany of failure, a legacy of failure, left by the very person who now runs the opposition. They achieved nothing. All of those people have now grown up. I will tell members what we have done.

**Mr Crandon** interjected.

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Member for Coomera, you are warned under the standing orders. Members, the level of interjection is far too high. I have warned several people. I will start to ask people to leave the chamber.

**Mr HARPER:** They do not like to hear the truth. The LNP left a legacy of failure. I will tell members what we have done. We have invested money. We have changed and toughened laws. Breach of bail is now an offence. Seventy-seven people have been charged with that offence since those laws were passed—with bipartisan support, I note. We have invested in Clontarf. I have 500 young Indigenous men in those programs. I thank Minister Grace, who is acutely aware of the success of that program in keeping young people in education and making sure they get skills, training and employment at the end of it. We are investing in the street university model of the Ted Noffs Foundation. I am very proud to have received \$4.5 million to stand up that service. It should be up and running by July.

We have invested in Transition 2 Success, where we get 70 per cent of kids going back into education, skills and training. We have invested in Project Booyah. What did the LNP do with Project Booyah? It cut its funding. It cut funding to the Murri Court. It cut programs that divert kids in local community centres, such as mine in the Upper Ross, where I have \$500,000—I thank the minister for that—through an after-hours diversion program that keeps kids occupied and gets them home. They see about 60 kids per week in that program. We continue to invest in early intervention programs. At the same time we have enabled the courts, with laws passed recently to ensure community safety is paramount during sentencing. We have increased the length of—


**Mr Hart:** More crime.

**Mr HARPER:** My goodness.

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Order, member for Burleigh. Cease your interjections.

**Mr HARPER:** It is like getting hit by a wet lettuce leaf when the member for Burleigh goes for me—seriously. Is that the best they can do? If the member wants to be heard, he should stand up and make a contribution.

We continue to invest in early intervention programs. We have enabled the courts with the laws to hold violent and serious repeat offenders to account. That is what the community expects us as legislators to do. I am very proud to have restored funding to a number of programs in Townsville that see those kids find employment. They are proud to come up to me and say, 'I have a job.' At the same time, we are holding people to account and we are investing heavily in early intervention programs. The hypocrisy of LNP members to stand in this place after they cut funding to multiple programs! It is an absolute joke. They are a one-trick pony when it comes to crime. That is all they have. It is 700 days since the shadow police minister was supposed to deliver a plan. Where is it?

 **Mr LISTER** (Southern Downs—LNP) (5.33 pm): I rise to speak in favour of the motion moved by the member for Clayfield and implacably against the ragbag of excuses and irrelevances introduced by the youth justice minister which do more to shine a sidelight on the fatal disconnection between word on the street and the community and this government than anything else that we could do on our own.

Do members opposite have any idea what it is like for people in Goondiwindi to every single night have to work out how they will secure their place so they are not home invaded and so that their cars are not stolen? Does anybody opposite understand what it is like for a small business owner who works hard to generate wealth for themselves, to employ others and to generate taxes to have that business ram raided and to have their vehicles stolen? Do they have any idea what it is like for the tradie in Goondiwindi who has his ute stolen and all of his tools and the ute burnt or pushed into the Macintyre River? Do they have any idea what impact that has on their business, on their livelihood? Do they have any idea what happens to the elderly gentleman who is seriously assaulted so that the keys to his car can be taken by juveniles for a joy ride? Do they have any idea what it is like for their community to experience assaults, deaths and murders by young offenders because of the weakness of the laws that the government had the temerity to introduce almost a decade ago?

We are now reaping the bitter fruit of going soft on youth crime. We have seen a generation of youth offenders who have no respect for the law, the community or themselves, thanks to the watering down of laws by this disgraceful Palaszczuk government over years. Members opposite have drenched themselves in shame and still refuse to admit it. This government is very disconnected from what is happening on the ground in rural communities. When I look across to the other side of the House I see many heads down, because they know that at the next election the people of Queensland will pass a very harsh verdict on this government for persistently refusing to accept that it has done the wrong thing and that good people who live by and uphold the law and their communities are entitled to sleep safe at night. I am tired of hearing from the Palaszczuk Labor government that we need to balance the rights of offenders with the rights of communities to be safe. There is to be no balance there. Communities have the right to be safe. People have the right to be safe in their own homes. People have the right not to be assaulted or murdered or have their cars stolen or their business invaded.

Every time members of this government say that it is a complex issue and that we need to take into account the rights of offenders, they forsake the people of Queensland, who are entitled to their protection. When young offenders are allowed out night after night to commit the same offences night after night, there is no balance. It is a disgraceful departure from the role of government to look after the good people of Queensland.

It does not surprise me, really, that this government has persistently looked after the interests of offenders. I refer to the amendments to the Youth Justice Act through which the government brought back breach of bail—I am told, as a result of a deal between the left and the right of the Labor Party.

Didn't the right get diddled? The right wanted breach of bail brought back and the left said, 'Well, we'll do it if you give us watering down of drug laws.' What happened? The reforms have not resulted in any extra custodial sentences for juveniles. They are still laughing, aren't they? It is rather like the vegan farm invaders. What did the government do about that sort of lawlessness? Some of those people were juveniles. They were given just a slap on the wrist, because at the heart of this government is a compact with criminals. It is a compact with the bleeding-heart lefties who do not believe that people in communities like Goondiwindi should be able to sleep safe in their beds at night.


We also know that this government is wringing its hands over the plight of youth offenders and wants to raise the age of criminal responsibility. As if things are not bad enough now!

**Mrs Frecklington** interjected.

**Mr LISTER:** I take that acknowledgement from the member for Nanango. She understands what youth crime has done to her community. This government persists in wanting to feather the nests of juvenile offenders.

No-one wants to see juvenile offenders in prison, but if the question is, 'Are they locked up or allowed to commit the same offences night after night in my communities?' the answer should be, 'Lock them up.' We will never see that from this government. This government is fatally disconnected from what people want. They want to sleep safe in their homes at night. They want to make sure that their cars are not stolen over and over again. They do not want the cost of living to impact them more because they are paying double for their insurance due to the rampant crime that this government has failed to do something about. I will stop at nothing to hold this government to account and to remind the people in my electorate every day about the forsaken nature they have under this Labor government that thinks criminals should come first.

*(Time expired)*

 **Mrs GILBERT** (Mackay—ALP) (5.38 pm): I rise to speak in support of the minister's amendment and to oppose the opposition's motion. Unlike those opposite, the Mackay community is proud of our youth and is doing everything possible to support them to become the best people they can be and to reach their full potential. For those youth at risk, we want to help them change their possible path into crime. I am pleased that the Palaszczuk government supports those at-risk youth in my community with programs such as Booyah and Transition 2 Success. I extend my sincere thanks to those in my community who work with our young people to help them gain confidence, develop healthy relationships and consider further education, training or employment options. They begin to have positive opinions of themselves and start making good choices about their physical health. This has positive flow-on effects to their mental health.

Young people take a hard look at their past and their future and it is amazing the changes in attitudes from their first week to graduation. It is heartwarming the way the young people support each other, develop strong positive bonds and see a positive future for themselves. The change in the young person's attitude helps mend tensions in relationships with their parents and guardians.

The Mackay co-responder team is also guiding young people away from crime. Youth justice officers and police officers engage with vulnerable young people at night in the CBD and across the city.

**Mrs Frecklington** interjected.

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Order! Member for Nanango.

**Mrs GILBERT:** They assist young people at risk to link up with services. They are the circuit breaker before crime occurs.

I thank Aunty Veronica Ahwang, the staff at Mackay PCYC, community businesses and departmental officers who support these programs. I know that the member for Whitsunday will support me in these comments because she has been effusive in her support at a Booyah graduation. On 18 May—

**Mrs Frecklington** interjected.

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. Member, please resume your seat. Member for Nanango, you are warned under the standing orders. I have warned you repeatedly to cease interjecting and you have not taken those warnings.

**Mrs GILBERT:** The member would want to hear this. On 18 May, the member for Whitsunday was quoted in the *Courier-Mail* saying, 'Mackay has some of the lowest youth crime rates.' I am glad that she is on our side—on team Palaszczuk. Youth crime is about support and outcomes, not grubby politics.

**Mr Head** interjected.

**Mrs GILBERT:** Have you finished? Thank you. Youth crime is a complex issue that requires ongoing adjustments to our strategies in line with what evidence shows us. We have listened to the community and we are taking a tougher approach to youth crime, putting community safety first by targeting serious repeat offenders.

Thank you to those opposite for naming me in their motion because it gives me the opportunity to share with them some of the latest data from the Mackay LGA. For the year ending 31 December 2022 compared to the year ending 31 December 2001 there has been a decrease of 38 per cent in the number of proven offences committed in Mackay by 10- to 17-year-olds and a decrease of 23 per cent in the number of distinct 10- to 17-year-old offenders, with at least one proven offence committed in Mackay.

As I have outlined, there are a range of programs that we are implementing in Mackay and they are having the best possible effect. There are bail support services and restorative justice. I know for victims of crime that these statistics are cold comfort. That is why as a government we know that we need to support victims of crime. We on this side of the House also know that it is important—as the member for Whitsunday on team Palaszczuk knows—

**Mr Head** interjected.

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

**Mrs GILBERT:**—to have positive programs in place to support the youth in our communities. I support the amendment to the motion.

**Mr MICKELBERG** (Buderim—LNP) (5.43 pm): After that, I am starting to think the Premier might have been right. Maybe the member for Mackay would not have been a better health minister than the last one. Maybe the member for Keppel might not have been a better minister for youth justice than the former one—the failed one at that.

It is time for the state government to start putting community safety first. Bleeding hearts do not keep our community safe. It is good that the government has finally decided to make breach of bail an offence after saying for eight years that it would not work. They copied the LNP's breach of bail legislation word perfect. They thought that would get them off the hook. They thought that that one part of the solution would get them off the hook, but the reality is that they need to do more.

Those opposite come in here and talk a big game, but if they are genuine about addressing youth crime in their communities, they can get on board and support the LNP's position to remove detention as a last resort within the Youth Justice Act. That is what magistrates are using to release young criminals early. They are sentencing in accordance with the government's legislation. If those opposite are serious about addressing that problem then they can come in here and support the LNP's position on that.

In 2015-16 the member for Keppel supported the weakening of youth justice laws, abolishing breach of bail and bringing back detention as a last resort. In 2019 the member for Keppel proudly lavished praise on amendments that 'remove legislative barriers that may contribute to children being refused bail'. Just last year the member for Keppel came in here and said, 'We know that breach of bail does not work. Please give us something new.'

What changed? The political winds changed. But it is all hollow from those opposite. Families and small businesses in places like Yeppoon and Rockhampton know that this Labor state government is weak on crime. Families and small businesses know that people like the member for Keppel say one thing in Central Queensland and another thing down here in Brisbane. Families and small businesses know that people like the member for Keppel put their own political ambition ahead of the welfare of the communities that they represent—communities like Yeppoon and Rockhampton, and communities on the Sunshine Coast.

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

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Order! Pause the clock.

**Ms LAUGA:** I take personal offence to that statement and I ask the member to withdraw.

**Mr MICKELBERG:** I withdraw. Communities right across Queensland are living the youth crime crisis which sits squarely at the feet of weak Labor state government ministers and Labor state members like the member for Keppel—Labor state members and ministers who have systematically weakened youth justice laws—

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

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. Resume your seat, member for Buderim.

**Ms LAUGA:** I take personal offence at the statement made by the member for Buderim and I ask him to withdraw.

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** I am going to take some advice. Neither the Clerks at the table nor I heard personal references. There is no point of order.

**Mr MICKELBERG:** You would have thought, given the member for Keppel had five minutes to speak, that she would have talked about her solutions to the youth crime crisis gripping Central Queensland such as in Yeppoon and Rockhampton. There is pretty understandable community concern in those areas. It is well understood. What did the member for Keppel do? She came in here and spent two minutes talking about herself—two minutes making herself the victim while mothers in Yeppoon have their car stolen with their baby in the back seat. How does that support the community? How is the member for Keppel fighting for her community? She is not. She is not because she is beholden to those weak Labor ministers opposite. She does not fight for her community because she is more interested in her own political ambitions. That is simply not good enough.

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

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. Resume your seat please, member for Buderim.

**Ms LAUGA:** I again take personal offence at the member's statement and I ask him to withdraw.

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Member for Buderim, take a breath. You will withdraw and put your comments through the chair.

**Mr MICKELBERG:** I withdraw. Queensland small businesses are being held to ransom by young criminals who ransack their shops, frequently without consequence. Yeppoon business owners whom I recently met with showed me how they leave their empty tills at the door every night so that young criminals can see there is nothing there to steal. Even with that action, young criminals still throw bricks through their front windows with monotonous regularity.

The data supports the way they are feeling. 2022 was the worst year on record for unlawful entry offences in Yeppoon. Some 213 break and enters were recorded there last year, up 39 per cent from the year before. No matter how we cut the numbers, the facts do not lie. Crime is increasing in Keppel. Let us look at the data for the Capricorn district in the last year. Car theft is up 252 per cent. Break and enter is up 100 per cent. Assaults are up 148 per cent. We heard from the shadow Attorney-General that the number of youth offenders fell every single year under the LNP government. Crime is worse under Labor and Labor members of parliament, like the member for Keppel, are not prepared to fight for their communities. They are not prepared to fight for their communities and they have decided—


**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. Resume your seat, member for Buderim. What is your point of order, member for Keppel?

**Ms LAUGA:** Mr Acting Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I take offence to the member's statement and I ask him to withdraw.

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** The member has taken personal offence, member for Buderim. I ask you to withdraw.

**Mr MICKELBERG:** I withdraw. Labor members of parliament have presided over a systematic weakening of youth justice laws in this state over the last eight years, and it is communities like Yeppoon and Rockhampton that are paying the price—communities that deserve better from a local member like the member for Keppel, who is abandoning them.

*(Time expired)*

 **Ms BOYD** (Pine Rivers—ALP) (5.49 pm): We know those opposite love to attack workers' rights. In any other workplace that behaviour in no way would be tolerated. The member for Buderim has just stood up screaming, pointing and shouting abuse at the member for Keppel, who is not only a colleague—

**Mr Healy:** A woman.

**Ms BOYD:** He was shouting across the chamber at a woman. It is absolutely disgraceful. I think that absolutely encompasses what the LNP do and the way they conduct themselves. Quite frankly, they cannot get up off the ground. It is little wonder that they are in the mess they are in today.

I rise today to support the amendment moved by Minister Farmer to the private member's motion. In doing so, I reflect upon the comparison that exists between the former LNP attorney-general Bleijie, who oversaw a litany of youth justice and other failures including but definitely not limited to attacks right across the legal spectrum. It is interesting to have a look at the biography of the member for Kawana. What we find is a bit of pumping up of his own tyres—not uncommon, I know—with the member for Kawana saying that he is—

... known for designing and introducing as Attorney General and Minister for Justice, what some commentators and community leaders described at the time, as the strongest laws in the country—commonly referred to as the VLAD laws—to deal with the threat of criminal motorcycle gangs.

That is interesting. Let us look into this a little further. Wikipedia is probably the general point where people start to do research. What we find there in terms of his stint as the attorney-general and minister for justice from 2012 to 2015 is that, as attorney-general, the member for Kawana 'introduced an amendment that renamed Queensland civil partnerships for same-sex couples into registered relationships and disallowed state-sanctioned ceremonies'. The member for Kawana 'subsequently unveiled legislation to ban single people and same-sex couples from having a child through surrogacy'. In 2015, the member for Kawana 'declared his support for same-sex marriage'. These backflips are not uncommon, I know.

What is really interesting is what I found when I started to look even further into the record of the member for Kawana in terms of him being the architect and the saviour of the 'strongest laws' protecting our community. I could find nothing that actually backed that in. The VLAD laws affected innocent people. They did not target the real kingpins of the drug trade or bikies, as those opposite purported they would. Police harassed and vilified the public. Who could forget the librarian who was locked up for having drinks or the Mount Isa man who was arrested for wearing a Sons of Anarchy T-shirt? This is how those opposite prevailed over law and order in the state of Queensland. Who could forget the motorcycle mechanic who was strip searched on the side of the road in front of a school? That is the record of those opposite when it comes to being tough on crime.

Interestingly, the crusade continued with the member for Kawana. The news articles—man, Mr Acting Speaker, these are interesting! You are hard pressed to find a single one that is complimentary. There were headlines such as the member for Kawana 'slammed as "incompetent" and 'defends leaking confidential chat' and 'Queensland Attorney-General ... sharply divides opinion with hard line sex predators, bikies, workers' compensation'. Those folks in the legal profession had no regard for the member for Kawana when he was attorney-general in this state. In fact, it was quite the opposite. They talked about an 'intolerable and matter-of-fact attack upon the profession and the courts'. They said that 'confidentiality meant nothing' to the member for Kawana. They went on to say that it was "impossible" for the legal profession to trust' him.

**Mr Watts:** What about crime—is it up or down?

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Order, member for Toowoomba North!

**Ms BOYD:** I will talk about crime in Toowoomba. How about standing there having a street party—

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Order!

**Ms BOYD:** That is your record!

**Opposition members** interjected.


**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** I call the member for Pine Rivers.

**Ms BOYD:** Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker. It is very clear: not only does the community think they are incompetent; so does the government.

*(Time expired)*

**Mr Mickelberg** interjected.

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** I warn the member for Buderim for that interjection.

 **Mr LAST** (Burdekin—LNP) (5.54 pm): I rise to support the motion moved by the member for Clayfield. There are two words that the members for Thuringowa—

**Mr Harper:** Where's your plan?

**Mr LAST:**—and he is having plenty to say already, but we will see what his record is when I finish this contribution. There are two words that the member for Thuringowa, the member for Townsville and the member for Mackay cannot bring themselves to utter. They had the opportunity a couple of weeks ago in Cairns during the sittings to mention those two words. What are they? Youth crime. We will mention that on this side of the House every day of the week. On this side of the House we will talk about the victims of crime every single day of the week because on this side of the House we will stick up for the victims of crime in this state of Queensland.

**Mr Mickelberg** interjected.

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

*Whereupon the honourable member for Buderim withdrew from the chamber at 5.55 pm.*

**Mr LAST:** This issue had its genesis back in 2015-16 when the then attorney-general watered down the youth justice laws—and hasn't Queensland suffered since that day! Who could forget? The then attorney-general abolished breach of bail and brought back detention as a last resort. Let us not forget that those three members—the members for Thuringowa, Townsville and Mackay—voted to support that bill. They voted to support those changes.

They have adopted our policy on breach of bail word for word. If they were serious about addressing youth crime in this state, they would get rid of detention as a last resort. What does it say? It says that 'a detention order should be imposed only as a last resort and for the shortest appropriate period'. How can our magistrates and judges undertake their role—how can they impose a penalty that reflects what the community wants when their hands are shackled and they cannot impose a sentence of imprisonment?

I say this unequivocally: if they are breaking into houses, if they are stealing cars, if they are out there ramming police vehicles, then they belong in jail! I will say that every single day of the week. These members have had seven years to stand up in this place and talk about this issue.

**Mr Purdie:** Nearly eight.

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Order, member for Nicklin!

**Mr LAST:** Nearly eight—going on eight years. What have they done? They have toed the party line. The big whip has been waved over their head. They have toed the line. They are not game to come in here and speak up on behalf of their communities. Well I will and so will every one of the members on this side of the House!

What have we seen in those seven years? Let me give you some more figures, Mr Acting Speaker. In the 83 months since those changes, more than 32,000 charges of unlawful use of a motor vehicle have been laid against juveniles. In the 83 months before that date, there were fewer than 17,000.

**An opposition member:** Numbers don't lie.

**Mr LAST:** Numbers don't lie. Let me give you a couple more. From 15 May to 16 April, in the Townsville district, the number of car thefts was 801. From 22 May to 23 April, they were 1,643—up 104 per cent. Break and enters were up for the same period—110 per cent. What about assaults? They were up 220 per cent.

Last week that lot over there would have us believe that the laws are working. Last week on Friday two stolen cars were chased in Townsville. They were involved in an incident and the offenders raced off. They punched an 85-year-old lady in the face and they ran through a school yard putting those students at risk. It is still going on as we speak. We know that everything this Labor government would have us believe is absolute rubbish.


**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. I would just like to give general guidance to all members because a number of members have referenced recent incidents. It is incumbent on all members that when you rise to your feet in this chamber and make reference to incidents, particularly recent incidents, we have no way of knowing whether those individuals have been apprehended, caught, charged or anything else, so it is incumbent on you to ensure that you are not offending the sub judice rules. Member for Burdekin, I would ask you to continue with those thoughts in mind. It is very important that we do not offend the sub judice standing orders of this chamber.

**Mr LAST:** Who could forget 29 December last year, when the Premier stood up and announced the you beaut plan that was going to change everything: the toughest youth justice laws in the country. They were going to see these juvenile offenders jailed. They were going to be brought to account. The

Premier did not tell Queenslanders about the little provision embedded in the Youth Justice Act called 'detention as a last resort'. On the one hand, we are supposed to be jailing these kids; on the other hand, when they come before the court the judiciary is bound by the principle of detention as a last resort.

Listen to Queenslanders; that is what I say. Listen to Queenslanders, because they want these offenders brought to justice. Victims of crime across Queensland have had enough. They want change, and they want it now.

*(Time expired)*

 **Hon. SJ STEWART** (Townsville—ALP) (Minister for Resources) (6.01 pm): I rise to speak to the amended motion moved by the Minister for Youth Justice. Let me first say that no amount of crime is acceptable. This government will continue to target those repeat offenders who commit the majority of crimes. In fact, earlier this year we introduced tough new laws to make sure serious offenders are held to account. Let me remind those opposite that they supported it and voted for those laws. I guess it is because they have no idea, having never introduced their own legislation into this House. But I digress.

I have, and always will, advocate on behalf of my community for increased penalties and tough new laws which passed Queensland parliament just last month. Let me be crystal clear: breach of bail for young offenders did not exist as an offence under the LNP, but it does now under the Palaszczuk government. What the LNP had in place did not work. In fact, the 2013-14 annual report to the Childrens Court of Queensland said that the Newman-Crisafulli policy did not, and could not, work. In Townsville fewer than 40 young people were convicted of this offence while it was in effect—that is fewer than 20 young people on average a year—with over 90 per cent reoffending within 12 months. No wonder this useless, poorly drafted law by Queensland's worst attorney-general did not work.

Let me be clear: the laws we passed in March this year, which the LNP supported, included a real breach of bail offence. This means that for the first time this century it will be an offence for young offenders to breach bail conditions in Queensland. We are already seeing the impact of this, with more than 70 offenders charged with breach of bail under our tough laws. I am happy to compare our actions with those opposite, who have done nothing. The member for Burdekin promised that the LNP would release its plan to tackle crime 866 days ago. It was the member for Whitsunday who said, 'The numbers don't lie.' All they have released since then is three dot points, one of which is wanting gold standards for youth justice programs.

Looking at their track record when it comes to the LNP's failed boot camps, their standard was not gold. It was not silver. It was not bronze. In fact, it did not even make the qualifying round. This program had a \$16 million cost blowout, a more than 90 per cent recidivism rate and helped get donations for the LNP. It shows the LNP's ignorance when it comes to youth justice. All they want to do is throw stones. In fact, on 25 January this year the member for Currumbin complained that we got rid of their failed boot camps. We got rid of them because they were a complete rort and a failed idea. They need to come clean and tell the people of Townsville and Queensland if part of their so-called plan is to bring back this failed program.

We are tackling this issue from both ends. As the community expects, we will be tough on those repeat offenders who commit the majority of crimes and we will continue to invest in early intervention programs, which we know are making a difference. We are also investing an additional \$100 million into early intervention programs, including the announcement during the Cairns parliament sitting of \$4 million in funding for the Youth Development Partnership Fund, which supports programs in Townsville like Project Booyah which myself, the member for Thuringowa and the member for Mundingburra are big supporters of. Unlike those opposite, we are continuing to support police and other agencies with more resources so they can target these recidivist offenders—unlike the LNP, who cut police numbers and tried to sell the Townsville Police Academy. In fact, just last week we stood up with the police minister Mark Ryan in Townsville to update the community on the future of the old 1300SMILES stadium site. The Palaszczuk government is investing \$30 million into the first stage of the facility. Construction is set to commence late next year with work expected to be completed in early 2025. Let's contrast that with those opposite and their position on this site. At the last election the LNP told the people of Townsville they wanted to turn the old Cowboys home ground into a harness racing track. As always, the LNP refused to back our Police Service with real investment. We should not be surprised, because cutting, sacking and selling is in the LNP's DNA.

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



**AYES, 47:**

**ALP, 47**—Bailey, Boyd, Brown, Butcher, Crawford, D'Ath, de Brenni, Dick, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Furner, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Healy, Hinchliffe, Howard, Hunt, A. King, S. King, Lauga, Linard, Lui, Madden, Martin, McCallum, McMahon, McMillan, Mellish, Miles, Mullen, O'Rourke, Pease, Power, Pugh, Richards, Russo, Saunders, Scanlon, Skelton, Smith, Stewart, Sullivan, Tantari, Walker, Whiting.

**NOES, 30:**

**LNP, 30**—Bates, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Camm, Crandon, Crisafulli, Frecklington, Hart, Head, Janetzki, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Lister, Mander, McDonald, Minnikin, Molhoek, Nicholls, O'Connor, Perrett, Powell, Purdie, Rowan, Simpson, Stevens, Watts, Weir.

Pairs: Bush, Gerber; Pitt, Millar.

Resolved in the affirmative.

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

**AYES, 47:**

**ALP, 47**—Bailey, Boyd, Brown, Butcher, Crawford, D'Ath, de Brenni, Dick, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Furner, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Healy, Hinchliffe, Howard, Hunt, A. King, S. King, Lauga, Linard, Lui, Madden, Martin, McCallum, McMahon, McMillan, Mellish, Miles, Mullen, O'Rourke, Pease, Power, Pugh, Richards, Russo, Saunders, Scanlon, Skelton, Smith, Stewart, Sullivan, Tantari, Walker, Whiting.

**NOES, 30:**

**LNP, 30**—Bates, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Camm, Crandon, Crisafulli, Frecklington, Hart, Head, Janetzki, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Lister, Mander, McDonald, Minnikin, Molhoek, Nicholls, O'Connor, Perrett, Powell, Purdie, Rowan, Simpson, Stevens, Watts, Weir.

Pairs: Bush, Gerber; Pitt, Millar.

Resolved in the affirmative.

Motion, as agreed—

That this House notes:


1. on 16 March 2023 the LNP voted in support of the Queensland government's stronger youth justice laws in the Strengthening Community Safety Bill;
2. the importance of providing strong laws, funding and intervention programs to tackle crimes committed by youths;
3. the strong legacy of justice and legal reforms of Attorney-General D'Ath over successive years compared to former LNP attorney-general Bleijie, who oversaw a litany of youth justice and other failures, including but definitely not limited to:
  - (a) failed youth justice boot camps;
  - (b) failed boot camp tender;
  - (c) cuts to youth justice conferencing;
  - (d) spending \$15,000 on chartering helicopter flights to visit the failed boot camps;
  - (e) orchestrating the sacking of the PCMC in the middle of the night;
  - (f) removing the CCC's corruption prevention function;
  - (g) failed sex offender laws;
  - (h) attacks on the judiciary;
  - (i) failed bikie laws;
  - (j) failed pink jumpsuit policy for prisoners;
  - (k) rushed outsourcing of court transcription services;
  - (l) abolishing the Drug Court;
  - (m) abolishing the Special Circumstances Court;
  - (n) abolishing the Murri Court;
  - (o) abolishing the Queensland Sentencing Advisory Council; and
  - (p) leaking private conversations with senior members of the judiciary.

## **TOBACCO AND OTHER SMOKING PRODUCTS AMENDMENT BILL**

### **Second Reading**

Resumed from p. 1628, on motion of Ms Fentiman—

That the bill be now read a second time.

 **Mr CRANDON** (Coomera—LNP) (6.14 pm), continuing: I rise to continue my contribution on the bill. In the closing seconds prior to the debate being adjourned, I spoke about the letters that I had received from the Hon. Yvette D'Ath, the then minister for health and ambulance services and Leader of the House. The first letter was coincidentally from two years ago today, on 24 May 2021, and the second letter was from 16 August 2021. The reason for the second letter was to further reinforce comments that the health minister had spoken about in her first letter which came about as a direct result of feedback from my community and in particular my school community that there had been an explosion in vaping incidents within my high schools, in particular, and my primary schools. Clearly, for all of that time, vaping has been and continues to be a big issue in my community.

As I mentioned earlier, the number of stores have doubled over time. The biggest school population in the state is in the Coomera electorate, so it is a big issue, with more than 20,000 young people going to school. I have been told unofficially, sadly, that in recent times my state schools have been told not to suspend students for using e-cigarettes and other vaping products. It is okay in relation to using drugs, alcohol and cigarettes. Yes, suspensions are okay there, but they should not suspend students for using vaping products. What message is that sending to my community and the communities around Queensland?

**Ms Grace:** That is false; absolutely false.

**Mr CRANDON:** I take the interjection from the minister who is saying that is not correct. I have it from sources within Education Queensland that principals have been told—

**Government members** interjected.

**Mr CRANDON:** Let me make it clear. Principals have been told not to suspend students for using vaping products.

**Ms Grace:** Absolute rubbish.

**Mr CRANDON:** That is the information that I have received from my schools. If it is wrong, Minister, you make sure that your director-general and your deputy directors-general call that back.

**Mr BAILEY:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The member for Coomera is referring directly and specifically, against the standing orders, at the Minister for Education. He should conform to the standing orders.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Walker): I will take advice. Member for Coomera, you can recommence.

**Mr CRANDON:** I am making it very clear that I am very concerned about the turn in policy to one of not suspending students for the use of vaping products in our state schools. I am very concerned about that. It sends a message—

**Ms PEASE:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The title of the bill that we are debating is the Tobacco and Other Smoking Products Amendment Bill. It is not about education. I ask that you call the member back to the long title of the bill.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** In relation to the member for Lytton's point of order, vaping has been discussed throughout this whole session and there has been a bit of latitude on both sides. I will let the member for Coomera proceed but I ask you to stick to the title of the bill as best you can. You have two minutes and 49 seconds.

**Mr CRANDON:** I refer to report No. 32 on the Tobacco and Other Smoking Products Amendment Bill 2023 where the issue of vaping and concern about young people vaping is mentioned throughout that report. If it is not an issue for members opposite that we have a situation where young people are not being suspended from school for using vaping products but are being suspended from school—

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Stop the clock. Member for Coomera, you keep going on about the school and other issues peripheral to this bill. We have given you some latitude on the vaping, but please stick to the title of the bill. You have two minutes and five seconds.

**Mr CRANDON:** Thank you for your direction there.

**Ms Pease** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Lytton, please. You have the floor, member for Coomera.

**Mr CRANDON:** Thank you. Well—

**Ms Pease:** He has nothing to say.

**Mr Watts:** He can't because someone keeps going after him.

**Mr Smith** interjected.

**Ms Pease** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. Take your seat, member for Coomera. Member for Bundaberg and member for Lytton, please. Order!

**Mr CRANDON:** I find it absolutely amazing, perfectly frankly, that I have this sort of interjection from people who make out that they have concerns about the Tobacco and Other Smoking Products Amendment Bill.

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Stop the clock. Take your seat, member for Coomera. Member for Toowoomba North, please, we are trying to hear. Any more interjections, I will start warning. I have given you plenty of time. I might be new in the chair, but, please, we are nearly there.

**Mr CRANDON:** I make it clear that I support the amendments that are being proposed in the Tobacco and Other Smoking Products Amendment Bill 2023. I make it clear, though, that in what we have heard and the point that I was trying to make earlier was that two years ago I wrote to the Minister for Health in relation to these matters, and today we have comments in the report where the department has said—


In the course of the inquiry, the committee also heard evidence from submitters and witnesses who were concerned about the increasing use of e-cigarettes in the community.

The comment from the department in response to those concerns that were raised was—

More stringent regulation of e-cigarettes and e-liquids falls beyond the scope of the bill but may be considered in the future.

I was raising this issue with the Minister for Health two years ago. Two years later, we have a situation—

*(Time expired)*

 **Hon. DE FARMER** (Bulimba—ALP) (Minister for Employment and Small Business, Minister for Training and Skills Development and Minister for Youth Justice) (6.22 pm): I rise to speak briefly on the Tobacco and Other Smoking Products Amendment Bill. You actually could not get a more accessible education minister than our Minister for Education. She has given halls and all sorts of things to people all over, from all sides of parliament, and if the member for Coomera has an issue with anything, he knows that he can come up and talk to her to—

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Stop the clock. Member for Bulimba, we will stick to the bill. Thank you for that advice, but there are others who will look after that.


**Ms FARMER:** Thank you for that guidance, Mr Deputy Speaker. I want to congratulate the committee on their excellent work, and the excellent work they are doing on the vaping inquiry as well. In fact, this committee has done some outstanding work on some very big issues. This is something that I feel very strongly about because you see the consequences of tobacco and other smoking products in terms of causing chronic health disease and the ruining of people's lives. It is so important that we are taking really positive action on this.

I was really interested to see one of the extra recommendations of the committee talking about enhanced enforcement efforts coordinated between Queensland Health and Queensland Police and also between relevant state and federal agencies targeting illicit tobacco and vaping markets. The federal government has only recently come out and made some very strong statements about vaping and what it is going to do, and the state and federal governments will be able to work together very strongly.

Before I go onto vaping, I want to acknowledge the impact that the illicit sale of tobacco and smoking products has on legitimate small businesses. It is very good to see there is some strong support in their direction to support people who are making a legitimate living out of these products.

On the vaping issue, we talk about all the work that has been done to combat the effects of tobacco and the enormous strides we have made in bringing the smoking rate figures down, yet here we have vaping which is sort of like the Trojan horse to a whole new generation of people, leading them to smoking. I went out to my electorate with a survey to see what they thought about that, particularly with a link to smoking. I had hundreds and hundreds of people respond, and in fact I was very surprised by just how many people. Some 42 per cent of them said they were worried about their children vaping; almost 90 per cent of them said they worry about the potential health risks; 86 per cent worry about the availability and attractiveness of vaping products to children; and more than 80 per cent would like more restrictions over the sale of illegal vaping products.

My Bulimba electorate Youth Advisory Panel, who range in age from 16 to 23, when I asked them what were the main issues they want to address this year, they said vaping and the way it can lead to taking up tobacco and more harmful habits was the No. 1 issue. I want to congratulate them. They have written the most impressive submission to the vaping inquiry. They are very interested to follow the passage of this bill as well. They are so concerned about the false messages on vaping and other smoking products and how that is really insinuating itself into even primary schoolchildren's lives. I want to read out their names because they have done such a good job: Alaina Strongthick, Aneesha Gol, Eliza Rief, Ewan Tiernan, Isabella Hollowand, Samuel Petrou, Maddison Sparks, Hannah Webb, Chiara de Negan, Theon Espina, Chloe Grant, Bernadette Furner, Will Sullivan and Jayden. It is important that our young people feel there is an avenue for them to express their voice. This parliament is meeting the hopes of those young people that we are really taking action over serious issues. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr LANGBROEK** (Surfers Paradise—LNP) (6.27 pm): I rise to speak on the Tobacco and Other Smoking Products Amendment Bill 2023. Despite the fact that adult smoking rates have decreased in Queensland over the past 25 years, smoking continues to be a major cause of death, disease and health issues in the region. As a health professional, I have seen firsthand what smoking does to one's oral soft tissues, gums, teeth, lungs and general health. It is of great concern that we still have the numbers of people smoking who do.

As the shadow minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander partnerships, I have heard from other members today who have mentioned the same issue that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples experience higher smoking rates and consequently face poorer health outcomes than other Australians. Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islanders face historical and ongoing factors that contribute to higher smoking rates such as cultural norms, targeted marketing by the tobacco industry and limited access to health care and smoking cessation support.

Similarly, individuals with low socio-economic status often encounter higher levels of stress, limited access to resources and a higher prevalence of other risk factors associated with smoking such as mental health issues or substance abuse. Living in regional and remote areas can also present unique challenges such as limited healthcare infrastructure, fewer tobacco control programs and higher rates of social isolation, all of which can contribute to higher smoking rates.

The Tobacco and Other Smoking Products Amendment Bill 2023 amends the existing Tobacco and Other Smoking Products Act 1998 and introduces several changes related to smoking products. Key provisions of the bill include: establishing a licensing scheme for the wholesale and retail sale of smoking products, the introduction of new penalties for noncompliance with the licensing scheme along with new offences including prohibiting the supply of smoking products to children and prohibiting the supply of smoking products to children by parents and guardians.

The bill enables Queensland Health to monitor compliance with the smoking product requirements set by the Commonwealth. It also seeks to improve intelligence sharing with other state, territory and Commonwealth law enforcement agencies. In my time in this place I have been pleased to see changes to the Tobacco and Other Smoking Products Act including at a time when I discovered in my own electorate during schoolies week the prevalence of drug-smoking implements that were being promoted to schoolies. I was proud to bring an amendment to this parliament that subsequently was accepted by the government of the time to prevent the sale, distribution and display of such smoking implements. Now here we are again amending this act. As time goes on there are always people who think they can get away with those sorts of things, especially the promotion of such activities, whether it is drug smoking or other activities such as vaping that we have heard about in today's debate. That is why authorities need to remain vigilant.

I want to refer to an article in the *Townsville Bulletin* dated 12 April 2023 titled 'Illicit tobacco shops outnumber legal retailers in Qld, Townsville tobacconist says'. The article refers to tobacconist Ms Pam Wright who made remarks at the public hearing in Townsville. The article states—

Illicit tobacco traders outnumber legal retailers in Queensland and illegal stores are back in business five hours after being raided ...

It should be noted that submissions made to the committee questioned the government's ability to manage and enforce these proposed laws. The article went on—

... Ms Wright said the state's 300 illicit tobacconists outnumbered 280 legal retailers.

...

Sale of illicit tobacco was run by organised crime, Ms Wright said, and health inspectors sent to check a possible illegal retailer would be intimidated and not effective.

"The health inspectors will run," she said.

I table a copy of that article.

*Tabled paper:* Article from the *Townsville Bulletin*, dated 12 April 2023, titled 'Illicit tobacco shops outnumber legal retailers in Qld, Townsville tobacconist says' [703].

I refer also to an article by the Australian Association of Convenience Stores from 2021 titled 'Tobacco, chop chop, Gold Coast: massive black market racket exposed'. The article states—

A NETWORK of shops on the Gold Coast is selling black market tobacco as part of a nationwide racket—  
which authorities say is—

largely organised by crime syndicates ...

And it is costing taxpayers about \$1bn a year—

due to illegal tobacco trading. The article continues with Cancer Council Queensland's general manager of advocacy saying—

... We know that price is an important consideration when people are thinking about starting smoking or thinking about quitting.

...

"It's important not only that we have the right laws and policies, but that governments are enforcing them," he said.

I table a copy of that article.

*Tabled paper:* Article from the Australian Association of Convenience Stores, dated 12 November 2021, titled 'Tobacco, Chop Chop, Gold Coast: Massive Black Market Racket Exposed' [704].

On a side note, the word on the street at the Gold Coast is that tobacconists and shops selling illegal tobacco, or chop-chop, behind the counter can often be identifiable if there is an ATM on the premises. In other words, if they are able to get cash from an ATM on the premises, there is a chance they are selling chop-chop from behind the counter. I mention that in this place to bring it to the attention of authorities.


The Palaszczuk government has struggled to enforce the existing laws, so I dare say increasing smoke-free spaces, limiting retail supply and changes to advertising laws for tobacco products will prove even more difficult. There is nothing more frustrating than seeing the law broken and yet it not being enforced. That is what we get. Whether it is with the Office of Liquor and Gaming Regulation or transport inspectors, across the board people are extremely frustrated when they see such things or even scooters on sidewalks. That is why I am very concerned about whether adequate resourcing will be given for enforcement.

There are various other amendments to the bill which include modernising and clarifying the requirements for advertising, display and promotion of smoking products, including online trading platforms; expanding smoke-free public spaces with a specific focus on community spaces for children; and prohibiting smoking in car parks adjacent to schools. It also enhances offences protecting children from the dangers of smoking, including prohibiting children from being in designated outdoor smoking areas, and improving protections at liquor licensed premises. That reminds me of another amendment I was pleased to suggest to the government of the time which was banning smoking in cars with children present. It was pooh-poohed back in the 51st or 52nd Parliament and subsequently, as it was introduced in every other state, it was brought into Queensland as well. That is why people cannot smoke in a car with children present; it is thanks to the changes we have made to the act over the years.

The bill introduces tighter requirements for smoking areas and mandates the relocation of tobacco product vending machines to areas inaccessible to patrons and, lastly, prohibits smoking in national parks. The committee highlighted a number of recommendations in their report; namely, to align the Medicines and Poisons Act 2019 and the Tobacco and Other Smoking Products Act 1998 so as to remove barriers that hinder the execution of warrants, searching of premises and seizing contraband items.

Also raised was the need for enhanced enforcement efforts targeting illicit tobacco and vaping markets, suggesting that Queensland Health, the Queensland Police Service and relevant state and federal agencies should coordinate their enforcement actions. The opposition want to be clear that this legislation does not regulate e-cigarettes or vapes. There are valid concerns in the community regarding these products, as we have heard from others tonight and this afternoon. However, the legislation in question does not address them. The opposition want transparency regarding the scope of the bill to ensure all Queenslanders understand that it does not deal with e-cigarettes or vapes.

I am aware the Health and Environment Committee is currently conducting an inquiry into reducing e-cigarette use in Queensland. As a constructive and judicious opposition, we look forward to considering the outcomes of the committee's work and recommendations in its final report. If the end game is eliminating smoking in Queensland, addressing health inequities requires a comprehensive approach that involves implementing targeted tobacco control strategies, increasing access to smoking cessation services, education and engaging with specific communities to understand their unique needs and barriers to quitting smoking.

 **Mrs GILBERT** (Mackay—ALP) (6.36 pm): I rise to support the Tobacco and Other Smoking Products Amendment Bill. We know that putting in place preventive measures that look after our health is more effective than reactive measures to repair the damage done to our health. Once we make those repairs, our health never seems to return to 100 per cent.

I was a bit shocked that some speakers before me said that while they are not in favour of smoking, they are not against others smoking. That seems just a little silly and a little dangerous. I was a bit concerned by some of the comments made by the member for Mirani, who seemed in favour of having open slather around smoking and vaping. I was a bit surprised considering the stance he has taken on vaccinations: you do not put poisons in your body, but let's all get out and have a bit of a vape and a bit of a ciggy with all the toxins and poisons they contain. I am sure he really has not thought about this, especially with his young girls in high school and whether he would have them out there using those vapes.

When I was a child I grew up in a household where my father smoked rollies. At the time that was quite acceptable and as kids, my siblings and I could roll a great smooth durry for him. All six of us lined up and we all learnt how to roll them. I can still roll a very fast and smooth one today, although I do not choose to. With that experience I have seen what long-term smoking does to a person's health: the effect on the lungs and the heart, kidney disease and throw in a little bit of cancer and it is not a very good mix. It would take a miracle to repair that type of damage to anybody's body. I am sure that my dad would have enjoyed a few more birthdays, Christmases and family functions, but he chose to be a smoker and he quit too late in life.

The amount of care that he needed in the weeks and months leading up to his passing was a huge impost on the health system. The number of specialists and the amount of care that he had was extraordinary. He had great care, but if he was not a smoker it would not have been such a great cost. I am pleased that the reforms in this bill will respond to the ongoing and emergent health concerns in Queensland.

The effects of smoking are a public health concern. Smoking is the No. 1 risk factor contributing to preventable death and disease. Over the last 25 years we have made inroads when it comes to reducing the rate of smoking. Unfortunately, these gains are under threat as we have seen the emergence of the aggressive marketing of smoking products to younger people through the sale of vapes. Social media is being used to claim that vapes are safe. There are other community concerns, with illicit products appearing in packaging that does not comply with national regulations. There are serious concerns about the contents of these cigarettes that people may consume, and I welcome the proposed licensing of the sale of smoking products. It is an election commitment of the Palaszczuk government to regulate the wholesale, retail and online supply of smoking products and the advertising and promotion that goes with it.


The new licences must be renewed annually. Before a licence is issued, the chief executive officer of the department must be satisfied that the licence holder is a fit and proper person to hold a licence. Any criminal history must be considered, along with compliance with smoking product laws in Queensland and interstate. Holders of a liquor licence will automatically be granted a licence to sell tobacco on premises only, and the online sale of tobacco will require a separate licence. There will be a fee for the annual licence. The fee will serve as cost recovery for issuing the licence and enable the rollout of antismoking programs, which I am in favour of. New penalties will be introduced for noncompliance with the new licences. Only legitimate businesses should be selling tobacco, to deter the unlawful supply of smoking products.

Passive smoking is harmful. It is annoying when smokers intrude into your space in public. The increase in the number of smoke-free public places such as outdoor markets and the inclusion of buffer zones around eating areas are welcome. The buffer zones at liquor licensed premises have also been tightened up in this bill so that patrons are protected from smoke drifting from smoking areas. Children are also banned from being in a designated smoking area.

This bill does not prohibit a person's choice to smoke; it enhances the public's protection from passive smoke. As others have said, the new restrictions will also capture spaces where activities for children are organised, such as Girl Guides and Scouts, as well as school car parks. It is important to strengthen the existing laws around playgrounds and schools, where you cannot smoke. I support further restrictions so that children are not exposed to smoking.

Children should not be handling smoking products when they are at work. People under the age of 18 will not be able to sell smoking products. We do not want those young people thinking that smoking is normal and that buying smoking products is commonplace. This is a great regulation, and people employing children need to make sure they are in control of who is selling their products.

Regulating the sale of smoke products is an essential step towards stamping out the sale of illicit tobacco. These products often do not comply with Commonwealth standards for content of the product, and the packaging is not subject to regulation. They have potential to do greater harm to a person's health. Their sale does harm those licensed premises that are doing the right thing, so we need to protect those businesses. New penalties for the sale and storage of illicit products will be enacted through this bill. The police will also have powers to seize illicit products. I support the bill.

 **Mr SMITH** (Bundaberg—ALP) (6.44 pm): We know about the dangers of smoking, not only to the individuals who take up the option to smoke but also to those around them through second-hand smoking. My generation was one of the first generations to experience advertising around the dangers of smoking. Winfield and Benson & Hedges were major sponsors for the NRL and AFL competitions. That cut out at the end of 1995, when I was coming through school. We were very aware of the dangers and health impacts of smoking for individuals. Big tobacco would advertise—sometimes through subliminal advertising—to encourage people to engage in smoking, despite knowing very early on the risks and hazards for people who engaged in the activity. Smoking also has a large impact on our state's health system and on the budget that has to go towards ensuring we are supporting those who are suffering with the diseases that result from long-term smoking.

In saying that, I recognise that there are people out there who choose to smoke. Just because someone chooses to smoke, it does not mean they are a pack-a-day smoker. It may be a social activity that they engage in. Of course we want to encourage as many people as possible to limit their amount of smoking or even to quit. It is important to recognise that this bill will assist those who are wanting to quit or lessen the amount of cigarette smoke they inhale through their social activities.

There is a fundamental change to this piece of legislation that will go a long way towards ensuring the protection of honest retailers. Like many members in this House, I have had honest retailers come to me to talk about the impact of the unsavoury non-branded tobacconist shops that are opening up across our communities, especially throughout regional Queensland. It is very easy to spot this wave of no-name tobacconists, who are sometimes linked with organised crime, when you are in a small regional community—especially in the CBD of the likes of Bundaberg.

The licensing of wholesalers and retailers of smoking products is an absolute game changer that protects our small businesses, honest retailers and wholesalers. It ensures a licence goes to a person who is fit and proper during the application. There is 1,000 penalty units assigned to unlicensed retailers who provide smoking products. As I said, this is not to punish retailers but to provide them with security against unsavoury distributors.

We all know that there are no-name tobacconists coming in with illicit tobacco. It is very clear to see. I have raised my concerns with our local police and with the ministers in our government. I am glad to see that this piece of legislation responds to the concerns that many of us on this side have raised. I hear reports of these unsavoury tobacconists having an EFTPOS option at the counter as well as an ATM. It is clear why there is an ATM in there, despite there being an EFTPOS option. We know that these unsavoury characters are using that to take advantage of young people and that they are selling tobacco and cigarette and smoking products to young people in our communities. This has a damaging impact on not only their longevity but also their ability to become addicted at a young age. As the developing mind is maturing, it is very easy to become addicted to substances. We see that then become a lifelong pattern.

One of the other fundamental game changers in this bill is the prohibition on supplying and possessing illicit tobacco. We know that this will have a major impact on what is happening. We know that these chop-chop shops, as they have been referred to, have illicit tobacco in their stores. When the Queensland police go in there, under Commonwealth legislation they are unable to take it because there is a claim of personal use. This legislation recognises the regulations around a commercial quantity which will go a long way to ensuring that we start to run these unsavoury characters and these illicit tobacconists out of town. That is what we want to see. If people want to buy their cigarettes they

can of course do that, but they need to ensure that that is done legally to protect our small businesses and to ensure that we are not getting an extension of organised crime throughout our communities in regional Queensland. That is something that none of us wants to see.

This bill will also assist those wishing to quit by providing greater measures of prevention, with one of the main ways through limiting the supply at liquor licensed premises. There are roughly 800 tobacco product vending machines throughout licensed premises in Queensland. This bill will ensure that any smoking products purchased at a licensed premises will have to go through a member of the staff at that premises. That means that the money does not go into the vending machine directly from the patron; it goes to a staff member and that staff member takes that money and will then dispense the smoking product. That is in the explanatory notes, and if only the member for Coomera had highlighted a couple of things from the explanatory notes. I kept yelling out to him to turn to page 7 and he would have been able to help himself, but this will ensure that those people who are recreational smokers—

**Mr Crandon** interjected.

**Mr SMITH:** It is always good when 'weekend at Bernie' wakes up, isn't it? It is always good to know that he is alive, but I will move on.

**Ms Boyd** interjected.

**Mr SMITH:** Indeed. This will ensure that those recreational smokers will not feel tempted to go to the vending machine and get quick access in order to smoke. Rather, they will have to think about it because they will have to have a conversation with the staff at the bar and that may make them reconsider their decision, which is ultimately a good thing.

There are also very good provisions around ensuring that there is a prohibition on the supply of smoking products by children. That is a commonsense statement within this bill. When you talk to retailers such as Wessel Petroleum, which is a very good local business organisation throughout Bundaberg and stretching down further, it supplies cigarettes and smoking products but it does not want children supplying those products to adults. It knows that it is detrimental to the health and wellbeing of young people. In fact, it is my understanding that organisations such as Coles and Woolworths, our major supermarkets, are already transitioning that way and they do not have children dispensing smoking products to adults. That is just a pretty commonsense provision and, dare I say, it passes the pub test as well—the pub test where that pub now has smoking products behind the bar so that those recreational smokers are no longer tempted. Did you see what I did there, member for Stafford?

**Mr Sullivan:** Well done.

**Mr SMITH:** Thank you; I take that interjection. The other big change is making sure that parents and guardians are not supplying smoking products to children. That is another big step. We have all heard the stories of people from previous generations where their mum and dad caught them smoking and so as a punishment to make sure that they never smoked again they made their child smoke the entire packet of cigarettes and then they got sick and therefore they never smoked again. We know that that is not a healthy option at the end of the day. Whilst it might be more myth than fact, we want to make sure that we are keeping children safe. The big thing is that this is not about criminalising those parents and guardians; it is about education and making sure that they are taking forward the good educational steps of ensuring that we are protecting the health and wellbeing of young people all across our community.

I am a little bit disappointed that there was no statement of reservation. I will not say that it has ruined my day, but I really enjoy the statement of reservation. Luckily the member for Bonney saved me when he started talking about how we need more health workers, because guess what those opposite did when they were in government? Guess what they did? Did they employ more health workers? No! What did they do? They sacked health workers. They sacked health workers across the state. For the member for Bonney to stand up and say that you need essential health workers on the front line, just remember, member for Bonney—

**Mr Saunders** interjected.

**Mr SMITH:** I take the interjections from the member for Maryborough. Those opposite unshackled the health workers. They unshackled 4,400 health workers. They marched them out the doors, so that is the height of hypocrisy. You do not need a statement of reservation, LNP. We know its hypocrisy when it comes to protecting our health workers in this state, caring for people in our communities, making sure that we are putting forward good, positive legislation that looks after the health and wellbeing of young people. We are not going to sack health workers.



**Ms Bates** interjected.

**Mr SMITH:** I hear the failed former minister. Was it about six months before she got turfed out? We know what her role will be. It will be to cut, sack and sell. The member should do that now: sack herself before it is too late.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON** (Nanango—LNP) (6.54 pm): It gives me great pleasure to rise and follow the contribution of the member for Bundaberg. I will tell the member for Bundaberg what we did: we fixed the health system that was broken by the former Bligh government. Let us remember that it was premier Bligh who stood up and said that the health system is a basket case. That is why we split it into two. That is exactly what happened.

**Mr HARPER:** Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I think the member on her feet is misleading the House with her commentary about fixing the health system.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms Lui): Order, members! I will take advice. Member for Thuringowa, there is a process if someone is misleading the House. I encourage you to write to the Speaker.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** When the long dental waitlist had 67,000 people on it, we got it to zero.

**Ms Boyd** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Pine Rivers, order!

**Mrs McMahan** interjected.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** And there is a oncer if I have ever seen one! What did we do? We did what all good governments should do, and that is look after people. We actually cut the health waitlists in half. Remember that premier Bligh said that it was a basket case. Guess where the health system is now? It is worse than it was under Anna Bligh.

**Ms Boyd** interjected.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** Oh, wow! Oh my goodness! I take that interjection.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. Member for Pine Rivers, you are warned.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** Interestingly, I know it has been a tough week for the government, but honestly. The waitlists doubled before the pandemic, but let us just pretend that that never happened. Let us pretend that the Palaszczuk government has not been in power for eight years. It is clear that this is a government that has lost its way.

In relation to the Tobacco and Other Smoking Products Amendment Bill, it was very interesting—and, again, I know that the member for Pumicestone did not understand what the role of opposition was yesterday—to hear the contribution of the member for Bundaberg, a former teacher supposedly who surely to goodness goes into schools and explains to children what goes on in parliament. He is upset that there is not a statement of reservation. I am very proud to stand in front of my school students like I did today with Kingaroy State High and talk about what goes on in this place. Quite often the majority of the time this House agrees with each other and that, member for Bundaberg, is exactly what is happening with this bill, so naturally there would not be a statement of reservation because, member for Bundaberg, we support the bill. Go figure! The poor kids of Bundaberg! Imagine having such a political member of parliament rather than actually telling them what goes on in this House.

We know and have heard many stories in this House about the effects of smoking. I was pleased to be able to talk to those Kingaroy State High year 10 kids. They got on a bus this morning at 5.30 to drive down to the parliament to see question time and to go through the educational process.

**Government members** interjected.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** It is interesting that members from Brisbane think it is funny that these schoolkids had to be on a bus at 5.30 in the morning and travel three hours to come and see parliament and they—

**Government members** interjected.

**Mr Whiting** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Members to my right, order!

**Mr Mander** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Everton, order!

**Honourable members** interjected.


**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Members, order!

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** It clearly shows a government that has lost its way and is out of touch with what regional school kids face. I can tell the member for Bancroft that they were on the bus for three full hours. We listen to the new health minister stand in this House and screech about the fact that apparently the health system has been fixed.

Debate, on motion of Mrs Frecklington, adjourned.

## ADJOURNMENT

### Glass House Electorate, Small Business Awards

 **Mr POWELL** (Glass House—LNP) (7.00 pm): May is Small Business Month and no-one celebrates it better than the Glass House electorate because on Tuesday, 16 May we held our eighth annual Glassies, the Glass House Small Business Awards. It is when Hollywood comes to Hideaway Weddings in Beerwah and we acknowledge and applaud our amazing small and family businesses and their employees. This year we received a record number of nominations—all up, 172 different businesses and employees—and a record number of votes with nearly 5,000 in total. As always, my thanks go to the Montville Chamber of Commerce, Maleny Commerce, Glasshouse Country Chamber of Commerce, Woodford and Wamuran Business Network, Greater Caboolture Chamber of Commerce, Ruy at Worldwide Printing and our many media and business partners. So who won?

In Montville the awards went to Tina Cooper Glass Gallery, Crystal Multiverse, Eliza Claridge from The Barn on Flaxton and Serge Doumergue from Crystal Multiverse. In Maleny, the coveted Glassies were scored by Rosetta Books, Maleny Jewellers, Jennepher Bucher from Maleny Cheese and Elaine Haggerty from Beyond Words Therapy Centre. In Glasshouse Country, the Local Beerwah, Mooloolah Newsagency, Lizzie Vaughan from All About Autism and Natalie Lelievre from Mooloolah Newsagency were awarded the gongs. In Moreton Bay, the prizes went to Woodfit, Red Fox Orchids, Taylor Wenham from Sunnydaze Wellness and, for the first time ever, we had a tie between Cheryl Grant from Rayview Produce and Jasmine Brown from the Woodford Hotel.


To acknowledge some regular high-flyers, this year we introduced a special Hall of Fame category and inducted our first six members: Maple Street Co-op, Mountain View Pet Retreat, Ledgers Country Butchery, VIP Wildlife, Sharon Schofield from Easton Lawyers and Jodie Pember from White's IGA Mooloolah.

Finally, our amazing gold winners: the Business winner was Tamara Hazelden Real Estate. Nominations for Tamara called her and her team, Lauren and Tess, an inspiration for women in business everywhere. They are constantly supporting community events and projects as well as really making a name for themselves in the real estate industry. Tamara has also stepped up into the role of vice president of the Glasshouse Country Chamber of Commerce, giving President Jenny a much needed reprieve.

Where should I even begin with the Employee winner, Jim Goulton of Maleny Jewellers? Running Maleny Jewellers since 2000 with his wife, Sandra, Jim is consistently praised by customers for his repair and design work, creative ability, passion and attention to detail. One nomination read, 'I love the beautiful unseen work he does to help others in the community.' I think that just about sums up who Jim is. He is always helping others wherever he can. He even drove to Brisbane to collect the trophies for the Glassies, not knowing that he was winning not one but two awards, because he did not trust the courier.

Congratulations to all our winners, all our nominees and all our small and family businesses. They are the heart of our communities and they provide jobs, services and support for our sporting and community groups. Without you, Glass House would not be Glass House.

### Algester Electorate, Small Business Month

 **Hon. LM ENOCH** (Algester—ALP) (Minister for Treaty, Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, Minister for Communities and Minister for the Arts) (7.03 pm): Small businesses are the lifeblood of the community and last week it was my privilege to host a Small Business Month morning tea at the local YMCA in Acacia Ridge, in the electorate of Algester. A number of small businesses from across my electorate were in attendance and it was wonderful to hear their stories and talk with them about the Palaszczuk government's small business support services. There are over 6,000 small businesses in my electorate of Algester and they work hard each and every day, supporting the local economy and, of course, supporting local jobs.


I refer to businesses such as Bottles and Cans at Browns Plains, which is owned by Andrew and Julie Lambert. In September 2020 when they started that venture the Containers for Change program, which I am incredibly proud to have initiated as the then minister for environment, was still a relatively new program. Andrew and Julie did what so many small businesses do to get started: they took a risk. Thankfully, that risk paid off. With the incredible success of Containers for Change, Andrew and Julie's business has prospered. Last month I was able to celebrate with them as they marked the incredible milestone of serving their 100,000th customer.

Another local business that I had the privilege of hosting was Vintage Loves Flowers and Decor. When the former owners chose to sell that business, employee Joanne Irvine, who has been a florist for 30 years, stepped in to take over. Joanne has a deep passion for her industry and her community. Vintage Loves Flowers and Decor has now become a family business that she operates with her sister Stephanie. As well as expressing her commitment to the local community, Joanne spoke to me about cost-of-living pressures. I had a chance to catch up with Joanne again at the end of last week when I had my flu shot as her shop is just across the road from the chemist. She talked about issues such as the cost of living and how the morning tea was a great opportunity to share with other businesses.

It is stories such as Joanne's that make the government's efforts to help with some of those financial pressures so important. Recently, our government announced a \$650 energy rebate for small businesses as part of our extensive cost-of-living measures. We can deliver these rebates because we kept Queensland's energy assets in public hands. That decision is now providing real support to small businesses.

As Small Business Month draws to a close, I want to acknowledge the valuable contributions that those businesses and thousands of others like them make to our community. Through programs like the Go Local, Grow Local campaign and Mentoring for Growth, our government is committed to the success of small businesses right across Queensland. As the member for Algester, I am determined to see them thrive in my local community as well. I give a big shout-out to Paviter Noori from Ecutas Training, Iqbal Singh from Freshmorning2021 and Jon Smith from Smith & Li who were also in attendance at the Small Business Month morning tea.

### **Coomera Electorate, Bus Services**

 **Mr CRANDON** (Coomera—LNP) (7.06 pm): I wish I could spend all of my three minutes talking about the many positive things that are happening in the Coomera electorate. I would talk about students in year 5 and year 2/3 at Gainsborough State School who have been talking about the three levels of government or year 6 students from Rivermount College who have been questioning the issues facing our local community. I would talk about the Biggest Morning Tea in the Canelands, which raised funds for the Cancer Council or Gloves Up, which is a program for youth run at the World Gym at Coomera. I would talk about the Everything Suave fundraiser that was held by the Rotary Club of Ormeau-Pimpama to support another great youth program in my electorate.


Sadly, though, once again I have to talk about the slow delivery of bus services in the Coomera electorate. Responses to petitions sponsored by me are due before the next sitting week and I look forward to those responses from the minister. I will be clear: the minister committed to additional bus services in the Coomera electorate in the 2022 budget and at our next sitting week the 2023 budget will be handed down. We are a year down the track and we have seen fewer than half of those services delivered to date.

Sadly, not only have they been slow in delivery; we have also seen some terrible circumstances where at times the first bus service in the morning and other services have been cancelled, leaving young people and aged people on the side of the road. One lady who comes to mind is a volunteer at the Gold Coast University Hospital. She was left on the side of the road several times and was not able to get to the hospital to fulfil her volunteering role at the Gold Coast University Hospital.

Those sorts of things cause chaos in the lives of people. I am calling on the government and this minister to give me some positive responses to the petitions that have been lodged. I call on them to give me some positive outcomes for the people of the northern Gold Coast from the perspective of the delivery of bus services that have been funded since 2022 and, indeed, have been on the agenda since the Gold Coast city council provided the funding for those services in 2021.

I need those bus services to be delivered as a matter of urgency. I also need a guarantee that they will be delivered on time. Every one of those services needs to arrive when they are meant to arrive for all of the people of the northern Gold Coast.

## Kindergarten


 **Ms KING** (Pumicestone—ALP) (7.09 pm): Our Pumicestone schools are absolutely amazing. I loved going along to the Bribie Island State School's brilliant under-eights day last week. Teachers, educators, parents, community groups and even the early childhood education students from Bribie High all worked together and combined forces to give our youngest Pumicestonians a wonderful experience. There was glitter galore at the craft stations, fun and games on the sports fields and a sensational sausage sizzle run by our Bribie Island Lions volunteer. The kids had a fantastic day.

I also really enjoyed catching up with Wendy and her little daughter Briarna and hearing from them their story. Wendy is a Bribie Island local with five young girls in her blended family; four of them are preschool age. When I first met Wendy last year, she told me that she knows that kindy is really important for the kids but that her family were struggling to pay the costs. She asked if there was any ways our government could help. When Wendy spotted me last week at under-eights day, she told me how delighted she is with our government's free and cheaper kindy program. Free and cheaper kindy has been life-changing for Wendy's family. It has saved them a total of \$280 week between their four kids at kindy. In fact, Wendy told me that she and her partner would not be able to afford to send their kids to kindy without the free kindy program.

Hearing the difference that our Palaszczuk Labor government's free kindy program has made to families like Wendy's made me feel really grateful to get to do this job. Our free and cheaper kindy program has invested a billion dollars to deliver free kindy for 14,000 young Queenslanders and reduces kindy fees for the parents of another 26,000. Now we are looking at expanding our kindy support even further to make kindy free for every Queensland family so that all kids can benefit from the boost that kindy gives to their school readiness. Not only will expanding free kindy give our kids the best start in life, it will also be a big support for families struggling with global cost-of-living pressures at the moment. That is why I am asking everyone in Pumicestone to have their say on what expanding free kindy could mean to them.

When it is time to start kindy, Pumicestone kids have wonderful options for their early childhood education and care. Recently I was absolutely delighted to hear that C&K Bribie Island Community Kindergarten became the only kindy in Australia to achieve five 'excellent' ratings from the Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority. I congratulate kindy director Narelle Dawson and the brilliant Bribie Island educators on their outstanding achievement, and I thank them for all that they do to give our kids the very best start. From free and cheaper kindy to Kindy uplift to GPs in our schools, Pumicestone kids are getting the very best start in life thanks to our Palaszczuk Labor government.

## Burleigh, Light Rail Forum

 **Mr HART** (Burleigh—LNP) (7.12 pm): Last Thursday night in Palm Beach, four local representatives came together and held a forum—

**Mr Bailey:** No, you didn't.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms Lui): Order!

**Mr HART:** There were 635 people in attendance at the forum. How do we know that? Because we counted the people there. The next morning we heard a train wreck interview on ABC local radio by the Minister for Transport and read a tweet put out by the minister, who was described as 'foolish' by the Crime and Corruption Commission. He was in full flight on that day when he denied that there were 635 people there and said that there were only a couple of hundred. We had registrations from 392 groups on the night. There were 635 people present. If the minister had bothered to attend, he would have seen that for himself.

*Tabled paper:* Letter, dated 1 March 2023, to the Minister for Transport and Main Roads, Hon. Mark Bailey, inviting him to attend a public meeting on 18 May 2023 to discuss the extension of the light rail through Palm Beach to beyond Coolangatta [\[705\]](#).

In that interview the minister said that it was an LNP event. There were a couple of LNP representatives there, but there was also the local councillor, who has never been in a political party in her life. We all spoke for two minutes. We actually hired a professional mediator to run the event. Despite what the minister described, there was no shouting down of people who were supportive. If the minister had been there, he would have understood that. There were a number of motions moved on the night and we have provided those to both the minister and the Premier. I have about 200 letters from the people who attended on the night. I will deliver them to the minister and the Premier. What do


those letters ask for? All they ask is for the minister to come to the southern Gold Coast. I table the minister's tweet where he says that the LNP called an anti-light rail meeting forum, did not consult him on the date and then blamed him for not attending.

*Tabled paper:* Extract, undated, from the Twitter account of the Minister for Transport and Main Roads and Minister for Digital Services, Hon. Mark Bailey, in relation to a public light rail meeting [706].

A few minutes later I tweeted a letter I sent to the minister 11 weeks before the event, giving the minister the date. Of course, the minister could not even bother to reply to that. Foolish—that is what this minister is. The minister can pick his own date. If the minister wants to come down and listen to what the people of my electorate have to say about light rail, I or somebody else will organise a meeting. The Premier says that people do not need to hire a Labor aligned consultant to have a meeting with her. I would like to know exactly what you have to do to get a meeting with the minister, because the only people who can get a meeting with the minister are Labor aligned groups. Minister, people in my area want you to come down there—

*(Time expired)*

### Manufactured Home Parks


 **Mr KING** (Kurwongbah—ALP) (7.15 pm): I rise to talk about the consultation regulatory impact statement on manufactured home parks that is now open. I thank the former minister and departmental staff for their work on this. I have to shout out to some local advocates—Barb, Lynn and Bruce from Burpengary Pines—who let us know what is happening quite regularly. Sadly, I have heard many complaints about manufactured home parks over the years, including site rent increases, unfair market reviews, poor upkeep of park facilities and confusion about site agreements in sales such as when lower fees can be passed on by sellers and what downfalls can come with legacy agreements. The repetition of complaints is disappointing. I reckon there are owners who could do a lot better to facilitate peaceful and happy living in their parks, but here we are. I am hopeful that the proposed new regulations will improve life in my parks and across the state.

The CRIS puts forward a package of reforms, including new site agreements required for all sales with options to bring across favourable terms from old site agreements minus any illegal old terms such as exit fees, disincentives for park owners to tank sales, banning market rent reviews and capping rent rises so they cannot exceed CPI. I note that there are some groups advocating for only a one per cent per annum increase. We must realise, though, that there will always be outside market influences in any part of the real estate market. I agree that there are greedy park owners who are taking advantage of legal loopholes to rip off residents—and that is not okay—but changes must be practical, sustainable and balanced. The cost analysis here seems to favour residents—that is good. Hopefully, it weeds out some operators only in the business for big profits and signals very strongly that residents are valued, should be listened to and are not powerless.

There will be compulsory park comparisons which, together with new maintenance and capital replacement plans, will reward park owners who take pride in their facilities and punish those who have been dropping the ball. A compulsory buyback scheme will guarantee current unhappy residents a way out, at least within the next couple of years. I would like to hear more said about dispute resolution in parks. I agree with advocacy groups on this, but I am also hopeful that the changes proposed now will see a significant decrease in demand and cases being brought to QCAT.

There is no denying that manufactured home park arrangements are unique. Most property owners take risks in investment—council, interest rates and land tax increases—renters take risks in lease terms and we all cop increases in grocery, petrol and energy costs. Buyers in manufactured home parks take on a new level of risk: they own their own home but still lease the land. It is not practical to separate the two, so it is very easy for vulnerable people to get trapped in a bad investment. This RIS will help better protect people. I encourage all park residents, family and friends to consider it carefully and to have their say by 26 June. The member for Bancroft and I hear a lot about this and we really hope that this makes it fairer for all residents.

### Government Accountability

 **Mr ANDREW** (Mirani—PHON) (7.18 pm): It was once widely accepted that functioning democracies contain five main defences against tyranny: a parliament with a real opposition capable of holding the government to account; an independent and accountable public service; an independent

and nonpartisan judiciary; an independent and questioning press, prepared to confront all forms of power; and independent and disinterested universities. Whether any of these protections exist in their proper form today is questionable.

I suspect that if we were to ask most people in government now, they would argue that such checks and balances are little more than obstacles in the way of efficient, what-works governance. I think they are wrong. I still believe in the role of parliament in holding governments to account and providing transparency to the people. It is the legitimate role of the opposition and crossbench members to provide transparency to the whole process of governing and much needed alternative viewpoints.

Today, however, opposition and crossbench MPs are given very little opportunity for scrutinising all the laws that are being passed, whether through parliament or via delegated executive powers. Most MPs, particularly those on the crossbench, have little time or capacity to police the vast amount of discretionary power the executive has awarded itself, under permissive legislation in recent years—much of it done with almost no parliamentary scrutiny or debate. This makes accountability and transparency very difficult to achieve. This is a situation that is seriously undermining the foundational principles of our democratic and legislative process.

There are a number of mechanisms, however, that if their existing shortcomings could be fixed would go a long way towards strengthening parliament's ability to apply accountability and scrutiny to government. An overhaul of the state's freedom of information legislation is one such avenue, followed by similar overhauls of all laws dealing with government secrecy, commercial-in-confidence deals and the misuse of gag clauses. Currently, there is no real commitment to the principles of such legislation within the ranks of government or the Public Service—a powerful arm of executive government.


Other suggestions include widening the Ombudsman's powers or legislating the establishment of an oversight committee, chaired by crossbench members on a rotational basis. Other mechanisms worthy of consideration would be a public works committee, a public accounts committee and the creation of a beneficial owner register in Queensland.

Finally, there needs to be much greater tolerance of political dissent and a commitment to free and open debate in parliament.

**Mrs McMahon:** When you turn up.

**Mr ANDREW:** I am always here. Go and find me not here. I take that interjection from the member for Macalister. The executive branch of government has enormous powers and a measure of restraint about their use is crucial. Respect for individual autonomy is another necessary feature of responsible government. I am away working.

### Hiker Brewing Co.


 **Mr RUSSO** (Toohey—ALP) (7.21 pm): I celebrated business month in my electorate. I recently had the pleasure of visiting the recently opened Hiker Brewing Co. in Salisbury with Minister Farmer, the Minister for Training and Skills Development. Co-founders Phil Sharp and Daniel Venema welcomed us to their premises where they envision bringing the community together while serving exceptional beers. In just three months, Hiker is well on the way to achieving this goal. Craft beer enthusiasts from across Brisbane and locals have warmly embraced Hiker, which is located near Toohey Forest.

This is not only a good local story about craft beer enthusiasts who are achieving great things. The brewery has gained a reputation for its topnotch beers and inviting atmosphere, which I can attest to. They have big plans moving forward, and their business plan is to build a true community space that locals can enjoy. However, this is not just a good local story. This is a great success story. One of the co-founders, Phil Sharp, is a graduate of TAFE's Certificate III in Food Processing (Brewing). Phil holds the distinction of being the first graduate from this course to open a craft brewery. The course Phil completed is run through our world-class Queensland TAFE and is a part of the Palaszczuk government's Queensland's Craft Brewing Strategy.

In 2018, craft brewing was identified as an emerging, fast growing sector of the manufacturing industry—one that would generate jobs and contribute to economic growth. Demonstrating the government's tangible support for the industry, TAFE Queensland developed a course for craft brewers to meet an identified shortfall of brewing skills. Phil is a compelling advocate for the TAFE course, with Hiker dedicating a tap at their brewery to serve Froth Rookies beers, a beer produced by TAFE students. This initiative allows TAFE students to showcase beers they create to their families and friends.

Hiker Brewing achieved recent success at the Royal Queensland Beer Awards, where they received five medals—one gold, three silver, and one bronze. This speaks to the quality of their beers. Notably, their light Scottish ale named Wee Little! earned the gold medal. It is worth mentioning that Wee Little! was the first beer brewed at their brew house and is a testament to their skill and passion for their craft.

### Beaudesert, Police Resources

 **Mr KRAUSE** (Scenic Rim—LNP) (7.25 pm): I rise tonight to raise concerns about crime on the rise in the Beaudesert district and a lack of police numbers in that area to deal with it. I 100 per cent support our police and the work they do in our community to support our locals and to keep them safe, but they need our help.

When it comes to the Beaudesert police district they were caught up in SDRP in the Logan district. Now that SDRP has gone—it has been abolished; it has been abandoned—it is time for the resources that have been sucked out of the Beaudesert police division to be put back where they were in the first place. At one stage, in the Beaudesert division we had 24 or 25 police. I have a lot of feedback from local police that through SDRP those numbers were depleted badly. They were sent off to other parts of the Logan district to do work there, leaving a hole in terms of the resources in Beaudesert. That impacts their ability to do proactive policing in the community. It impacts the types of crime that they can respond to. It impacts the time it takes to get to people. Mostly importantly for our police, it impacts their morale. It also impacts the morale of locals.

I have received a lot of correspondence in recent times about the diminished police presence around the Beaudesert district, and in particular around the town. This week I heard from people who have had a group of hoons move in next to them. They have complained to the police numerous times, but they have been told there are not enough resources—not enough presence—for them to be able to respond to these legitimate hooning and crime concerns. I will read a little of the feedback I have received. It states—


My main point is, there is no police here in Beaudesert at night due to lack of funding, especially on weekends at night. The police officer I spoke with said they are understaffed in Beaudesert.

All police matters in Beaudesert at night and on weekends is diverted to the Logan police.

That is not an acceptable situation, considering that in 2013 the LNP made Beaudesert police station 24/7. It needs to go back to that now that SDRP has been abandoned.

Police have been talking to me. They are afraid to talk to me because I am not a government member. Police have been talking. They have been telling me that their ability to police 24/7 has been lost and it is something that we need to bring back now that SDRP has gone. I have been told that police vehicles are being deployed into other parts of the Logan district away from where they should have been assigned, away from where their approved strength was assigned. I have been informed that some nights the Beaudesert police station is unattended. That is a retrograde step. Now that SDRP has been abandoned, can we please get back to having police in stations doing proactive policing and protecting the communities that they have been approved for.

### Capalaba Electorate, Schools

 **Mr BROWN** (Capalaba—ALP) (7.28 pm): I want to update the House on all the wonderful achievements and deliverables for the schools in Capalaba. I start with the massive school hall that is under construction at the moment at Capalaba State College. We turned the sod there a couple of weeks ago. When I drop my boy off there I see the massive earthworks. We are getting on with building that hall, which will join up both the junior school and the senior school, connecting them so they can have whole school assemblies and whole school speech nights but also deliver for their basketball and volleyball excellence programs.

We are also delivering on the security front for Vienna Woods State School and Alexandra Hills State High School. Big black fences are being installed as we speak. That will mean less disruption in the classroom from vandalism. We are also refurbishing my old school, Birkdale State School, block C. It was great to go and see it before and after. I do not think much had changed in 30 years. It was great to see block C get a massive refurbishment.

We have delivered for so many schools which I cannot list in round 1 of the Go for Gold grants. It is a fantastic initiative in the lead-up to the 2032 Olympics. Round 2 is now open and I encourage all my schools, be they state schools or private schools, to apply for that grant funding.

What a fantastic announcement we heard last Sunday, when the education minister and the Premier announced free kindy. It is a game changer. One of my young mums said to me: 'It will be life changing for so many families. It will encourage mums to jump back into the workforce.' It is good on the economic front. We have low unemployment at the moment. We need to get mums back into the workforce. We also need to listen to prep teachers who say that we need to bring these kids up to level with play-based learning in kindy. It is a game changer. I do agree with young Stevee.

We are also delivering on the social front at schools. Social workers will be delivered for Alexandra Hills State School, Birkdale South State School and Hilliard State School. Guidance officers will be delivered for Coolnwynpin State School and Wellington Point State School. A psychologist will be delivered for Wellington Point State High School and a GP will continue—it has been a fantastic program—at Alexandra Hills State High School.

There are so many things happening in the education space. We are a government that backs our teachers. We back our education system because we know it changes lives for so many people. I am proud to be part of a government that invests so much. I am looking forward to the budget next sitting week which will see more investment in the Capalaba electorate.

The House adjourned at 7.31 pm.

## **ATTENDANCE**

Andrew, Bailey, Bates, Bennett, Bleijie, Bolton, Boothman, Boyd, Brown, Butcher, Camm, Crandon, Crawford, Crisafulli, D'Ath, Dametto, de Brenni, Dick, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Frecklington, Furner, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Hart, Head, Healy, Hinchliffe, Howard, Hunt, Janetzki, Katter, Kelly, King A, King S, Knuth, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Lauga, Leahy, Linard, Lister, Lui, MacMahon, Madden, Mander, Martin, McCallum, McDonald, McMahon, McMillan, Mellish, Mickelberg, Miles, Minnikin, Molhoek, Mullen, Nicholls, O'Connor, O'Rourke, Palaszczuk, Pease, Perrett, Powell, Power, Pugh, Purdie, Richards, Robinson, Rowan, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Scanlon, Simpson, Skelton, Smith, Stevens, Stewart, Sullivan, Tantari, Walker, Watts, Weir, Whiting