



# RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

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## FIRST SESSION OF THE FIFTY-SEVENTH PARLIAMENT

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## TUESDAY, 12 SEPTEMBER 2023

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The Legislative Assembly met at 9.30 am.

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



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

### ASSENT TO BILLS



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

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

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

Date of Assent: 1 September 2023

A Bill for an Act authorising the Treasurer to pay amounts from the consolidated fund for the Legislative Assembly and parliamentary service for the financial years starting 1 July 2023 and 1 July 2024

A Bill for an Act authorising the Treasurer to pay amounts from the consolidated fund for departments for the financial years starting 1 July 2022, 1 July 2023 and 1 July 2024

A bill for an Act to amend the Child Protection (Offender Reporting and Offender Prohibition Order) Act 2004, the Child Protection (Offender Reporting and Offender Prohibition Order) Regulation 2015, the Mental Health Act 2016, the Mineral Resources Act 1989, the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000, the Police Powers and Responsibilities Regulation 2012, the Police Service Administration Act 1990, the Summary Offences Act 2005, the Supreme Court of Queensland Act 1991 and the Youth Justice Act 1992 for particular purposes

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

Yours sincerely

Governor

1 September 2023

*Tabled paper:* Letter, dated 1 September 2023, from Her Excellency the Governor to the Speaker advising of assent to certain bills on 1 September 2023 [\[1310\]](#).

### PRESENTATION OF APPROPRIATION BILLS



**Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I have to report that on Friday, 1 September I presented to Her Excellency the Governor the Appropriation (Parliament) Bill and the Appropriation Bill for royal assent and that Her Excellency was pleased to subscribe her assent in the name and on behalf of His Majesty.


### SPEAKER'S STATEMENTS

#### Coronation of King Charles III and Queen Camilla, Address of Congratulations



**Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, on Friday, 1 September I presented to Her Excellency the Governor the address of the Legislative Assembly adopted by this House on Thursday, 11 May 2023, regarding its congratulations on the coronation of His Majesty King Charles III and Her Majesty Queen Camilla.

### Absence of Speaker


 **Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, it is good to be back. As members are aware, until recently I was on a period of leave to deal with medical issues. I returned to my role on 1 September. I am pleased to report to the House that the break was very positive and enabled me to have long-awaited back surgery which was successful. A further positive outcome of the surgery will hopefully mean that as a result of reduced back pain I may not be as cranky as honourable members have been aware in the past.

I would like to thank the Deputy Speaker, Joe Kelly, for so ably performing as Acting Speaker during my absence over the previous months, including at this year's estimates. As members know, being Speaker involves more than presiding in the chair, and the Acting Speaker also performed the diplomatic and administrative functions of the role admirably. I also thank the House for showing the Acting Speaker and his team, which included the member for Cook as Acting Deputy Speaker, the same courtesies and respect shown to me. Whilst the House was advised of my unavoidable absence from sittings, to discharge standing order 263A and for the information of members I table my public statement explaining my leave of absence.

*Tabled paper:* Media release, dated 14 June 2023, from the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, the Hon. Curtis Pitt, regarding his leave of absence [\[1311\]](#).

### PRIVILEGE

#### Speaker's Rulings, Alleged Deliberate Misleading of the House and Breach of Rules

 **Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, on 31 August 2023 the Acting Speaker tabled a ruling regarding a matter of privilege relating to a complaint by the member for Mudgeeraba alleging that the Minister for Health and Ambulance Services and Minister for Women deliberately misled the House in response to a question without notice on 24 May 2023.

On 31 August the Acting Speaker tabled a ruling regarding a matter of privilege relating to a complaint by the Manager of Opposition Business, the member for Glass House, that the member for Redlands, the Minister for Health and Ambulance Services and Minister for Women, and the Minister for Transport and Main Roads and Minister for Digital Services deliberately misled the House on 28 March 2023.


On 31 August 2023 the Acting Speaker tabled a ruling regarding a matter of privilege relating to a complaint by the member for Maiwar alleging that the Deputy Premier, Minister for State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning and Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympic and Paralympic Games Infrastructure deliberately misled the House in response to a question without notice on 20 April 2023.

Also on 31 August 2023 the Acting Speaker tabled a ruling regarding a matter of privilege relating to a complaint by the member for Lytton and the member for Mundingburra alleging that on 23 May 2023 the member for Ninderry breached the rules resolved by the House on 20 May 2015 concerning the use of electronic devices.

The Acting Speaker ruled that all four matters did not warrant the further attention of the House via the Ethics Committee. I now refer to these matters so that, if any member wishes to exercise their rights in respect to those matters, under the standing orders they should do so immediately, identifying the matter.

### SPEAKER'S STATEMENT

#### Visitors to Public Gallery

 **Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, this morning we are joined in the gallery by volunteers from the Rural Fire Service. We welcome all of you to Parliament House and thank you for your service to the community.

I also wish to advise honourable members that we will be visited in the gallery this morning by students and teachers from Redbank Plains State School in the electorate of Bundamba; Broadbeach State School in the electorate of Mermaid Beach; and Emmaus College Rockhampton in the electorate of Rockhampton.

## PETITIONS

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

### Yeerongpilly Railway Station, Seating

175 petitioners, requesting the House to retain the wooden seating benches at Yeerongpilly Railway Station [\[1298\]](#).

The Clerk presented the following paper and e-petition, sponsored and lodged by the Clerk—

### Kurilpa, Development

1,823 petitioners, requesting the House to refuse the Brisbane City Council's application to fast-track developments in the Kurilpa precinct [\[1299\]](#) [\[1300\]](#).

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

### Ayr Hospital, CT Scanner

**Mr Last**, from 677 petitioners, requesting the House to install a CT scanner at the Ayr Hospital [\[1301\]](#).

### Gold Coast Spit, Marine Tourism

**Mr Langbroek**, from 4,056 petitioners, requesting the House to support the Gold Coast's Marine Tourism industry on the Spit [\[1302\]](#).

### Atherton Forest Mountain Bike Park

**Mr Knuth**, from 165 petitioners, requesting the House to ensure the Stage 2 expansion of the Atherton Forest Mountain Bike Park [\[1303\]](#).

### Buaraba Creek Road and Gatton-Esk Road Intersection

**Mrs Frecklington**, from 229 petitioners, requesting the House to undertake a range of measures to address road safety concerns at the intersection of Buaraba Creek Road and Gatton-Esk Road [\[1304\]](#).

### Albion and Woolloowin Railway Stations, Accessibility

**Mr Nicholls**, from 226 petitioners, requesting the House to upgrade the car parking and accessibility facilities at Albion and Woolloowin railway stations [\[1305\]](#).

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

### Petitions

855 petitioners, requesting the House to provide local councils and governments access to the state's online petition system [\[1306\]](#).

### Roma Street Priority Development Area, Transport Bridge

635 petitioners requesting the House to deliver a transport bridge connecting the Roma Street Priority Development Area across the rail lines and ICB to Victoria Park [\[1307\]](#).

### Electricity Prices

1,384 petitioners requesting the House to fix a set price for electricity and to ban or control day rates [\[1308\]](#).

Petitions received.

## TABLED PAPERS

### PAPERS TABLED DURING THE RECESS (SO 31)

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

25 August 2023—

[1201](#) Ethics Committee: Report No. 214, 57th Parliament—Matter of privilege referred by the State Development and Regional Industries Committee on 26 May 2022 relating to an alleged unauthorised disclosure of committee proceedings, interim government response

29 August 2023—

[1202](#) Public Report of Ministerial Expenses for the period 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023

30 August 2023—

[1203](#) Letter, dated 29 August 2023, from the Leader of the Opposition, Shadow Minister for Tourism and Shadow Minister for Olympics and Paralympics, Mr David Crisafulli MP, to the Acting Speaker, Mr Joe Kelly MP, regarding tabling of the Public Report of Office Expenses for the Office of the Leader of the Opposition for the period 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023, including an Independent Auditor's Report

- [1204](#) Public Report of Office Expenses for the Office of the Leader of the Opposition for the period 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023, including an Independent Auditor's Report
- [1205](#) Education, Employment and Training Committee: Report No. 36, 57th Parliament—Inquiry into the Cairns TAFE Upgrade Project
- [1206](#) Education, Employment and Training Committee: Report No. 37, 57th Parliament—Subordinate legislation tabled between 29 March and 8 June 2023
- [1207](#) State Development and Regional Industries Committee: Report No. 44, 57th Parliament—Subordinate legislation tabled between 15 March 2023 and 13 June 2023

31 August 2023—

- [1208](#) Ruling by the Acting Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, Mr Joe Kelly—Alleged contempt of Parliament by the Minister for Health, Mental Health and Ambulance Services and Minister for Women
- [1209](#) Ruling by the Acting Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, Mr Joe Kelly—Alleged contempt of Parliament by the Member for Redlands, Minister for Health, Mental Health and Ambulance Services and Minister for Women, and the Minister for Transport and Main Roads and Minister for Digital Services
- [1210](#) Ruling by the Acting Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, Mr Joe Kelly—Alleged contempt of Parliament by the Deputy Premier, Minister for State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning and Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympic and Paralympic Games Infrastructure
- [1211](#) Ruling by the Acting Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, Mr Joe Kelly—Alleged contempt of Parliament by the member for Ninderry
- [1212](#) Health and Environment Committee: Report No. 38, 57th Parliament—Vaping: An inquiry into reducing rates of e-cigarette use in Queensland
- [1213](#) Statement for Public Disclosure: Expenditure of the Office of the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly for the period 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023

1 September 2023—

- [1214](#) Transport and Resources Committee: Report No. 39, 57th Parliament—Tow Truck Bill 2023
- [1215](#) Economics and Governance Committee: Report No. 51, 57th Parliament—Integrity and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023

5 September 2023—

- [1216](#) Response from the Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment (Hon. Dick), to an ePetition (3912-23) sponsored by the Clerk under the provisions of Standing Order 119(4) from 4,341 petitioners, requesting the House to legislate that any business operating in Queensland must accept any and all forms of legal Australian tender

8 September 2023—

- [1217](#) Letter, dated 9 August 2023, from the Chair, Screen Queensland Pty Ltd, Hon. Roslyn Atkinson AO, to the Premier and Minister for the Olympic and Paralympic Games, Hon. Annastacia Palaszczuk, regarding the financial statements of Screen Queensland
- [1218](#) Screen Queensland—Directors' Report and Financial Statements 2022-2023

11 September 2023—

- [1219](#) Queensland Treasury Holdings Pty Ltd—Consolidated Financial Report for the year ended 30 June 2023
- [1220](#) Brisbane Port Holdings Pty Ltd—Financial Report for the year ended 30 June 2023
- [1221](#) DBCT Holdings Pty Ltd—Financial Report for the year ended 30 June 2023
- [1222](#) Queensland Lottery Corporation Pty Ltd—Financial Report for the year ended 30 June 2023
- [1223](#) Consolidated Fund Financial Report 2022-23
- [1224](#) Overseas Travel Report: Report on trade and investment mission to Indonesia and Taiwan by the Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment, Hon. Cameron Dick, 9-16 August 2023
- [1225](#) Legal Affairs and Safety Committee: Report No. 54, 57th Parliament—Subordinate legislation tabled between 10 May 2023 and 23 May 2023

#### TABLING OF DOCUMENTS (SO 32)

#### STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

The following statutory instruments were tabled by the Clerk—

Economic Development Act 2012:

- [1226](#) Economic Development Regulation 2023, No. 107
- [1227](#) Economic Development Regulation 2023, No. 107, explanatory notes
- [1228](#) Economic Development Regulation 2023, No. 107, human rights certificate

Economic Development Act 2012, State Penalties Enforcement Act 1999:

- [1229](#) Economic Development (Vegetation Management) By-law 2023, No. 108
- [1230](#) Economic Development (Vegetation Management) By-law 2023, No. 108, explanatory notes
- [1231](#) Economic Development (Vegetation Management) By-law 2023, No. 108, human rights certificate



## Planning Act 2016:

- [1232](#) Planning (Queensland Rural Workers' Accommodation Initiative) Amendment Regulation 2023, No. 109
- [1233](#) Planning (Queensland Rural Workers' Accommodation Initiative) Amendment Regulation 2023, No. 109, explanatory notes
- [1234](#) Planning (Queensland Rural Workers' Accommodation Initiative) Amendment Regulation 2023, No. 109, human rights certificate

## Coastal Protection and Management Act 1995, State Penalties Enforcement Act 1999, Transport Infrastructure Act 1994:

- [1235](#) Transport Infrastructure (Public Marine Facilities) Regulation 2023, No. 110
- [1236](#) Transport Infrastructure (Public Marine Facilities) Regulation 2023, No. 110, explanatory notes
- [1237](#) Transport Infrastructure (Public Marine Facilities) Regulation 2023, No. 110, human rights certificate

## State Penalties Enforcement Act 1999, Transport Operations (Passenger Transport) Act 1994:

- [1238](#) Transport Operations (Passenger Transport) and Other Legislation Amendment Regulation 2023, No. 111
- [1239](#) Transport Operations (Passenger Transport) and Other Legislation Amendment Regulation 2023, No. 111, explanatory notes
- [1240](#) Transport Operations (Passenger Transport) and Other Legislation Amendment Regulation 2023, No. 111, human rights certificate

## Civil Partnerships Act 2011:

- [1241](#) Civil Partnerships Regulation 2023, No. 112
- [1242](#) Civil Partnerships Regulation 2023, No. 112, explanatory notes
- [1243](#) Civil Partnerships Regulation 2023, No. 112, human rights certificate

## Criminal Proceeds Confiscation Act 2002:

- [1244](#) Criminal Proceeds Confiscation Regulation 2023, No. 113
- [1245](#) Criminal Proceeds Confiscation Regulation 2023, No. 113, explanatory notes
- [1246](#) Criminal Proceeds Confiscation Regulation 2023, No. 113, human rights certificate

## Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal Act 2009:

- [1247](#) Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal Amendment Regulation 2023, No. 114
- [1248](#) Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal Amendment Regulation 2023, No. 114, explanatory notes
- [1249](#) Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal Amendment Regulation 2023, No. 114, human rights certificate

## Public Trustee Act 1978:

- [1250](#) Public Trustee Regulation 2023, No. 115
- [1251](#) Public Trustee Regulation 2023, No. 115, explanatory notes
- [1252](#) Public Trustee Regulation 2023, No. 115, human rights certificate

## Major Events Act 2014:

- [1253](#) Major Events (Motor Racing Events) (Gold Coast 500) Amendment Regulation 2023, No. 116
- [1254](#) Major Events (Motor Racing Events) (Gold Coast 500) Amendment Regulation 2023, No. 116, explanatory notes
- [1255](#) Major Events (Motor Racing Events) (Gold Coast 500) Amendment Regulation 2023, No. 116, human rights certificate

## Animal Care and Protection Act 2001:

- [1256](#) Animal Care and Protection Regulation 2023, No. 117
- [1257](#) Animal Care and Protection Regulation 2023, No. 117, explanatory notes
- [1258](#) Animal Care and Protection Regulation 2023, No. 117, human rights certificate

## Biosecurity Act 2014:

- [1259](#) Biosecurity (Polyphagous Shot-hole Borer) Amendment Regulation 2023, No. 118
- [1260](#) Biosecurity (Polyphagous Shot-hole Borer) Amendment Regulation 2023, No. 118, explanatory notes
- [1261](#) Biosecurity (Polyphagous Shot-hole Borer) Amendment Regulation 2023, No. 118, human rights certificate

## Rural and Regional Adjustment Act 1994:

- [1262](#) Rural and Regional Adjustment (Climate Smart Energy Saver Scheme) Amendment Regulation 2023, No. 119
- [1263](#) Rural and Regional Adjustment (Climate Smart Energy Saver Scheme) Amendment Regulation 2023, No. 119, explanatory notes
- [1264](#) Rural and Regional Adjustment (Climate Smart Energy Saver Scheme) Amendment Regulation 2023, No. 119, human rights certificate

## Disability Services Act 2006:

- [1265](#) Disability Services Amendment Regulation 2023, No. 120
- [1266](#) Disability Services Amendment Regulation 2023, No. 120, explanatory notes
- [1267](#) Disability Services Amendment Regulation 2023, No. 120, human rights certificate

## Mineral Resources Act 1989:

- [1268](#) Mineral Resources Amendment Regulation 2023, No. 121
- [1269](#) Mineral Resources Amendment Regulation 2023, No. 121, explanatory notes
- [1270](#) Mineral Resources Amendment Regulation 2023, No. 121, human rights certificate

## Forestry Act 1959, Nature Conservation Act 1992:

- [1271](#) Forestry (State Forests) and Other Legislation Amendment Regulation (No. 2) 2023, No. 122
- [1272](#) Forestry (State Forests) and Other Legislation Amendment Regulation (No. 2) 2023, No. 122, explanatory notes
- [1273](#) Forestry (State Forests) and Other Legislation Amendment Regulation (No. 2) 2023, No. 122, human rights certificate

## Parliamentary Service Act 1988:

- [1274](#) Parliamentary Service By-law 2023, No. 123
- [1275](#) Parliamentary Service By-law 2023, No. 123, explanatory notes
- [1276](#) Parliamentary Service By-law 2023, No. 123, human rights certificate

## Governors (Salary and Pensions) Act 2003:

- [1277](#) Governors (Salary and Pensions) Regulation 2023, No. 124
- [1278](#) Governors (Salary and Pensions) Regulation 2023, No. 124, explanatory notes
- [1279](#) Governors (Salary and Pensions) Regulation 2023, No. 124, human rights certificate

## Statutory Instruments Act 1992:

- [1280](#) Statutory Instruments (Exemptions from Expiry) Amendment Regulation 2023, No. 125
- [1281](#) Statutory Instruments (Exemptions from Expiry) Amendment Regulation 2023, No. 125, explanatory notes
- [1282](#) Statutory Instruments (Exemptions from Expiry) Amendment Regulation 2023, No. 125, human rights certificate

## Public Sector Ethics Act 1994:

- [1283](#) Public Sector Ethics Regulation 2023, No. 126
- [1284](#) Public Sector Ethics Regulation 2023, No. 126, explanatory notes
- [1285](#) Public Sector Ethics Regulation 2023, No. 126, human rights certificate

## Environmental Protection Act 1994, Rural and Regional Adjustment Act 1994, State Penalties Enforcement Act 1999, Waste Reduction and Recycling Act 2011:

- [1286](#) Waste Reduction and Recycling Regulation 2023, No. 127
- [1287](#) Waste Reduction and Recycling Regulation 2023, No. 127, explanatory notes
- [1288](#) Waste Reduction and Recycling Regulation 2023, No. 127, human rights certificate

## Work Health and Safety Act 2011:

- [1289](#) Work Health and Safety (Codes of Practice) (Amusement Devices and Concrete Pumping) Amendment Notice 2023, No. 128
- [1290](#) Work Health and Safety (Codes of Practice) (Amusement Devices and Concrete Pumping) Amendment Notice 2023, No. 128, explanatory notes
- [1291](#) Work Health and Safety (Codes of Practice) (Amusement Devices and Concrete Pumping) Amendment Notice 2023, No. 128, human rights certificate

## Forestry Act 1959, Nature Conservation Act 1992, Recreation Areas Management Act 2006, State Penalties Enforcement Act 1999:

- [1292](#) State Penalties Enforcement and Other Legislation Amendment Regulation 2023, No. 131
- [1293](#) State Penalties Enforcement and Other Legislation Amendment Regulation 2023, No. 131, explanatory notes
- [1294](#) State Penalties Enforcement and Other Legislation Amendment Regulation 2023, No. 131, human rights certificate

## Local Government Act 2009:

- [1295](#) Local Government (Fraser Coast Regional Council—Suspension of Councillor) Amendment Regulation 2023, No. 132
- [1296](#) Local Government (Fraser Coast Regional Council—Suspension of Councillor) Amendment Regulation 2023, No. 132, explanatory notes
- [1297](#) Local Government (Fraser Coast Regional Council—Suspension of Councillor) Amendment Regulation 2023, No. 132, human rights certificate

## REPORT BY THE CLERK

The following report was tabled by the Clerk—

[1309](#) 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—

**Child Protection (Offender Reporting and Offender Prohibition Order) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022**

Amendments made to Bill

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

*Omit—*


'Child Protection (Offender Reporting and Offender Prohibition Order) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022'

*Insert—*

'Child Protection (Offender Reporting and Offender Prohibition Order) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023'

## MINISTERIAL PAPER


### Office of the Public Advocate

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence) (9.37 am): I lay upon the table of the House a report of the Public Advocate titled '*Safe, secure and affordable*?: the need for an inquiry into supported accommodation' in Queensland, dated August 2023, in accordance with section 209A of the Guardianship and Administration Act 2000.

*Tabled paper:* The Public Advocate—'Safe, secure and affordable'?: the need for an inquiry into supported accommodation in Queensland, August 2023 [\[1312\]](#).

## MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

### Economy


 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Olympic and Paralympic Games) (9.38 am): Data released last week by the Australian Bureau of Statistics confirms our economic plan is delivering. Queensland's economy is outpacing the nation out of the pandemic. Since March 2020 Queensland's state final demand grew by 12.8 per cent to the June quarter. Over just the last quarter Queensland's state final demand is the equal highest at 1.3 per cent. Investment included: 3.8 per cent increase in total dwellings, including housing and apartment buildings; 2.4 per cent rise in machinery and equipment investment, including for our growing resources sector; economic and jobs return from our Big Build; and a 10.7 per cent increase in state and local infrastructure investment. To quote the ABS, this was driven by 'increased work on road and rail projects, hospital buildings and purchases of health equipment'.

Queensland has the strongest domestic economy, and Queensland has the strongest growth in new jobs in the nation out of the pandemic at 276,000. We have supported over half a million more jobs in Queensland since coming to government. Our big infrastructure build is the largest in the history of Queensland—delivering the hospitals, the transport infrastructure, the schools and the renewable energy our growing state needs.

The Big Build is also providing the confidence for the private sector to invest, with investment in new dwellings up 14.8 per cent over the year to the June quarter according to the ABS and business investment up by 5.6 per cent over the year. It is supported by our economic plan to deliver high-paying jobs in new industries—unlocking new manufacturing and tech jobs in renewable energy, in hydrogen, in critical minerals, in making trains in Maryborough, in space, in defence and in advanced manufacturing. Over just the last year, there are now 17,800 more jobs on the Sunshine Coast, 14,000 more jobs in the Wide Bay region, 6,100 more jobs in Toowoomba, 11,500 more jobs in Central Queensland, 7,000 more jobs in Townsville and 1,500 more jobs in Cairns.

On our side of the House, we understand the importance of having access to well-paying, secure jobs to respond to national cost-of-living pressures. When we came to government Queensland's domestic economy was flatlining because of the cuts and the sackings. We will continue to back rather than sack. By working together, our best days remain ahead of us.


### Cost of Living, Relief

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Olympic and Paralympic Games) (9.40 am): In more good news for Queensland, our government continues to reduce the cost of living for Queenslanders. Electricity bills are arriving showing the benefit of rebates announced in the budget. I know the opposition does not like hearing this, but these rebates include \$550 for every Queensland household, rising to \$1,072 for vulnerable Queenslanders. Businesses will receive \$650. In some cases, some Queenslanders will pay no electricity bill at all. This is a direct reflection of the strength of the Queensland economy which is an achievement of the good financial management of this government.

There is more. The people of this state are able to save even more with up to \$1,000 offered to help purchase new, energy-efficient appliances. Since its launch last week, more than 10,130 applications have been received with an average rebate of \$420. This bill-busting initiative has been such a resounding success that we are extending it. Now 80,000 Queenslanders—or twice as many—will be able to benefit from this investment. I am informed that switching from a washing machine with a two-star rating to a four-star rating will rinse \$117 from electricity bills every year. Switching to a heat pump hot water system will save more than \$1,100 a year. This is how the strength of the Queensland economy is helping every Queenslanders every day.

These are the most generous cost-of-living relief measures ever offered in Australia. We also included: free swimming lessons; FairPlay vouchers, cutting \$150 off the cost of having children participate in sport; and free kindy, representing a saving of \$4,600 per year. Over the past five years, Queenslanders have received \$1,125 in rebates on their electricity bills. It is yet another reminder of the wisdom of keeping our electricity assets in public hands and the risk to every family budget if that policy was to change. Queensland does not have to choose between these measures and building more roads, schools and hospitals. Sound economic management means Queensland can do it all and Queensland reaps the rewards.

### Victims of Crime


 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Olympic and Paralympic Games) (9.42 am): Our government continues to stand beside victims of crime. At the last sittings of this House, I announced the appointment of an independent commissioner responsible for representing the needs of victims of crime. Respected, lifelong police officer Jon Rouse AM will be the first to fill this role, having been appointed by the Attorney-General. Former inspector Rouse spent 40 years in the Queensland Police Service, most notably leading the world famous Taskforce Argos targeting those who prey on children. He will be that voice for victims, ensuring awareness of the rights of victims and the support available to them, identifying the training needs of agencies to better respond to them, and improving the coordination of the financial assistance scheme offered to victims of crime.

In addition, our government has also announced the establishment of an independent ministerial advisory committee. This committee will have a similar status to our very effective and respected Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Council. We are working with the Voice for Victims group on how this group can work best. I want to thank representatives of Voice for Victims for raising their concerns and for working with the Attorney-General and the police and youth justice ministers on better ways to support victims of crime.

Our efforts do not end there. Today I can announce another measure. We will agree to establish a select parliamentary committee to further contribute to our youth crime response. I understand that the Leader of the House has spoken to the member for Noosa and that this committee will be chaired by the independent member for Noosa. We will write to the opposition today requesting their nominees. This will allow for a bipartisan approach examining all aspects of this very complex issue.

Once again, I thank the Voice for Victims group for putting this proposal forward, and I want to also highlight the contribution of the member for Cooper. Our party and this parliament are all the better because of their advocacy on behalf of victims. Ours is a government that listens and acts. We have shown this time and time again, and we have proven, as a state, there is nothing we cannot overcome when we work together.


### Disability Royal Commission, Recommendations

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Olympic and Paralympic Games) (9.44 am): The care of children and young people with a disability needs to be paramount and thorough. This sentiment was clear in the interim findings of the disability royal commission inquiry into


the care of Kaleb and Jonathon. I think all Queenslanders were horrified by reports of the mistreatment of these boys. Minister Crawford has apologised, and today I echo that apology. We are sorry. This should never have happened, and we are working to make sure it does not happen again.

Yesterday, cabinet considered the recommendations made by the disability royal commission. Today, Minister Crawford will be tabling the report and our government's response that accepts, or accepts in principle, all five recommendations made. That includes the recommendation for an independent review. The review will be conducted by the Queensland Ombudsman, and the Attorney will have more to say on that shortly. We will also consider all recommendations from the disability royal commission's final report, which I understand is due to come down at the end of this month.

### Rural Fire Service

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Olympic and Paralympic Games) (9.45 am): To echo your words, Mr Speaker, this Yellow Ribbon Day we celebrate the work of the Rural Fire Service and its volunteer workforce. There are more than 28,000 volunteers who make up the 1,400 rural fire brigades, covering 93 per cent of Queensland. We are joined today by some of our RFS firefighters. To you and to all RFS volunteers, thank you and happy Yellow Ribbon Day.

### Hydrogen Industry

 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Murrumba—ALP) (Deputy Premier, Minister for State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning and Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympic and Paralympic Games Infrastructure) (9.46 am): Mr Speaker, it is good to see you back. The Palaszczuk government is making Queensland the global capital of the green hydrogen industry. Queensland has a strong track record of industry development. The creation of Gladstone's world-leading CSG to LNG industry in a decade was only possible because government championed it. Now Gladstone exports 23 million tonnes of LNG to the world every year. Where else but Queensland could you go from a standing start to a world-beating export industry in just a decade?


I travelled to Gladstone just recently to see Fortescue Future Industries' electrolyser factory. It will make the devices that will use our solar and wind power to split water to make green hydrogen for our future renewables industries. We could have imported electrolyzers. Instead, we partnered with FFI to make them locally. Construction reached practical completion in April and the fit-out is underway. FFI are already producing prototypes right now at the factory. When it is at full production next year, it will not just be the world's biggest electrolyser factory; it will be four times bigger than the next biggest in the world. Just testing the electrolyzers off the production line will produce more green hydrogen than all of the green hydrogen currently produced in Australia. Fortescue also has plans for a neighbouring facility that will use the electrolyzers to make green hydrogen for local energy intensive industries, helping them to maintain local jobs.

I was pleased to meet with workers onsite who share our vision for Gladstone's green energy future. They know the world is taking notice of our emerging green hydrogen industry. I also visited Perth to represent the Premier at the Boao Forum for Asia and talk about Queensland's role as a trusted and reliable energy exporter. I told delegates that we are ready to build on our reputation as we take our place—

**Mr SPEAKER:** Members to my left, there is a continual conversation happening. It is becoming difficult to hear the Deputy Premier. I ask that you cease your conversations or take them outside.

**Dr MILES:** I told delegates that Queensland is ready to build on our reputation as we take our place in the global renewable energy supply chain. There are more than 50 green hydrogen and ammonia projects underway in Queensland right now. There is \$110 million being invested as part of the Queensland Hydrogen Industry Strategy. Modelling suggests that our hydrogen industry could be worth \$19 billion in 2040. Worldwide demand for hydrogen is projected to exceed 500 million tonnes by 2050. As the world continues to grow and change, it is time to look for the best place to invest in renewable energy, and that place is Queensland.


### Resources Industries

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment) (9.49 am): Three weeks ago in this House, the Palaszczuk Labor government took urgent legislative action to deliver for the people of Glenden in the Bowen Basin. We introduced and passed new laws to save an entire Queensland town. We did not submit those laws to a committee process and we did so

deliberately because our Premier made it clear the people of Glenden deserve a future. We were not going to lose a minute to deliver for them. In taking this action, the Premier and the government came under attack from the Queensland Resources Council and its leader, Ian Macfarlane. Today I have a message for Ian Macfarlane and anyone else who wants to attack our government and our Premier. Let me say that again: I have a message today for Ian Macfarlane and anyone else who wants to attack our government and our Premier. We will not back away from a fight. We are going to fight for every town, we are going to fight for every city, and we are going to fight for every region across Queensland because that is what Labor governments do.

It does not matter how rich or powerful you think you are. It does not matter if you are the biggest mining company in the world. Our Labor government will not take a backward step in demanding a fair deal for Queenslanders. Every day for 8½ years, our government has fought hard to deliver for Queensland—more nurses, more teachers, more doctors, more paramedics, better mental health care, free kindy, the biggest power rebate of any state or territory in the country, the lowest unemployment rate on record, lower debt and the biggest surplus ever recorded by a state government. However, our government has so much more to do. Only the Palaszczuk Labor government has a plan to decarbonise our energy system. Only the Palaszczuk Labor government has a plan to deliver the biggest hospital building program in the nation, only the Palaszczuk Labor government has a plan to keep progressive coal royalties, and it is only our government, the Palaszczuk Labor government, that has a plan to protect Queenslanders from LNP cuts.

### Trade to Teach; Turn to Teaching

 **Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for Education, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing) (9.52 am): Welcome back, Mr Speaker, and best wishes for your good health. Only the Palaszczuk government will always back our hardworking teachers. We are always looking at new and innovative ways to attract people from a variety of backgrounds to this wonderful profession. Last year we announced a \$10 million program to boost the number of industrial design and technology teachers by supporting tradies to become teachers in our Queensland state schools. We also want the program to ignite a passion for the trades in our young people and build the pipeline of skilled tradies we need for Queensland's record \$89 billion Big Build. Trade to Teach is based on our nation-leading Turn to Teaching program and is an earn-and-learn model. Our tradies get a \$20,000 scholarship, a paid internship with mentoring in classroom and a guaranteed permanent ITD teaching position specialising in a Queensland state secondary school when they complete the program. We have 38 participants in the pilot cohort. They have started their teaching degrees this year and will start in the classroom as an intern with half teaching load from 2024.

The feedback has been great. I am delighted to advise the House that the Palaszczuk government will invest an additional \$10 million to expand the program and invite even more tradies to make the change to teaching. Applications open today, and I encourage people to jump online and find out more. It really is an amazing opportunity. Here is what some of our current Trade to Teach cohort have to say. Alexander Manfield, a former boilermaker from Warwick, encourages people who are considering applying to, 'Go for it! It's a brilliant opportunity.' I notice the member for Gympie is in the House. Krystien Bennett, a plasterer from Gympie, says—

My grandfather had always inspired me when I was little; he was a great teacher with lots of patience. I promised my grandfather that I would pass on our knowledge to the next generation and teaching allows me to do this ... so I'm excited about the career change.

That is from a plasterer from Gympie—fantastic! Many tradies are looking for a physical and lifestyle change, and Dion Kingi, a carpenter and current participant from the Sunshine Coast, says Trade to Teach 'has been a godsend as I was looking to get off the tools or change career'.

The program is part of our Good People Good Jobs Queensland Workforce Strategy 2022-2032. I want to thank Minister Farmer and the former assistant education minister, the member for Keppel, for their important work on this program. I know my current assistant minister, the member for Mackay, will take on this role in her new position.

Trade to Teach is just one of many ways we are getting more teachers in the classroom, along with our new teacher aide pathway, our Turn to Teaching internship program and our excellent nation-leading EBA. Applications close on 2 October, so if you are a tradie with a passion for your craft and a desire to pass on your knowledge to the next generation, get online and apply today.

## Vaping



**Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (Minister for Health, Mental Health and Ambulance Services and Minister for Women) (9.56 am): Our government makes no apologies for cracking down on vapes and drawing a line in the sand to protect young Queenslanders. As I have previously outlined, we have begun raiding illicit retailers. In one day, over 54,000 vapes were seized. Many of these vapes would have otherwise ended up in the hands of young Queenslanders. We have recently seen vapes that look like highlighters, the kind that you would find in any student's pencil case. If that is not shamelessly targeting our children, then I do not know what is.

We have also launched our brand new \$1.3 million anti-vaping campaign aimed at 12- to 17-year-olds, titled There's Nothing Sweet About Vapes. The campaign is being promoted on TikTok and SnapChat, along with online and outdoor advertisements to educate young people about the dangers of vapes. We launched the campaign by encouraging Queenslanders of all ages to simply search for 'Vaping Exposed', and the results in just a couple of weeks have been amazing. So far the campaign has resulted in just under 3.8 million impressions. YouTube ads have been viewed over 110,000 times in two weeks alone. The website is getting great results with over 31,000 visitors so far to find out more about the dangers of vaping. This proves that Queenslanders share our government's concerns about the dangers of vapes and are eager to learn more.

We are not the only ones to have identified vapes as a danger to young people. Minister Mark Butler has said that the federal government is intending to ban the importation of non-prescription vapes, as well as banning single-use disposable vapes. The federal government also plans to increase the minimum quality standards around vapes.

We have to keep up the fight and inform our children about the hazards of vaping and get illegal products off our streets. I look forward to the day when vaping is no longer seen as the cool thing to do, but we have to work together if we are going to prevent a new generation of Queenslanders from going down the road to addiction.

## Victims Commissioner; Disability Royal Commission, Recommendations



**Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence) (9.58 am): The Palaszczuk government is committed to making sure Queensland victims feel safe and heard. On 23 August, I advised this House that the government intended to appoint an interim victims commissioner at the beginning of September. I am pleased to advise the House that Mr Jon Rouse APM has been appointed as Queensland's interim Victims' Commissioner. Mr Rouse will be well known to members for his distinguished 39 years of service with the Queensland Police Service and his groundbreaking work with Taskforce Argos targeting internet child sex offenders.

Jon was a Queensland Australian of the Year in 2019, is the recipient of many Police Service medals and international awards for his incredible work in the fight against the commercial and sexual exploitation of children and is the perfect person to act as the interim Victims' Commissioner. Jon joined Minister Ryan, Minister Farmer, senior public servants and me at a meeting with representatives from the Voice for Victims advocacy group on 6 September 2023 in addition to meeting the group during the last sitting week. I was pleased to be able to inform the representatives that the Queensland government would be supporting the creation of an independent advisory committee co-chaired by a victim and a retired judge which would consist of victims advocates and other experts and stakeholders who could provide the government an additional voice for proposals for reform.

The Palaszczuk government is working with Voice for Victims and other stakeholders to determine the advisory group's membership, terms of reference and a potential expression of interest process to secure broad representation. In addition, the Palaszczuk government has also advised that it supports ensuring that there is a victims representative on the Queensland Sentencing Advisory Council and the Parole Board of Queensland. We announce today, as the Premier has stated, that we will establish a select parliamentary committee chaired by the independent member for Noosa, and I thank her for accepting that position. I will be writing to the opposition today to request nominees for membership of this committee.

Last week the Disability Royal Commission released its report into public hearing 33, Kaleb and Jonathon. Minister Crawford will have more to say regarding this matter shortly. However, I am pleased to advise the House that in respect to recommendations 5.2 to 5.4 the Queensland Ombudsman has discussed the recommendation with me and will be conducting the independent review as recommended by the royal commission.

### Camera Detected Offence Program



**Hon. MC BAILEY** (Miller—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads and Minister for Digital Services) (10.01 am): Mr Speaker, it is great to have you back. Every person deserves to get home safely, especially on our roads. Sadly, 196 people have lost their life on our roads this year. We know distraction and not wearing a seatbelt are two very real killers, which is why we are tough on these dangerous behaviours as a government. We make no apologies for investing in the latest technology to keep Queenslanders safe on our roads.

Last week I was made aware of a design fault in the mobile phone distraction and seatbelt camera system identified by the Department of Transport and Main Roads. This resulted in double demerit points being incorrectly issued for some seatbelt offences where it was a second or subsequent offence and one was a camera detected offence where a passenger was not correctly wearing a seatbelt. I am advised this impacted 1,842 licence holders between 1 November 2021 and 31 August this year.

My department worked to immediately rectify the issue and today I can update the House that all 121 people with currently suspended licences have been contacted or attempted to be contacted. Those unable to be reached by phone or email will be issued a letter of information. Legal advice has been provided and will guide how licences can be swiftly reissued. I am advised the Department of Transport and Main Roads has the appropriate legislative powers to undertake rectification work.

The department is currently developing a procedure to support updating customer records and this process will be thoroughly tested. Once finalised, those with currently suspended licences will be rectified in the first instance with other customers to follow. Others who have been incorrectly issued double demerit points but still hold a licence will also be contacted. Transport and main roads is working to make contact with all impacted people as soon as possible.

The acting director-general has appointed Pinnacle QM, an Australian based firm with over 30 years experience, to lead the independent review into the Camera Detected Offence Program. I expect that will be completed in coming months. We want to make sure that this situation never occurs again and ensure that we are using the best available technology to keep every Queenslanders on our roads safe. Despite this, the message is clear: buckle up every single time you drive. It could save your life and that of your passengers as well.

### Office of the Public Advocate, Report



**Hon. MAJ SCANLON** (Gaven—ALP) (Minister for Housing) (10.03 am): ‘*Safe, secure and affordable*’—that is the title of the Public Advocate’s report tabled this morning and what the Palaszczuk government expects for our state’s most vulnerable citizens. In Queensland, level 3 residential services provide accommodation, personal care and often food services. A significant number of people living in these settings have complex support needs coupled with impaired decision-making. It is not lost on me that if my own brother did not have my mum or me, he may very well have had to rely on one of these services. Ensuring that those most vulnerable in our community are given opportunities and are supported is one of the reasons I got involved in politics, and as housing minister I take my responsibility to deliver for those people very seriously.

The Public Advocate’s report handed to government makes one recommendation, and that is that the Queensland parliament should conduct an inquiry into the provision and regulation of supported accommodation in Queensland. The Palaszczuk government accepts this recommendation and will soon refer this inquiry to the Community Support and Services Committee. This is an opportunity to shine a light on this industry and listen to the voices of residents, which will help inform a review of the Residential Services (Accreditation) Act.

The Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability and the NDIS review are currently examining issues directly related to people with disability and are likely to address supported accommodation. In Queensland, 46 level 3 residential services provide housing plus supports for more than 1,500 people living with a disability, serious mental health concerns or issues related to drug and alcohol use. Those services are not run by government and often house very marginalised members of our community. The report looked at these services, their role in the broader housing and social care system and whether they are appropriately serving their purpose. It included input from a range of stakeholders including people with lived experience and their advocates. It asks two key questions. One, are the current residential services regulatory criteria appropriate and appropriately monitored? Two, is there sufficient regulatory oversight of interplay between multiple systems, particularly the state regulated residential services system and the federally regulated NDIS?



The Commonwealth government's Disability Royal Commission has highlighted some serious values from similar kinds of supported accommodation services in New South Wales. Over the past decade the NDIS has changed the lives of many Queenslanders for the better including my brother. However, the system is not perfect and bad behaviour by private institutions is sometimes unintentionally incentivised. It is right and timely to look at the way these systems interact. If there are any gaps or ways that we can improve, I want to know about it so we can act immediately.

It is important that we listen to the real experiences provided during the report process and during the inquiry to ensure that we have the right supports and legislative framework to protect some of the state's most marginalised citizens. As recommended in the report, we will seek to engage an independent non-government organisation to support residents to contribute their views on the services and support they receive. I want to sincerely thank the Public Advocate for his work on this matter and his commitment to improving the lives of vulnerable Queenslanders and to thank all staff who assisted in the preparation of this report. I look forward to updating the House further.

### Disability Royal Commission, Recommendations



**Hon. CD CRAWFORD** (Barron River—ALP) (Minister for Child Safety and Minister for Seniors and Disability Services) (10.07 am): Last week the Disability Royal Commission released its report into public hearing 33, Kaleb and Jonathon. It found the state had failed the two boys and that frontline services could have done more to assist them. This review spanned multiple governments, portfolios and events over a 20-year period of the boys' lives from 2000 to 2020. Like me, I think all Queenslanders were horrified by the reports of the violence, abuse, neglect and deprivation of rights that those boys suffered whilst in the care of their father. On behalf of the government I sincerely apologised to the boys and expressed deep regret at their experience. I also noted the whole-of-government response should and could have been better. This should never have happened and we are working to make sure something like this never happens again.

On Monday, cabinet considered the recommendations from the Disability Royal Commission in relation to this hearing. Today I table the royal commission public hearing report 33 and the Queensland government response to the five recommendations made by the commission.

*Tabled paper:* Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability—Public Hearing Report: Public Hearing 33, 'Violence, abuse, neglect and deprivation of human rights: Kaleb and Jonathon (a case study)', 8 to 10 May 2023 [\[1313\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability—Public Hearing Report: Public Hearing 33, 'Violence, abuse, neglect and deprivation of human rights: Kaleb and Jonathon (a case study)', 8 to 10 May 2023, government response [\[1314\]](#).

I am pleased to advise the House that we have accepted or accepted in principle all five recommendations. The government response is as follows. Recommendation 1 is to increase training and resources for government employees. That is accepted. Recommendation 2 is to further incorporate voices and experiences of people with disability in the child protection system. That is accepted in principle. Recommendation 3 is to review section 13E(1)(d) of the Child Protection Act to consider if mandatory child safety reporting requirements should apply to all Queensland police officers. That is accepted. Recommendation 4 is for a substantial expansion of the Queensland Public Guardian's Child Advocate scheme beyond categories of children in the tertiary child protection system to children and young people with disability at risk of entering the child protection system. That is accepted in principle.

Recommendation 5.1 is for an apology, which I delivered on 5 September 2023. Recommendations 5.2 to 5.4 are for an independent review. I refer to the announcement this morning by the Attorney-General, who advised that the Queensland Ombudsman has discussed the recommendation with the Attorney-General and will be conducting the independent investigation. Recommendation 5.5 refers to redress. On this, the Queensland government will confer with Kaleb and Jonathon's representatives about the royal commission's recommendation for redress and ongoing support. The final report by the Disability Royal Commission is due at the end of the month and the Queensland government will consider all relevant recommendations from that report.

### Water Security



**Hon. GJ BUTCHER** (Gladstone—ALP) (Minister for Regional Development and Manufacturing and Minister for Water) (10.10 am): Mr Speaker, it is good to have you back. South-East Queensland's water supplies are secure, thanks to the foresight of Labor governments. It was the Labor government that delivered the South East Queensland Water Grid in response to the millennium drought. The South

East Queensland Water Grid, which is currently sitting at 71 per cent, is comprised of traditional water storages like dams and climate resilient infrastructure like the Gold Coast Desalination Plant and the Western Corridor Recycled Water Scheme. Together, these vital assets have provided, and will continue to provide, water security to South-East Queensland. Importantly, Labor has kept these assets in public hands.

The design of the grid means that we can move water around. This is important, given the variable rainfall we experience here in South-East Queensland. As Queenslanders, we are always prepared for the extremes that nature throws at us. The South East Queensland Water Grid is an example of that, serving the south-east in times of drought and flooding rain.

During the 2022 flood event, when water treatment plants were impacted by debris, production was ramped up at the Gold Coast Desalination Plant to make sure that South-East Queensland's water supply was not impacted. The western corridor is currently being used to supply water to industry to reduce the demand on Wivenhoe Dam and remains a vital drought response measure. The most recent drought in South-East Queensland—broken with the 2022 floods—was only one year shorter than the millennium drought. Thanks to the South East Queensland Water Grid, our water supplies performed much better, with the grid only dropping to about 55 per cent during that time.

Let me be clear: our South-East Queensland water supplies are safe and secure. Queenslanders can be confident of that. Our plan for water now and into the future is outlined in the Water Security Program prepared by Seqwater. The current Water Security Program is online and you can read it now. Seqwater is also planning for the future, reviewing and updating its water security plan. This plan is not a one- or two-year outlook; it is a 30-year plan to deliver water security in South-East Queensland. The plan considers South-East Queensland water demand from the community and industries and takes into account population growth, projected rainfall and climate change. It then outlines the water infrastructure needed to meet that demand and when it will be needed.

People can always count on the Palaszczuk government to deliver water security—whenever or wherever they are in Queensland. With the planning we are doing, our communities can be confident that safe and secure water supply will continue to be delivered in South-East Queensland, now and into the future.

### Rural Fire Service



**Hon. MT RYAN** (Morayfield—ALP) (Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services) (10.13 am): Today we welcome Rural Fire Service volunteers to the House to celebrate Yellow Ribbon Day. It was great for a number of us to join those volunteers and our friends from the Rural Fire Brigades Association Queensland out the front of parliament this morning to say hello and to see one of the latest Rural Fire Service appliances on display.

The busy start to the bushfire season has been an great reminder of the importance of what our rural fire volunteers do to keep us safe. Across Queensland we currently have multiple bushfires, particularly in the south-west and central regions. Many of these fires are now currently contained because of the efforts of these outstanding Queenslanders—members of the Rural Fire Service. These fires are likely to continue to require active management for some days to come, with significant resources and personnel committed from many parts of Queensland.

In particular, it is worth highlighting that the Queensland Fire and Emergency Services, aerial firefighting fleet has been particularly busy, and this year that busyness is starting very early. The large air tanker, for instance, has already performed over a dozen drops and the Black Hawk helicopter—new to the fleet—has performed over 260 water-bombing drops already. This is an important reminder that we are now in bushfire season and that the community needs to be prepared by following the information on the website of Queensland Fire and Emergency Services.

It is important to stay on the leading edge with the latest technology and equipment and to find new ways to keep both frontline volunteers and the community safe. That is why this morning I am very proud to announce a new \$1 million innovation fund to allow us to work with Rural Fire Service volunteers and partners on trialling new solutions and technologies and testing them for operational effectiveness. This may be a new appliance or the latest kind of safety in firefighting equipment. This is all about keeping Rural Fire Service volunteers on the front line safe, because they keep us and our community safe.

## MOTIONS

### Suspension of Standing Order



**Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Leader of the House) (10.15 am), by leave, without notice: I move—

That standing order 87 be suspended to allow the passage of the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law (Surgeons) Amendment Bill in its current form.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

### Suspension of Standing Order



**Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Leader of the House) (10.16 am), by leave, without notice: I move—

That standing order 87 be suspended to allow the passage of the Justice and Other Legislation Amendment Bill in its current form.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

### Order of Business



**Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Leader of the House) (10.16 am): I move—

That general business order of the day No. 1 be postponed.

I acknowledge that I have received a letter from the member for Hinchinbrook advising of his absence and requesting that the private member's bill listed on the *Notice Paper* not be proceeded with for this sitting week.

*Tabled paper:* Letter, dated 7 August 2023, from the member for Hinchinbrook, Mr Nick Dametto MP, to the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence, the Hon. Yvette D'Ath, requesting that the debate on the Liquid Fuel Supply (Minimum Biobased Petrol Content) Amendment Bill be postponed due to his absence from the Assembly this week [\[1315\]](#).

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

## QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

**Mr SPEAKER:** Question time will conclude today at 11.17 am.

### Palaszczuk Labor Government, Performance



**Mr CRISAFULLI** (10.17 am): Mr Speaker—

**Government members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! Members to my right!

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** My question is to the Premier. Despite families struggling to pay their bills and being fearful of youth crime and a health system in crisis, the government's focus has been on itself. If the Premier cannot govern her ministers, how can she govern Queensland?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I thank the Leader of the Opposition for the question. Over the last eight years we have been firmly focused on the people of this great state. There is nothing that drives us more than making sure that people across Queensland have good, decent jobs that allow them to provide food for their family and to pay their bills. We said that if we kept people safe during COVID we would come out of the pandemic with a strong economy. That is what we said before the last election. We said to the people of the state: if you vote for us and put your trust in us, that is what we will deliver. That is what we have delivered. We have the strongest economic growth. We have come out of the pandemic the strongest in the nation. We have done such a good job that thousands are moving here. They are not just choosing the south-east; they are also choosing our great regions.

**Mrs Frecklington** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Nanango!

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** The Leader of the Opposition was part of that famous government—the Newman government.

**Mr Dick:** Cabal.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** The member for Kawana was part of it as well, and the member for Clayfield was very—

**Ms Bates** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! Member for Mudgeeraba.

**A government member** interjected.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** That is right; I take that interjection.

**Mr Dick:** Went into witness protection.

**Ms Grace:** They're all still here.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** That is right: fancy having to hide away someone for six months. How embarrassing: 'Don't come out.'

**Mr Bleijie** interjected.

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

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** We saw our regions coming out stronger and better than ever after the decimation of the regions and the south-east under the LNP with the cuts and the sackings. Now we see a Queensland that is flourishing—absolutely flourishing—in terms of our economic development with a government that cares, and because we kept our electricity assets in public hands we are able to give that dividend back to people as cost-of-living relief.

**Mr Janetzki** interjected.

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

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** That could never have happened under the LNP because it would have sold it off to the highest bidder.

### **Palaszczuk Labor Government, Performance**

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** My question is to the Premier. In 2020 the Premier said her job was to guide a stable and steady government. Given the failure of service delivery, leading to a torrent of leaks in the media, purportedly from government MPs, what action will the Premier take to ensure stability in government when she finds out which MPs are leaking against her?

**Government members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! The House will come to order!

**Mrs D'ATH:** Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I believe that question had inferences in it that are inaccurate and incorrect and the question should be ruled out of order.

**Mr SPEAKER:** The question is argumentative and I would ask you to either rephrase that question or it will be ruled out of order.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** My question is to the Premier. In 2020 the Premier said her job was to guide a stable and steady government. Despite that, numerous service delivery failings have unfolded and it has led to a fortnight of multiple stories across multiple platforms. Can the Premier continue to provide the stable and steady government she promised in 2020?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Absolutely!

**Ms Enoch** interjected.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I take the member's interjection as well: vote 'yes' at the referendum. Let me say this: if those on the opposite side of the House want to talk about stability, I have been leading this state for over eight years after being elected three times. Let us talk about the leaders of the LNP whilst I have been here. We had Campbell Newman and then we had Lawrence Springborg. I had to write them down because there are so many. Then there was Tim Nicholls—

**Mrs Frecklington** interjected.

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

**Ms PALASZCZUK:**—Deb Frecklington and then there is David Crisafulli. There we go—five.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Premier, we have to make sure we are using correct titles.

**Government members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order, members!

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I will take that interjection: the current Leader of the Opposition.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Thank you, Premier.

**Government members** interjected.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** That is right, so five on that side. There have also been a few PMs as well—Tony Abbott, Malcolm Turnbull and Scott Morrison, so three LNP prime ministers as well. If those opposite want to talk about instability, it is on that side. They cannot get a leader on that side that lasts more than one term.

**Mrs Frecklington** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. Please resume your seat, Premier. Member for Nanango, I have warned you under the standing orders. You interjected again. You are leaving the chamber for one hour.

*Whereupon the honourable member for Nanango withdrew from the chamber at 10.24 am.*

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** We on this side of the House will continue to focus on the issues that matter to Queenslanders. We understand that cost of living is the biggest issue at the moment, and that is why we have announced the doubling of the fund for the electrical appliances rebate while we are giving people the electricity rebate.

We also acknowledge that there are issues with housing. That is a national issue. It is happening in other states and we are working together. Isn't it great to finally see agreement reached at the federal level? Finally the Greens, after all of their protesting, have now come to the party to realise that housing is a big issue and we actually work best when we work together. We will continue to work with the regions and to work with the people, to work with businesses and to work with community groups right across our state because we work best when we work together.

### **Energy Saving Appliances, Rebate**

**Ms HOWARD:** My question is of the Premier and Minister for the Olympic and Paralympic Games. Can the Premier update the House on how the energy efficient appliance rebate will help Queenslanders save money, and is the Premier aware of any alternative approaches?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I thank the member for Ipswich for her question. I know how excited she is about this program and how delighted members of the government were to hear that we have doubled that incentive scheme because it is so popular. I thank the Minister for Energy for putting together the proposal. We announced that because we know that the cost of living is a big issue.

I want Queenslanders to know that it is not too late to apply and the best thing they can do is go on to the website—and we can put the details out and I am quite sure all members are talking about it on their social media platforms as well. It means that people can get energy efficient rebates from \$300 to \$1,000. This is having a huge impact. Already Minister de Brenni has updated to say that 50 per cent of people who are applying for this rebate come from vulnerable households. This means so much. When every dollar counts, it means so much to families' household incomes. Making that switch from a two- to a four-star appliance will make a huge difference to Queenslanders' energy bills.

As I recall I said in the last session of this parliament, I have seniors saying to me how they are surprised to see that they may have a bill of only \$20 because they are getting the rebate, because we kept our energy assets in public hands. All of that is at risk at the next election, because we know what the LNP loves doing is selling assets—putting them all together and putting them all up for sale.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order, member for Chatsworth!

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Member for Chatsworth, you are sitting next to 'Mr Asset Sales'. You are sitting right next to him. You are sitting next to—

**Mr SPEAKER:** Premier, please direct your comments through the chair.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Honestly, get a reality check! You are sitting right next to him. We still have not heard from the LNP whether it will rule out asset sales. Will it rule out asset sales at the next election? We do not know because we still do not have policies.

**Mr Crisafulli** interjected.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I say to the Leader of the Opposition and the shadow ministers: do some work!

**Mr Mander** interjected.

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

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I thank the member for the question because we will continue to deliver that cost-of-living relief to Queenslanders because Queenslanders deserve it. We are putting our hand out and making sure they get a helping hand when they need it most.

### **Palaszczuk Labor Government, Performance**

**Mr BLEIJIE:** My question is to the Premier. The Premier did not meet the Voice for Victims official delegation, rushed legislation without consultation and reportedly said from Italy there were no issues at home—this is despite the crime crisis, the health crisis, the housing and cost-of-living crisis. Does the Premier concede actions like these are the reason why senior Labor sources say the government is frozen?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** The member for Kawana cannot honestly stand in this House and talk about rushed legislation when he was the master of legislation being rushed through the parliament. Honestly!

**Mr SPEAKER:** The member for Kawana will cease waving those documents around.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** There are a lot of members who were not around when the member for Kawana would come in here and dump legislation into this parliament this thick.

**Mr Powell:** The Premier promised to be different.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** And we promised to save Glenden as well. You voted against saving Glenden.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. A notice to all members: comments will be directed not at other members but through the chair. If there are interjections that are irrelevant you may be warned under the standing orders.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** The member for Kawana rushed legislation through here. In fact, he was such a distraction for the government of the day they put him in witness protection for six months where he was not allowed to talk to the media. If the Leader of the Opposition is away, guess who is going to act? The member for Kawana! That is who Queenslanders are going to get: the member for Kawana. Heaven help us.

**Mr Bleijie:** Nine years of the current government—nine years.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Pause the clock.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** And you've had five leaders. You had five.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Premier, resume your seat. Member for Kawana, you have asked a question. You are continually interjecting. The Premier is answering the question. You are warned under the standing orders.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** What I see across from me is the same old LNP government—the same remnants of that party, the same people still in charge, who will do exactly the same. We know they have a secret cuts agenda. We know they have no policies and they want to sneak into office without being up-front and truthful with the people of this state. We will hold them to account each and every day to make sure that the public are reminded of the damage that they did. Let me say this: every single member of this team is up for the fight because they know what is at risk. They know what is at risk and they know the damage that was done to their communities, like the member for Lytton. You actually axed a health service in her electorate. You shut it. We were out there campaigning. The member for Surfers Paradise had a hit list of schools to close. The member for Clayfield was going to flog off all the electricity assets.

*(Time expired)*

### **Economy**

**Mr HUNT:** My question is to the Premier and Minister for the Olympic and Paralympic Games. Can the Premier update the House on the strength of the Queensland economy?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I am proud of Queensland and the economy that is growing in this state and the jobs that we are producing here to ensure that our young people have a bright future, to ensure that people have the dignity of work and have a roof over their head, because that is all at risk under those opposite. They do not care about people. They did not care when there were the savage cuts through the Public Service when 14,000 people were axed. They did not care about the mental health issues that came from that. They did not care about how those people were going to pay for their bills. They did not care about closing the Barrett Adolescent Centre and the damage that inflicted on young people when they had nowhere else to go when those support services were needed. Queenslanders are smart enough to remember. Queenslanders will never forget the damage that those opposite did.

The member for Caloundra is actually working so hard in his community and will soon be officially opening the Bells Creek Arterial Road. I am looking forward to that in the not-too-distant future. We are making sure we are building the infrastructure that is needed for our growing communities. We have new schools. I cannot even keep up with how many schools are now in the member for Caloundra's electorate. Every time I go there there appears to be a new school. Of course we are doing the Big Build, making sure that we have the beds and the hospitals that are needed right across our state—the biggest build in our state's history being delivered by this government and by every member of this government.

As I said earlier, since March 2020 Queensland's domestic economy has grown 12.8 per cent—the largest in the country—and every member should be proud of that. We know that when we came into office unemployment was high and not only that but youth unemployment was high, and we are actually seeing downward trends in both. This means our programs like Skilling Queenslanders for Work, Back to Work, free TAFE and free apprenticeships are actually working. On that side of the House they abolished Skilling Queenslanders for Work. Then they wanted to sell off the TAFEs. That will never happen under this Labor government because Labor stands with people and Labor stands with the jobs that come from building the industries that our state needs for the future. I am looking forward to going up to Caloundra in the not-too-distant future and we are going to open that road and make sure that the community is very proud of the infrastructure that is coming.

*(Time expired)*

### **Palaszczuk Labor Government, Performance**

**Mr JANETZKI:** My question is to the Premier. A Labor MP has told the media Queenslanders think the Premier is tone deaf, while a factional ally says they need a leader with more energy. Are Queenslanders living through a youth crime crisis, a health crisis, a housing crisis and a cost-of-living crisis because, as the Premier has admitted, Labor has not yet clicked into first gear after nine years?

**Mr Healy** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Cairns, you were interjecting during the question. I have asked for silence. You are warned under the standing orders.

**Ms GRACE:** Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order on imputations under the standing orders. I believe that question is loaded with imputations and I think that it is out of order and I ask that you rule accordingly.

**Mr SPEAKER:** I would ask that the member rephrase the question in the first instance, noting that there were elements which I do not believe related to the executive function of government.

**Mr JANETZKI:** Despite multiple reports, are Queenslanders living through a youth crime crisis, a health crisis, a housing crisis and a cost-of-living crisis because, as the Premier has admitted, Labor has not yet clicked into first gear after nine years?

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

### **Speaker's Ruling, Question Out of Order**

**Mr SPEAKER:** Listening to that question, I believe that the question is argumentative. I am ruling the question out of order.

### **Job Creation**

**Ms LAUGA:** My question is to the Deputy Premier, Minister for State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning and Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympic and Paralympic Games Infrastructure. Could the Deputy Premier advise the House on how the Palaszczuk government is delivering the jobs of the future for Queenslanders' and is the Deputy Premier aware of any other approaches?

**Dr MILES:** I thank the member for Keppel for her question. It is a good question. I know the member for Keppel, like everyone on this side of the House, knows that Queensland is the best place in the country to live. One of the reasons for that—just one of the reasons for that—is the effort we have gone to to create jobs here, protect the jobs that we have and attract the jobs of the future. Central Queensland, which the member for Keppel represents, is at the heart of those efforts.

We are determined to use the ample renewables that will come from the Central Queensland renewable energy zone to power our existing industries and the industries of the future, to convert water into hydrogen that we can use for industries here and also export to the world. To do that we need electrolyzers and we need a lot of them. Just as the LNP bought dodgy trains from overseas, we could have bought our electrolyzers from overseas, but that is not the Palaszczuk government way. Just as we are fixing the LNP's dodgy trains here in Queensland with workers from Queensland and just as we are making our trains here in Queensland instead of buying dodgy ones from overseas as the LNP did, we are making our electrolyzers here in Queensland, creating jobs here in Queensland for Queenslanders, including in Central Queensland.

We have partnered with Fortescue Future Industries to build not just an electrolyser factory and not just the biggest electrolyser factory in the world but an electrolyser factory that is four times bigger than the next biggest anywhere in the world. It is already producing electrolyzers and the production line will be fully operational next year. We will use a lot of those electrolyzers for our budding green hydrogen industry and we will also be exporting them right around the world because we will be home to the biggest electrolyser factory in the world.

All of this is only possible because of our renewable Energy and Jobs Plan and because of our Big Build. Our Big Build is delivering the generation, the transmission and the storage that will power the new industries of the future, creating jobs here. Those plans are only possible because we retained our assets in our hands, owned by Queenslanders, so that we can use them to create jobs here.

#### **Minister for Health, Mental Health and Ambulance Services and Minister for Women**

**Ms BATES:** My question is to the Minister for Health. Ambulance ramping has climbed to 45 per cent. Rather than fixing the Queensland health crisis in the job she has, has the health minister been leaking to the media to get the job she wants?

#### **Speaker's Ruling, Question Out of Order**

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Mudgeeraba, that is clearly a question unrelated to the minister's portfolio responsibilities. You are out of order with that question.

#### **State Finances**

**Mr HARPER:** My question is to the Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment. Will the Treasurer update the House on how the Palaszczuk government is prudently managing Queensland's balance sheet and is the Treasurer aware of any alternative approaches?

**Mr DICK:** I thank the member for his question. Of course, our government is delivering the biggest cost-of-living relief package of any state or territory government in the country. We are delivering our Big Build. At \$89 billion, it is the biggest infrastructure spend in our state's history. We are, of course, reducing Queensland's debt at the same time. All of these good things show our plans coming to life. Labor is delivering for Queensland.

What an absolute fizzer we have seen from the opposition. To take the words of the Minister for Police, there he was, the Leader of the Opposition, huffing up in the gym: 'This is my big moment. We're going to take 'em on in parliament. We're going to really bring them down.' He could not even ask a question that was in order. And it was not only him; it was also the shadow Treasurer. Their third question was ruled out of order.

I can tell the member for Broadwater this: if you cannot run a question time strategy then you cannot run Queensland. What an absolute fizzer! He could not even ask a question that was in order. That is what you get from the LNP: lazy, no idea, turn up, take the money, deliver nothing. Not even the backbenchers are laughing. The backbenchers know it. Where is the rat? They needed the rat and the stuffed elephant today, didn't they? They needed that from the member for Kawana. It would have been something of substance if they had a stuffed toy in here.



We are going to deliver for Queensland and everyone on this side of the House knows it. We have the plan, we have the people and we have the leader. That is what we have. What do we hear from the shadow Treasurer? What is his big plan? The intergenerational equity report! What is intergenerational equity to the LNP? It is cutting government expenditure and selling government assets. That is what intergenerational equity is to the LNP and that is what they said they are going to do.

Every Queenslander knows there will be cuts to nurse numbers, cuts to police numbers, cuts to teacher numbers, cuts to doctor numbers, cuts to child safety worker numbers, cuts to the youth justice system. That is what we will get from the Leader of the Opposition. They read that in the *Courier-Mail*, amongst all of the whingeing and whining, on 29 August—mark it down. The intergenerational equity report is the new commission of audit. It is Peter Costello's commission of audit 2.0. It is coming back. That is what is going to happen because they are ideologically obsessed with cutting government expenditure, with pruning it. The infrastructure hit list was authored, written and delivered by the Leader of the Opposition.

Queenslanders know what you are up to, member for Broadwater. We know what you are up to, member for Broadwater. We are going to spend every day between here and the end of October stopping you from—

*(Time expired)*

**Mr SPEAKER:** Again I remind members to direct comments through the chair or you will be warned under the standing orders.

### **Minister for Employment and Small Business, Minister for Training and Skills Development and Minister for Youth Justice**

**Mr NICHOLLS:** My question is to the Minister for Employment and Small Business, Minister for Training and Skills Development and Minister for Youth Justice. The proportion of hardcore repeat youth offenders has doubled to more than 20 per cent in the past year. Has the youth justice minister been working to fix the Queensland youth crime crisis or leaking to the media against the Premier?

**Mrs D'ATH:** Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order.

**Mr SPEAKER:** I do not need to hear the point of order. Member for Clayfield, you are an experienced member in this place. That is an imputation and I ask you to withdraw.

**Mr NICHOLLS:** I withdraw.

### **Speaker's Ruling, Question Out of Order**

**Mr SPEAKER:** I rule the question out of order.

### **Kindergarten**

**Ms RICHARDS:** My question is to the Minister for Education, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing. Can the minister update the House on the implementation of the Palaszczuk government's program of free kindy starting in 2024 and is the minister aware of any alternative approaches?

**Ms GRACE:** What a great question and what a great advocate for free kindy and early childhood education in her electorate, where they are particularly happy to see funding of \$2.5 million for the new purpose-built, state delivered kindergarten facility at Russell Island State School. It was transported to the island and is up and running.

It is so good to finally hear a question that is in order. All those opposite are interested in is cheap political pointscore. That is all it is. They cannot even ask a question. As has just been said, if you cannot run question time then you cannot run government. We are going to let the people of Queensland know that every second between now and October next year. There is a little bit of hubris going on over there. They think that because they say something often enough it is true. That is what they think but I can tell you that it is a long road.

When it comes to free kindy we are going to deliver for the children of this state and leave a lasting legacy. What a cost-of-living relief that program is for families. In order to undertake their cheap political pointscore they invent things. The crises are in their heads—

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Ms GRACE:** Let me finish; calm down—particularly when it comes to free kindy. I will put some facts on the table. They never let the facts stand in the way of a good LNP slogan. That is what this is. We have been working closely with the sector.

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** I cannot hear the minister due to the high level of interjections. I ask members to cease their interjections so that the minister can be heard.

**Ms GRACE:** We are talking about free kindy. We have been working closely with the sector on a series of workshops. Over the past 12 months we have added kindy programs to 65 long day care centres. There is a 50 per cent increase in the number of teachers since 2016—from around 2,500 to 3,750.

**Mr Langbroek** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Surfers Paradise, you are warned under the standing orders.

**Ms GRACE:** The department recently surveyed stakeholders and only five per cent said that they had some concerns with the rollout with regard to staffing, and we are working with them. There is \$120 million on the table in terms of that work. C&K CEO Sandra Cheeseman said—

At C&K we are ready and excited for free kindy. We know there are staffing issues in some areas, but we are confident the work we are doing in partnership with the department and the broader sector will address these issues.

**Dr Rowan** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Moggill!

**Ms GRACE:** Stop inventing things. Stop making it up. It is not true. Free kindy is great and we hope members opposite do not cut it.

**Dr Rowan** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! The minister's time has expired. Member for Moggill, I had just asked you to cease your interjections but you continued to interject. You are warned under the standing orders.

### **Deputy Premier, Minister for State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning and Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympic and Paralympic Games Infrastructure**

**Mr O'CONNOR:** My question is to the Deputy Premier. Why did the Deputy Premier announce a 'holiday in Queensland' campaign and an endangered species program while the Premier was in Italy?

**Dr MILES:** I thank the member for Bonney for his question. The answer is: because I was the Acting Premier and they were the government stories of the day. I was very proud to join with our fantastic ministers and indeed with the Treasurer to make the flights announcement with Virgin and with the health minister to talk about how we are delivering free TAFE for nursing students. We on this side are very proud of the fact that we have a strong, united team of experienced ministers, any one of whom could outshine any of that mob over there.

Think about this: in 2015, our greatest campaign asset was the member for Kawana. In 2015, the member for Kawana did not appear in their ads but he certainly appeared in our ads! Now he is their deputy leader. The best those opposite could do was dredge up the worst performing minister in the Newman government and make him the deputy leader. In their hubris, in their effort to swear each other in and take for granted the votes of Queenslanders, they have lost sight of the fact that they have nobody new. They have no experience. They have no-one who could be a decent minister. Every single day that I was Acting Premier we had a strong, experienced minister standing up and talking about things that matter to Queenslanders. That is what we do every day. It is what we have done for more than eight years. It is what we will do every day from now until the election and beyond.

Those opposite take the votes of Queenslanders for granted at their peril. Those opposite have themselves convinced that they have already won. The member for Broadwater has already sworn himself in and purchased a new suit. He is doing his premier's exercise routine, making sure he looks the part, but when Queenslanders look at him on election day they will say, 'In my gut, I know he'll cut.'

### **Mental Health Services**

**Mrs GILBERT:** 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 investment in mental health care, and is the minister aware of alternative approaches?

**Ms FENTIMAN:** Did members hear that? That is the sound of a question that is in order. That is how it is done. I must say, I am not surprised by the member for Mudgeeraba, who seems to get more questions ruled out of order than almost anyone else in this House. It is pretty embarrassing. No wonder the Leader of the Opposition had to come in and supervise her during the estimates committee—the only committee that he had to join—to ensure she asked questions that were in order. Finally, we have a question that is in order about the health system.

I am so proud to be the Minister for Mental Health and to be delivering for the mental health of Queenslanders. Last week I announced \$11½ million for suicide prevention. This is something that our government is absolutely committed to. At last month's Bush Summit I announced \$92 million—with our Premier—for the mental health unit refurbishment and expansion in Rockhampton. These are crucial initiatives that will save Queensland lives. What do they both have in common? They are both funded by very sensible and fair revenue policies—our mental health levy and our progressive coal royalties—because of our determination to ensure that all Queenslanders benefit from our state's prosperity.

We can fund projects that benefit the health and wellbeing of Queenslanders for decades to come. Thanks to our mental health levy, we are investing an unprecedented \$1.64 billion to fund projects like a 64-acute-bed mental health inpatient unit in Ipswich, a new 40-bed secure mental health rehab unit on the Gold Coast and an expanded 43-bed mental health facility at the Redland Hospital. Thanks to progressive coal royalties we are building a brand new hospital in Moranbah, much to the delight, I am sure, of the member for Burdekin.

As usual, those opposite have failed to offer even a single word acknowledging these life-saving investments, even when their own constituents will benefit from them. They know that they never wanted the mental health levy to begin with. The *Courier-Mail* at the time stated, 'David Crisafulli hits out at Palaszczuk government's new mental health levy'. Shame. Of course, they on that side have no idea what their own position on coal royalties is. The Leader of the Opposition is saying one thing, the member for Burleigh is contradicting him and the member for Burdekin is running off and saying something else. It is embarrassing. We have a mental health levy and progressive coal royalties to fund our Big Build and to fund mental health investment. Those opposite should get on board.

*(Time expired)*

### Residential Tenancies

**Dr MacMAHON:** My question is for the Premier. According to the latest Essential poll, three in four Australians want governments to freeze or cap rents. With Labor's popularity plummeting in the polls, will the government listen to what the majority of everyday people want and freeze rents?

**Mrs D'ATH:** Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. There were inferences in that question and I ask that it be ruled out of order.

**Mr SPEAKER:** I am going to allow the question, but I will allow the Premier flexibility in terms of how she responds.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** We on this side of the House have introduced perhaps the most broad-ranging rental reforms in this country. In fact, when I was at National Cabinet, Queensland was held up as a benchmark in terms of the amount of reform we had done to assist people who are renting properties. We have also made sure that people get rent increases only once a year. I thank the member for the question. It is great to see that finally, after months, the Greens have decided to help pass federal Labor's legislation in terms of the housing fund which will release more dollars and allow even more housing. For a party that advocates for people in housing, it took months to get to this point. I note the ironic contradiction from the member.

We appreciate that there are hundreds of thousands of people renting at the moment and that they are facing issues when it comes to the payment of that rent. That is one of the reasons we have a very strong tenants advisory body, which, I remind members, those opposite saw fit to abolish when they were in office. That was their commitment to housing in this state.

**Ms Scanlon:** Rental subsidy scheme.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** That is right: the rental subsidy scheme. On this side of the House we will always back more housing. Unlike those opposite who, under successive LNP leaders, cut funding to remote Indigenous housing, we on this side of the House are absolutely committed to more funding for housing and ensuring that people have a roof over their head. This government has also provided assistance to over 200,000 families that have been doing it tough. There is important support for

emergency housing. I thank the current Minister for Housing and the former minister for housing for buying up residential complexes that can be used for housing. It was great that I had the opportunity to meet with people in their homes. It makes a real difference to have a roof over their head and have secure housing.

### Electricity Prices

**Mr KELLY:** My question is of the Minister for Energy, Renewables and Hydrogen and Minister for Public Works and Procurement. Can the minister advise the House how the Palaszczuk government is delivering relief to Queensland households from cost of living through energy initiatives, and is the minister aware of any alternative approaches?

**Mr de BRENNI:** The facts are very clear: Queensland has the lowest power bills of all states in the nation. This Labor government has delivered that through renewables that push down prices. Under this government, we have reduced wholesale prices by 61 per cent in the last 12 months. We have delivered this through retaining assets in public ownership. Through this year's budget we have invested \$19 billion in building Queensland's future, with most of that expended in the regions.

We have delivered relief through the largest rebates anywhere in the nation. We have the most comprehensive package of household and small business support in the nation—\$550 for every household and \$1,072 for those most in need: our seniors and concession card holders. We have done this through the Queensland Energy and Jobs Plan. It is a real plan for cheaper, cleaner power. It is a real plan for the economic development of this state's regions. It is a real plan to support Queenslanders who need it most.

Yesterday there was more good news for Queenslanders when the Premier announced an extension to the Climate Smart Energy Savers program—a further \$22 million, doubling the program to enable 80,000 households to access energy efficient appliances. That is the equivalent to every household in Thuringowa, Townsville and Mundingburra combined. This Labor government's strength is the leadership of this Premier—a leader in touch with Queenslanders. This is evidenced by the fact that this program is eight times more successful than programs of its kind in the past.

I refer to comments made by the CEO of the Queensland Council of Social Services, Aimee McVeigh, who said—

We know that some people on low incomes are disproportionately affected by the soaring costs of living, so the extension of this program will make a concrete difference to many Queenslanders doing it tough right now.

This government is focused on the economy and we are focused on families. It has been this government's and this Treasurer's superior fiscal strategy that means we can deliver this support for Queenslanders. The LNP cannot do that. The LNP is prepared to put corporate, offshore profits over the ability of a vulnerable household to get a new washing machine. That is what they are all about. On this side of the House we will back Queenslanders every single day.

### Camera Detected Offence Program

**Mr ANDREW:** My question is to the Minister for Transport and Main Roads and Minister for Digital Services. With reference to Queensland's state-of-the-art AI driven traffic system slugging thousands of Queenslanders twice for the same offence, how did this fault manage to go undetected for two years and how can Queenslanders trust there are not countless other undetected glitches in the department's multibillion dollar digitisation program flying under the radar?

**Mr BAILEY:** This was a new program and it was a design fault within the department. As soon as I was made aware of it, I was briefed fully by the department and put the information out to the community as quickly as possible. It was a design fault at a departmental level. It has been rectified immediately so it is not something that is ongoing.

Let me say to the member for Mirani that we need to make sure that we have safe roads. Camera detected offences for seatbelts not being worn and people being distracted by their phones are an absolutely essential part of making sure that people respect other people on the roads. I also know—and this is documented—that the number of people who are not complying with wearing seatbelts is higher in regional and rural areas. We have to get the message out to people that a seatbelt will save their life and the life of their passenger when they go off the road.

While this has been a regrettable situation, these cameras are an essential part of stopping crashes, stopping road trauma, stopping people suffering lifelong injuries and stopping fatalities. I outlined this very clearly in a press conference at eight o'clock on Friday morning. I went through this extensively. I also reported on it in my ministerial statement.

I say to the member that we all have a responsibility to make sure that the message on road safety gets out. This was an unfortunate situation. It was picked up in trend analysis within the department. This is a new program. It is something that was picked up in the trend analysis. Given the fault was within the design, initial testing did not pick it up, but it was picked up in the trend analysis. It was picked up by the departmental processes. That is a simple explanation of it. It has been rectified and we are working through the issue now.

### **Housing Investment Fund**

**Mr SULLIVAN:** My question is of the Minister for Housing. Can the minister please update the House on the Housing Investment Fund and any alternative approaches?

**Ms SCANLON:** The Housing Investment Fund is working with investors to deliver more homes right across Queensland. I am pleased to advise the House that the team have approved 1,600 homes. Of those, 106, mostly NRAS homes, have been purchased and settled and 94 of those are tenanted. Then we have another 71 proposals that have been shortlisted and are going to the next stage, 60 per cent of which are outside of Brisbane. I know that is welcomed news to regional Queenslanders. We also have 31 new social and affordable homes at Chermside—in the member's electorate—under construction. I look forward to going to another project which will start there soon.

The member for the Stafford is not the only one who is seemingly interested in the work that we are doing with the Housing Investment Fund. We had the Leader of the Opposition and the member for Everton visit that particular project the other day—there to complain at the site of a new building under construction as part of the Housing Investment Fund. They do that because they have no other solutions. They say that they do not support us purchasing existing homes—that is except for when the Deputy Leader of the Opposition says he is okay with us purchasing existing homes in his electorate when it suits his constituents to purchase homes that came off the National Rental Affordability Scheme, exposing the division in the LNP when it comes to housing policy. That is no mean feat given they have no housing policy.

The only thing we know is that the LNP are still blocking the Housing Australia Future Fund. As the Premier mentioned, finally the Greens have now come to table to pass this bill. Adam Bandt has put Max back in his box. We could feel the unity on the screen. It is not just the federal member for Griffith who is unhappy. Of course we heard from the Greens lord mayoral candidate, tweeting at his own party leader, that he wanted them to keep blocking 30,000 homes. One would think it would be easy to support more housing. They could not even go a day without undermining each other. That is what we see time and time again.

We saw the member for South Brisbane buddying up with the LNP to talk down the Housing Investment Fund, while the member for Griffith on his own Facebook page welcomed the Brisbane Housing Company's Carl Street project funded by—you guessed it—the Housing Investment Fund, the same fund that they were blocking for months in parliament! Just like the LNP, the Greens continue to bicker amongst themselves and block housing in their own electorates while we deliver our Big Build. I am very proud to see the work that we are doing across this state delivering tiny homes, refurbishing aged-care and retirement villages, purchasing homes that were coming off the National Rental Affordability Scheme and building homes right across this state.

### **Palaszczuk Labor Government, Performance**

**Mr POWELL:** My question is to the Premier. The media reports that the Premier disputed there were any crises at home whilst in Italy and now the education minister says that the 'crises are in their heads'. How can the government ever fix issues in crime, health and housing if they refuse to admit they are in crisis?

**Ms GRACE:** Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I take offence. That was in regard to free kindy.

**Opposition members** interjected.

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

**Ms GRACE:** I ask that the member withdraw.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Will you withdraw that component of the question, member for Glass House?

**Mr POWELL:** I withdraw.

**Ms Grace:** Using it out of context.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Thank you. I am dealing with that, member for McConnel. I ask you to restate the question.

**Government members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order, members to my right!

**Mr POWELL:** My question is to the Premier. How can the government ever fix issues in crime, health and housing if they refuse to admit they are in crisis?

**Mrs D'ATH:** Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I do believe that that question still has imputations and it should be ruled out of order.

**Mr SPEAKER:** I am going to allow the question. The Premier may answer as she sees fit.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** As Premier, I have acknowledged that there are issues out there. There are issues out there that are hurting people in—

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. Members to my left, the Premier has only just started her response. There is no need for interjections. I would like to hear the answer, as I am sure the questioner would like to hear the answer.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I have been very up-front about this. I have been very up-front that there are cost-of-living issues. Today you heard us talk about how we are providing direct cost-of-living relief to Queenslanders. Also, too, members in this House heard today how we are providing cost-of-living relief through our electricity dividend going back to consumers. That is only possible because we own our assets.

I have acknowledged that there are housing issues and housing pressures. That is why we now have a dedicated Minister for Housing focused very much on making sure that people get a roof over their head. We acknowledge that there are victims of crime out there. That is why we are responding to the victims of crime group. That is why our government continues to listen—

**Mr Crisafulli** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Leader of the Opposition!

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** That is why we continue to listen and respond. They are complex issues but they are also national issues. They are not unique to Queensland. They are happening across the country. National attention is being given to those issues as well.

**Mr Crisafulli** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Leader of the Opposition, you have had a good go today. You are warned under the standing orders.

### **Train Manufacturing Program**

**Mr SKELTON:** My question is to the Minister for Transport and Main Roads and Minister for Digital Services. Can the minister provide an update on the construction of a train manufacturing facility near Maryborough, and is the minister aware of any alternative approaches?

**Mr BAILEY:** I thank the member for his question. He is a very strong supporter of better public transport and making trains in Queensland. We have our commitment for 65 trains—800 jobs—all made in Queensland, and we know that it will only happen under this government. I report to the chamber that the lead contractor, Downer, has wasted no time in getting to work on the task, with major works due to commence in coming weeks on our Queensland-made train manufacturing facility at Torbanlea. We are already delivering on our commitment.

I can report to the House that we are very proud that these trains will be equipped with features that will make train travel more accessible for all Queenslanders. They include technology that allows them to lean into the platform to make getting on and off easier for people with various mobilities. There will be more accessible seating on every train and wider aisles to enable movement within the carriage for people in wheelchairs. The bathrooms will also meet contemporary accessibility standards—something that was not delivered by those opposite on the NGRs that they ordered and that were made overseas and were not disability compliant. We are still fixing their trains to this day in Maryborough with Queensland workers, and they are doing a fantastic job.

What we need to know is: will the Leader of the Opposition respect this contract and make trains in Queensland? He should clarify whether this is in the cuts already announced by the member for Chatsworth. The member for Chatsworth announced in April that there are going to be billions in cuts under the LNP, so what are they? The Leader of the Opposition needs to come clean because his own side says that there are going to be billions in cuts. The member for Chatsworth said that very clearly. Will those cuts include Queensland-made trains? Queenslanders deserve to know the answer to that question.

We went to the election and said we would make a batch of trains in Queensland, and that is exactly what we are doing—65 new trains to be made right here in Torbanlea, in Maryborough, by our workers. They are high-quality trains and a 35-year contract. The whingeing from those opposite indicates to me that they do not support making trains in Queensland and that the first thing they would probably do if they ever got the chance is to cut Queensland-made trains. That is why they continue to whinge and they continue to undermine. The Leader of the Opposition needs to clarify the words spoken by a member on his own side. He was the assistant minister for public transport under Campbell Newman. He is now their shadow transport minister. He said himself that there will be billions in cuts, so what are they, Leader of the Opposition?

*(Time expired)*

### Water Security

**Mr MANDER:** My question is to the Premier. Government projections show the South-East Queensland population jumping to six million by 2046. With no new dams being planned, what confidence can Queenslanders have that the government is planning for the water security to cope with this growth?

**Mr SPEAKER:** Premier, you have one minute to respond.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Those opposite would have heard what the Minister for Water said. He addressed it in detail. They have had no ideas on that side. The federal LNP barely spent any money on water infrastructure in this state. It has been the Queensland government that has stood up and delivered.

**Mr Dick** interjected.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** That is right. I take that interjection.

**Mr Dick:** The fake Bradfield scheme.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** The fake Bradfield scheme—wasn't he the shadow treasurer back then?

**Mr Dick:** They sacked him.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** That is right. He is not there anymore. They sacked him.

**Mr POWELL:** Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The question was very specific. All through question time the ministers and the Premier have been avoiding answering the questions. I draw the Premier back to the question.

**Government members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order, members to my right! There is no point of order.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** That side of the House have had two weeks to prepare questions. Most of them have been ruled out of order. They are lazy. They are incompetent. There are no policies and they have no ideas for this state.

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

## MOTION

### Business Program




**Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Leader of the House) (11.18 am): I move—

1. That the following business will be considered this sitting week, with the nominated maximum periods of time as specified:
  - (a) the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law (Surgeons) Amendment Bill, a maximum of 3 hours;

- (b) the Justice and Other Legislation Amendment Bill, a maximum of 5 hours 30 minutes; and
  - (c) the Water Legislation Amendment Bill, to complete all stages by 5.55 pm on Thursday, 14 September 2023.
2. The following time limits for the bills listed in 1. apply:
- (a) the minister to be called on in reply:
    - (i) for the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law (Surgeons) Amendment Bill, 30 minutes before the expiry of the maximum hours for that bill;
    - (ii) for the Justice and Other Legislation Amendment Bill, 30 minutes before the expiry of the maximum hours for that bill; and
    - (iii) for the Water Legislation Amendment Bill, by 5.25 pm on Thursday, 14 September 2023.
3. If the nominated stage of each bill has not been completed by 5.55 pm on Thursday, 14 September 2023, Mr Speaker:
- (a) shall call on a minister to table any explanatory notes to their circulated amendments, any statement of compatibility with human rights or any statement relating to an override declaration
  - (b) shall put all remaining questions necessary to either pass that stage or pass the bill without further debate
  - (c) may interrupt non-specified business or debate on a bill or motion to complete the requirements of the motion
  - (d) will complete all stages required by this motion notwithstanding anything contained in standing and sessional orders.

I note that we will be debating the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law (Surgeons) Amendment Bill, the Justice and Other Legislation Amendment Bill and also the Water Legislation Amendment Bill. As I indicated to the members of the Business Committee, there will be amendments moved in consideration in detail in relation to the Justice and Other Legislation Amendment Bill to address issues raised in the parliamentary committee process. Once again, I thank the committee members for their consideration of these bills. There will be amendments moved to the Water Legislation Amendment Bill which have already been circulated, so members will be well aware of that.

I do not intend to spend much time on this business motion. We have set times for the first two bills, with the third one to be completed by the end of this sitting week. This is to ensure that our parliamentary business continues and legislation is being debated and passed in this state so we can get on with delivering for the people of Queensland. Once again, that is what the legislation before this parliament will do this week.

 **Mr POWELL** (Glass House—LNP) (11.19 am): After what we saw in parliament during the last sitting week, it will probably come as no surprise to the Leader of the House and the government that the opposition will be opposing this business motion. Despite the words that the Leader of the House shared around amendments, no longer will the opposition take the business motion at face value. Let me remind people that in the last sitting we had a 47-page bill around child sexual offenders that would have had the support of the opposition and, I suspect, the crossbenchers. At the last minute it was amended with 58 pages worth of amendments. None of them were relevant to the bill itself and some of them were incredibly significant. We were left with less than half an hour to debate those amendments. On that basis we will not support this business motion and we will not support future business motions because, despite the words on this page, we cannot trust the government.

We heard the Premier go on about previous governments and their track records. The Premier promised to be different, but we have seen the Premier come in here and make significant changes to a piece of legislation with less than 48 hours notice. There was no committee consideration and no ability to debate those amendments in consideration in detail. I speak on behalf of not only the opposition but the crossbench as well, who expressed significant frustration that sizable changes to a number of pieces of legislation were all moved en bloc at the end of proceedings at the last sitting. It is no wonder the opposition had no choice but to vote against the third reading even though we voted for the second reading of the bill. That is not how this place should operate. It was trashing parliamentary democracy, and the Leader of the House and the government know it.


I suspect that, despite what seems to be a fairly innocuous business program for this week where we will be debating the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law (Surgeons) Amendment Bill, the Justice and Other Legislation Amendment Bill and the Water Legislation Amendment Bill, there will be amendments. We heard the Leader of the House say they have already been tabled and they have already forewarned the House what they are, but we still have not seen them. We do not know the significance of them. Never again will we take those opposite at face value and vote for the business motion.

As members of parliament we need to debate legislation as we see necessary. Members of parliament need to represent their communities, their electorates, as they see fit. Their contributions and the number of contributions should not be capped or guillotined and should not have time



constraints put on them. They should not have to justify to their whips or the government whips why they should have an opportunity to speak. They are elected to come into this chamber to speak and they should be able to do so. That goes for amendments as well. Whilst there will be very short consideration in detail opportunities this week, some of these amendments may need to be unpacked further. Some of them may have come from committee reports—that is what the committee process is there for—but some have not been to committees. That was the problem with what occurred during the last sitting, when 58 pages of amendments were rammed through this House with 48 hours notice.


We cannot continue to operate in this manner. We have told the government over and over again that we do not support the way they are managing the business of this House. If they have an agenda they need to get through, it is their responsibility to make sure we sit the appropriate length of time to consider those pieces of legislation. We have put on the table that we are more than happy to sit late each night. That is what we are elected to do. We have mentioned before that the so-called family friendly hours are not very friendly for those of us who come from regional Queensland, and I say that for those of us who just come from the Sunshine Coast, Toowoomba or the Gold Coast. We are not getting home to our families regardless of whether we rise at 7.30 or 10.30, so let's sit later. Let's allow our members the opportunity to speak not only on bills but also amendments. Let's do away with these business motions altogether and let's go back to the way parliament used to operate when I was first elected in 2009. Let's have robust debate; let's not be afraid of that. Let's ensure the people of Queensland have their voices heard through their elected representatives. We will not be supporting this motion.

 **Hon. MC BAILEY** (Miller—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads and Minister for Digital Services) (11.24 am): I rise in support of the motion. We have just heard a five-minute rant from the Manager of Opposition Business about everything that was not in the motion. What we have before us is the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law (Surgeons) Amendment Bill, the Justice and Other Legislation Amendment Bill and the Water Legislation Amendment Bill. That is what the motion is about. We have seen a return by the member for Glass House and Manager of Opposition Business to the old member for Kawana days. It is very disappointing really. There is no originality there. What we are proposing is simply the management of the House—similar to any other chamber in a modern era—in terms of family-friendly hours and dealing with things in a timely manner.

We need all members and parties to be disciplined about whom their speakers should be and to ensure we do not have those endless, repetitive speeches where members literally read out the same speeches verbatim, ranting on, not making an original contribution. People have to prioritise; that is what they should do. This motion is not about what might have happened last time or years ago. We can go back to the Newman government era for a very long list of travesties against parliamentary procedure. They were masters at it and the member for Glass House was involved. He was a minister for the three years they trashed parliamentary democracy, so you will have to forgive my scepticism when I hear him suddenly flip and become a paragon of virtue when it comes to democracy. I do remember his record all too well, as do all members on this side of the House.

This is a straightforward business motion. It ought to be supported. I do not wish to take up any more of the chamber's time. Let's get on with debating the substantive motion and not the arcane procedural debates the LNP specialises in.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Before I call the next speaker I want to remind members of the House those members who are on a warning: Toowoomba South, Nanango, Everton, Kawana, Cairns, Surfers Paradise, Moggill and Broadwater.

 **Mr MANDER** (Everton—LNP) (11.26 am): It will probably not surprise the House to hear that I could not disagree more with the member for Miller. Yes, this business motion has detail in it with regard to how debates are to be conducted this week, but this goes to principle. It is that principle we will continue to stick up for and argue against this government with regard to its practices, and that principle is that the parliamentary process should be respected. These types of motions show that the member for Miller and everybody on that side of the House treat the parliament as a sausage machine. 'We're in government, we've got the power, there's no upper house and we'll treat this House with contempt.'

The Labor Party and the Labor government treat the parliamentary process with total contempt. Every member in this House should have the ability to speak on a bill. In fact, I have done a quick calculation, and the 34 members on this side of the House represent around 1.1 million people. Those people have the right to representation and that is what we are fighting for. What is so ironic about this coming from the member for Miller, who would see himself as a champion of democracy, is that his mentors would have marched in the street marches of the Joh days for freedom of speech.

**Mr Bailey:** I did that!

**Mr MANDER:** Sorry, I take that interjection. I did not realise you were that old. He was there himself. I was in kindergarten, but he was there himself when those street rallies were taking place.

This goes to the very principle of freedom of speech. Isn't it ironic that the backbenchers have exercised their freedom of speech this week and over the last couple of weeks? They have been very willing to exercise their freedom of speech. I notice that some of the members up there—the member for Bundaberg, the member for Nicklin and the member for Hervey Bay—who are enjoying their last 13 months in this House—

**Mr BAILEY:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. Clearly the member is straying off the topic of the business motion and is now making extraneous points. I ask that he be brought back to the motion at hand.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Everton, I ask you to come to the substance of the motion.

**Mr MANDER:** It really comes down to the principles of democracy and the fact that we should be able to speak here as long as we can—actually, not only speak as long as we can but get an opportunity to speak—but that does not happen. All I was doing was pointing out that the backbenchers have voiced their frustration over the last week or two, and they have the right to do that. That is what we can do in a democratic society. They do not have the courage to put their names to it, where we have. We want to get up and say that we represent our electorate.

**Mr BAILEY:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The member has been called into order and he is now flagrantly disobeying direction. I ask that he be brought back to the business program motion and ask whether he should be disciplined or not.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I make determinations around whether people are following the directions of the Deputy Speaker. Member for Everton, you have the call.

**Mr MANDER:** I think the member for Miller protests too much. I think it is striking a bit of a nerve with the member for Miller and I can understand that—because it was not just backbenchers; it was ministers. Somebody else is leaking. They actually leaked during the caucus meeting. Can you believe that?

**Mrs D'ATH:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. Before I take the point of order: member for Everton, I have been listening to your contribution. You are off the motion. I ask you to come back to the substance of the motion. Leader of the House, do you have a point of order?

**Mrs D'ATH:** No.

**Mr MANDER:** Last sitting we had an example of 57—

**Mr Skelton:** Bill Harrigan knew better.

**Mr MANDER:** I will take that interjection from the member for Bundaberg.

**Mr Smith:** No, it was him.

**Mr MANDER:** Who was it?

**Mr Smith:** The member for Nicklin.

**Mr MANDER:** I will take that interjection. The member for Nicklin—the man who has achieved much in his life, the man who will be a one-term wonder, a man who will spend 13 months waiting for the death knell with Marty Hunt waiting to take his seat back.

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

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. Before I take your point of order: member for Everton, I recognise that you were taking an interjection when using some descriptors about another member, but you are not coming to the point that you are trying to make. I ask you to make that point, and it had better be relevant to the motion.

**Mr MANDER:** Thank you. I was trying to make the point but I was interrupted.

**Mr Power** interjected.

**Mr MANDER:** I will take that interjection from the member for Logan, talking about controlling themselves. Why can't these backbenchers control themselves and have the courage to put their name to their comments against the Premier? Where is their courage?

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. Resume your seat. I am going to take some advice. Member for Everton, you have been repeatedly brought back to order. I have attempted to allow you to take some interjections. I am going to sit you down. There being no further speakers, I will put the question.

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

**AYES, 51:**

**ALP, 51—**Bailey, Boyd, Brown, Bush, Butcher, Crawford, D'Ath, de Brenni, Dick, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Furner, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Healy, Hinchliffe, Howard, Hunt, Kelly, A. King, S. King, Lauga, Linard, Lui, Madden, Martin, McCallum, McMahon, McMillan, Mellish, Miles, Mullen, O'Rourke, Palaszczuk, Pease, Power, Pugh, Richards, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Scanlon, Skelton, Smith, Stewart, Sullivan, Tantari, Walker, Whiting.

**NOES, 37:**

**LNP, 34—**Bates, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Camm, Crandon, Crisafulli, Frecklington, Gerber, Hart, Head, Janetzki, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Lister, Mander, McDonald, Mickelberg, Millar, Minnikin, Molhoek, Nicholls, O'Connor, Perrett, Powell, Purdie, Robinson, Rowan, Simpson, Stevens, Watts, Weir.

**Grn, 2—**Berkman, MacMahon.

**PHON, 1—**Andrew.

Resolved in the affirmative.

## HEALTH PRACTITIONER REGULATION NATIONAL LAW (SURGEONS) AMENDMENT BILL

Resumed from 20 April (see p. 1127).

### Second Reading



**Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (Minister for Health, Mental Health and Ambulance Services and Minister for Women) (11.39 am): I move—

That the bill be now read a second time.

On 20 April 2023 the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law (Surgeons) Amendment Bill 2023 was introduced. The bill was referred to the Health and Environment Committee for consideration. On 2 June the committee tabled its report on the bill. The committee made one recommendation—that the bill be passed—and I thank the committee for its thorough consideration.

The bill amends the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law as hosted by Queensland and applies to all states and territories. The reforms in the bill were endorsed by Australian health ministers in February 2023 following extensive public consultation across the country. As host jurisdiction for the national law, Queensland is responsible for enacting the reforms on behalf of all jurisdictions. The bill amends the national law to protect the title 'surgeon' within the medical profession. It does so by restricting which medical practitioners can use the title and establishing criminal penalties for persons who unlawfully use the title. These are commonsense reforms to reflect what the public already reasonably assumes—that is, that doctors calling themselves a surgeon or a cosmetic surgeon have had the advanced surgical training to go along with the title.

We know that the cosmetic surgery industry is growing and the sector is becoming increasingly more difficult and dangerous for healthcare consumers to navigate, and that is why these reforms are necessary. The bill goes hand in hand with other steps being taken by Ahpra. Recently, we have seen Ahpra move to introduce tighter regulations for the injectables industry, including non-surgical cosmetic procedures like botox and thread lifts. Australians currently spend over \$1 billion on these non-surgical procedures, yet no minimum standards, education or training exists in this space. That is why Ahpra is introducing stronger consultation requirements for patients prior to procedures going ahead, stronger advertising guidelines, and stronger rules around the use of online influencers and brand ambassadors, because we know this type of content can pose a particular risk to younger people.

The reforms in this bill complement these changes and support the broader nationwide push to better regulate the cosmetics industry because this is about keeping people safe. In September last year, Ahpra established a cosmetic surgery hotline. As of 7 August this year, it had already received 394 calls from patients and their families to make a notification or seek information about the notification process. The hotline also received calls from the public seeking general information and from practitioners seeking clarification about cosmetic surgery guidelines. Ahpra's recently formed Cosmetic Surgery Enforcement Unit and the national boards are currently managing 271 notifications related to cosmetic surgery. These notifications relate to 94 health practitioners. Of these, 14 doctors cannot currently practise or perform cosmetic surgery due to their registration being suspended, surrendered or subject to significant restrictions. Of the 271 open matters, 49 are about 15 registered medical practitioners whose principal place of practice is listed as Queensland.

Feedback from a national consultation process on title protection and cosmetic surgery confirmed some cosmetic surgery consumers bear heavy costs for their procedures, including health complications, hospital fees to correct botched surgeries, loss of income and time, and mental distress. I want to take a moment to give real-life examples of some of the heartbreaking stories we have encountered in considering the need to strengthen the regulation of cosmetic surgery in Australia.

Consider, for example, a recent matter where the New South Wales Civil and Administrative Tribunal suspended a Sydney doctor after a cosmetic procedure went horribly wrong. The doctor, who had limited surgical training, performed abdominal lipolysis, a procedure for removing fat, on a patient who suffered complications and became unresponsive during surgery. She was taken by ambulance to the emergency department at a local hospital where she was treated for a serious cardiac condition and inappropriate dosage of morphine and another drug. There were a number of factors that led to the patient being hospitalised. The doctor failed to take baseline observations of the patient or perform an ECG to check the patient's heart prior to surgery. He also failed to appropriately monitor the patient during the procedure. Distressingly, the doctor was not prepared for emergencies, had inadequate safety protocols and did not have the appropriate drugs and equipment available to respond appropriately, including not even having a cardiac defibrillator to resuscitate patients. The tribunal found the doctor's conduct showed significant failings across a wide domain and that he was incompetent to perform the procedure. Not only was he inadequately trained in the procedure; he also had a disastrously low level understanding of the drugs he routinely used. There was a serious potential of harm to the patient, and it was a case of sheer luck rather than professional competence that saved the patients from a much more serious outcome.

In a separate matter, this time before the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal, a doctor engaged in unprofessional conduct by performing liposuction procedures that were beyond the doctor's competency and training. The doctor performed these risky procedures on multiple patients, several of whom were injured or experienced other adverse outcomes. If that were not concerning enough, the doctor asked her receptionist to assist in these liposuction operations despite the receptionist not being appropriately trained. This was a serious breach of the relevant guidelines and minimum standards of care for patients undergoing intravenous anaesthesia. These guidelines are put in place to protect the lives of patients undergoing serious operations where complications can arise unexpectedly. Some of the patients suffered from severe scarring requiring follow-up treatment by plastic surgeons. These surgeons were so alarmed by the poor standard of care provided that they notified the regulator of their concerns.

In another tragic case, the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal determined a practitioner's lack of surgical competency posed such a serious risk that immediate action was necessary to protect the public. The tribunal based its decision in part on video and photographic material and accounts by patients and others that it considered harrowing and shocking. The tribunal also had concerns with the practitioner's general and ethical competency, including poor hygiene and infection control, disrespectful behaviour towards patients, filming and posting on social media without informed consent. The tribunal was most concerned by the practitioner's apparent failure to appreciate the fundamental need for patients to provide informed consent to procedures. The tribunal found the practitioner prioritised his own interests above those of his patients, demonstrating the lack of a solid ethical foundation for the practice.

There are many other similarly distressing stories. I am sure that each of us is aware of other horrifying experiences reported by the media and to Ahpra that are the subject of legal proceedings. Unfortunately, these harrowing cases are the tip of the iceberg and more patients than ever before are reporting serious adverse effects from cosmetic procedures. Put quite simply, no person should have

to endure such treatment from a medical professional. All surgery comes with risks. Unexpected complications can arise, even under the care of the most skilled and experienced practitioner, but these risks are needlessly amplified when procedures are performed by unqualified or underqualified doctors, and the risks are further compounded when patients are misled by the medical professional they have entrusted to perform their surgery and manage any complications that may arise.

It is reasonable for a patient to expect that a doctor calling themselves 'surgeon' has the surgical qualifications to back up the title. Without significant surgical training, a doctor holding themselves out as a surgeon is leading their patients to believe they are more qualified than they actually are. To address these serious concerns, the bill will introduce strict protections on the use of the title 'surgeon' within the medical profession.

The bill protects the title 'surgeon' in the same way that other professional titles are protected under the national law. It will be an offence for a medical practitioner to use the title 'surgeon' if they do not have the approved surgical training and qualifications. It will also be an offence for an employer or other person to say that a medical practitioner is a surgeon when they are not. The offences will apply whether the title 'surgeon' is used in isolation or in combination with other words which means that 'cosmetic surgeon' and 'aesthetic surgeon' will also be restricted to those doctors who have surgical training. The offences will also apply if a doctor holds themselves out as a surgeon even if they do not use the title itself, and this will prevent practitioners from circumventing the protections by implying that they are a surgeon when they are not.

The bill sets out which doctors will be able to use the title 'surgeon'. These doctors are said to be in an approved surgical class. The doctors in the initial surgical classes are those who hold specialist registration in any of the three recognised medical specialties—surgery, obstetrics and gynaecology, and ophthalmology. These classes were determined by Australian health ministers with the advice of the Medical Board of Australia.

To be registered in these specialties, a medical practitioner is required to have successfully undertaken significant Australian Medical Council specialist surgical training or equivalent training in the case of international medical graduates. Specialists in these fields routinely perform complex surgery as part of their normal scope of practice. The bill will enable Australian health ministers to prescribe by regulation additional classes of medical practitioner that can use the title 'surgeon'. The ability to prescribe additional classes will accommodate future changes to the medical profession and provide flexibility for health ministers to consider and adapt to new and unanticipated circumstances. For example, health ministers will be able to consider factors such as the approval of new medical specialties or subspecialties and the unique circumstances of hard-to-staff locations for areas of need.

In deciding whether to prescribe an additional class of surgeon, the bill will require health ministers to have regard to the extent of surgical training required to be a member of the class. The bill will also require health ministers to consider any advice of the Medical Board. The Medical Board is the appropriate entity to advise health ministers on these matters and it is the primary regulator of medical training, accreditation and registration standards in Australia. The Medical Board is also the body that advises health ministers about medical specialties and specialist titles, so a similar process will be followed.

Protecting the title 'surgeon' will provide assurance to patients that a doctor using the title is appropriately trained and qualified and that they are expected to meet safe and professional standards of practice. The reform will increase patient protection and safety, increase satisfaction with operative outcomes, and improve public confidence in the medical profession and the national scheme. Separately, the bill makes minor but important changes to clarify the decision-making authority of tribunals when hearing matters about health practitioners.


The bill amends an ambiguous provision in the national law to clarify that if a tribunal cancels a practitioner's registration it can also do any or all of the following: disqualify the person from reapplying for registration for a specified period of time; or prohibit or restrict the person from providing certain health services or using certain titles. This is the interpretation that has been used by the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal. The bill also amends the definition of 'prohibition order' to ensure that an order restricting a practitioner from providing health services is enforceable and recorded on the public register. This treats a tribunal's restrictions on services in the same way as a tribunal's prohibitions on services.

We know the vast majority of doctors are doing the right thing. They are hardworking, principled and act with the best interests for their patients in mind. However, there are some who flaunt the rules and use deceptive advertising and language to mislead patients and give them false confidence. This

has led to devastating outcomes for some healthcare consumers, many of whom shared their stories with us as we were developing the bill. The reforms in this bill will prevent patients from being misled and safeguard the public's trust in the medical profession.

In closing, I would like to again thank the Health and Environment Committee for its carefully considered review of the bill, and I extend my sincere appreciation to all Australian health ministers for their commitment to strengthening the regulation of cosmetic surgery and for the urgency with which they have progressed these critical public protections.

I also want to thank the many and varied stakeholders who provided feedback on the bill during the national consultation process and the committee's review. The national consultation process drew submissions from 150 practitioners and professional organisations. Nearly 1,400 members of the public made submissions to the dedicated consumer survey sharing their experiences with cosmetic surgery. The serious and lasting harms that have been experienced by some patients is heartbreaking and unacceptable. The bill, along with other reforms already underway, will strengthen the regulation of cosmetic surgery in Queensland and across Australia. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Ms BATES** (Mudgeeraba—LNP) (11.53 am): I rise today to give my contribution to the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law (Surgeons) Amendment Bill 2023. At the very outset I will outline that the Opposition will not oppose the passage of this bill through the House today. The Health Practitioner Regulation National Law (Surgeons) Amendment Bill 2023 is not an overtly controversial piece of legislation. In fact, the bill is rather benign. I know there has been widespread backing of the bill from key stakeholder groups, although there were some groups or individuals who held some concerns or reservations, and I will briefly touch on some of those shortly. However, like I said, this piece of legislation does not incite any great level of controversy. That is, of course, in stark contrast to the frenzied, ham-fisted chaotic scenes we saw in this House last time it sat to pass laws. On that occasion, laws were passed by the Labor government without consultation and without due process—

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member, I will bring you back to the bill.

**Ms BATES:** In that regard it is welcome to see the Palaszczuk government choose to respect the institution and processes of the parliament on this occasion with the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law (Surgeons) Amendment Bill. Although now we quite clearly know that if it did not suit them politically, those opposite would have no issue in bypassing the parliamentary process—

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. Member, I will bring you back to the bill. If you persist in ignoring my rulings, I will sit you down.

**Ms BATES:** Dealing directly with the bill itself, I say that it was introduced to parliament on 20 April 2023, a month before the now Minister for Health was sworn into the role, and there has been a bit of water under the bridge since then. That aside, the bill amends the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law Act 2009. Australia's National Registration and Accreditation Scheme, the national scheme for health professionals, is set out under what is commonly known as the national law. All states and territories agreed to the adoption of the national scheme in 2010 and Queensland is the host jurisdiction for the national law.

Honourable members will recall that this the 57th Parliament had previously debated changes made to national law with debate held in October last year. The changes put forward in this bill were agreed to by Australian health ministers on 24 February this year. The amendments outlined in this bill are to essentially protect the title 'surgeon' in an effort to safeguard the public and strengthen the regulation of cosmetic surgery in Australia; and to clarify the decision-making authority of tribunals after hearing a matter about a registered health practitioner. I note these changes are largely technical. They are both reasonable legislative changes and, as highlighted earlier, the opposition has no intention to oppose the bill based on this.

The crux of the bill is really around the first of the two points I just mentioned in trying to increase the protection of the title of surgeon. Despite not being registered in a surgical speciality and having not completed any significant postgraduate surgical training, any registered medical practitioner may currently refer to themselves as a surgeon. We know there is often no deliberate attempt by practitioners to refer to themselves as something they are not. The overwhelming majority do the right thing. However, unfortunately, we do know of cases where medical practitioners may have sought to mislead patients with respect to their credentials. An increasing prevalence of practitioners calling themselves surgeons has led to uncertainty for patients who may justifiably and reasonably assume all practitioners using the title have the appropriate skills and qualifications. The field of cosmetic surgery is particularly prone to these types of false impressions, which has been well documented in the public discourse over recent times.

The Gold Coast has always been ground zero for cosmetic surgeons who are not plastic surgeons but who put themselves out there as being so. Because they charge smaller fees, younger people tend to go to them thinking they will get the same level of care. I know from personal experience working and running facilities on the Gold Coast that there are fly-in fly-out interstate surgeons who come to Queensland, particularly the Gold Coast, and provide surgeries that more often than not they are not qualified to perform. They leave the state, generally over the weekend, and often leave patients with life-threatening complications. It has always been my local plastic surgeons who have had to come in and fix the problem caused by these FIFO cosmetic surgeons.

Someone who wanted to operate at the Wesley came in and told me they did not require an anaesthetist or anaesthetic nurse for any of their procedures because, in their words, they just gave 'angel dust'. Mr Deputy Speaker, I am sure you will understand that anything called 'angel dust' that has Propofol and Midazolam is a bit more than angel dust and requires a laryngeal mask or intubation. Therefore, it does require the services of at least an anaesthetist, at the very least an anaesthetic nurse. Suffice to say, they were not allowed to operate in any facility I ran. Those operators have gone out of business on the Gold Coast, have come back in with a new name, have gone out of business again and have come back in again. Hopefully, this bill will stop those rogue cosmetic surgeons that cause so much devastation for people on the coast and across the state.

When the minister introduced the bill she outlined some of the adverse outcomes suffered by patients. I do not intend to repeat them now, but they are, as I mentioned, quite devastating. I do not think there are many Queenslanders or Australians out there who have not seen or heard some of those horror stories in the cosmetic field. I do not use that word 'horror' lightly, but there are genuinely some truly horrific cases which have been highlighted in media reports in months and years gone by. I think we can all agree on that. It is not by the good operators; it is by the rogues. They are in the minority—I stress that point.

With that said, safeguarding the title of 'surgeon' in the way it is being done in this legislation is a reasonable step for the government to take to provide greater clarity and protection to patients. I note that the new offences being proposed in this bill are indictable and carry a maximum penalty of \$60,000 or three years imprisonment for an individual or \$120,000 for a body corporate. Although I do not expect they will be used often, I do hope those penalties are readily handed down to any practitioner recklessly calling themselves a surgeon or otherwise holding themselves out to be a surgeon for their own benefit and to the detriment of their patients. This is not a new-found issue or revelation. Concerns around cosmetic practitioners using the term 'surgeon' in a misleading manner were made clear following the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency-led *Independent review of the regulation of medical practitioners who perform cosmetic surgery*.

I mentioned earlier in this contribution the last time amendments were made to the national law in this chamber last year. The issue of rogue medical practitioners was also raised then. In that context it was around the government's proposed changes to remove a ban on testimonial advertising—an area particularly pertinent in the field of cosmetic medicine. At the time, Ahpra's independent review on the cosmetic industry had not been completed and lifting the testimonial ban prior to the review being finished just did not make sense. With that review now complete, we see today's laws adding protections and safeguarding patients based on the review's expert findings. That is rather than plans to roll back these types of protections for patients like those seeking cosmetic care as well, as was planned last year by the government. The members for Southport and Bonney noted these concerns in their statement of reservation to the Health and Environment Committee report at the time, and I commend them both on that statement.

Lifting the ban on testimonial advertising was ultimately abandoned by the government in the final hour with last-minute amendments. It was the right thing to do and the right decision was made. Now we are debating laws here today which have been informed by the findings of an expert review of the cosmetic industry. I think that shows the value of proper scrutiny. We would have had a poorer outcome last year, and this bill might be entirely different had the government chosen to forge ahead.


There was only recommendation made in the committee's report on this occasion, which was that the bill be passed. The committee report noted that the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners, the Royal Australian College of Surgeons, the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists, the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Ophthalmologists, the Australian College of Dermatologists, the Australasian Society of Aesthetic Plastic Surgeons, the Australian Society of Plastic Surgeons and the Cosmetic Physicians College of Australasia all generally supported the passing of the legislation.

Of note, the Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine expressed apprehension that the changes failed to recognise the role of rural generalists who can complete advanced skills training in surgery and provide vital surgical services in remote, rural and regional Queensland. At present, rural generalists are not accredited surgical specialists under the Australian Medical Council, the AMC. The profession is currently requesting to have a separate accredited speciality put in place for the profession through the AMC.

Like all of my colleagues on this side of the chamber, I am a huge fan of our rural generalists across Queensland. They are incredible, versatile clinicians who work in some of the most trying of situations across our state. Those concerns raised by the College of Rural and Remote Medicine are warranted and should be listened carefully to. We so desperately need clinicians in these areas. Ensuring they feel valued and respected is an especially important part of not only attracting those doctors to the bush but being able to retain them, too. The opposition appreciates and is conscious of the fact that there is currently a process underway with the Australian Medical Council for some changes to recognise these doctors. We hope that the government acts accordingly with whatever outcome comes out of that process with the AMC.

The opposition will not oppose this piece of legislation. We will watch with interest how the new laws are enforced, with a sincere hope that patients are protected and safeguarded from rogue operators, particularly in the field of cosmetic medicine.

Finally, Mr Speaker, with your indulgence I would like to thank the staff at the Rockhampton Hospital and ambulance station along with the staff at the Robina Hospital and the Gold Coast University Hospital whom I visited last week. As always, I am truly inspired and in awe of the work that they do. It was a real pleasure to see them in action and up close as they went about doing what they do best: caring for sick and injured Queenslanders. I thank every clinician for all they do for the people of our state.

 **Mr HARPER** (Thuringowa—ALP) (12.04 pm): I rise to give my contribution to the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law (Surgeons) Amendment Bill 2023. I start by thanking all of the members of the health committee and offer a special thanks to the member for Lytton, who was a part of this inquiry and who I know will speak on this bill a little later. I also thank the secretariat and all of those who provided submissions and/or appeared before the committee during its public hearings on this bill.

One thing is absolutely clear: this bill is about patient safety. Protection of title is incredibly important to the health industry. It was only a number of years ago that we did the same thing in this place with the protection of title for paramedics. For a number of years now there has been a spotlight on cosmetic surgery and what can only be described as ‘cowboy’ surgery, placing individuals at great risk of damaging results that last a lifetime. Our regulatory body, Ahpra, has only recently targeted these individuals. This body of work we are doing in Queensland, as the lead jurisdiction, has enabled more to be done in this important space.

During the inquiry the committee heard a range of divergent views from peak bodies representing various medical practitioners and specialities as well as training organisations, lawyers and insurers. The committee deeply appreciates the views articulated by the various bodies and notes the concerns expressed in submissions and at the public hearing regarding who should be able to use the title ‘surgeon’. Whilst the various medical bodies could not reach agreement on this issue, there was broad agreement that protecting the public from harm caused by an unqualified or underqualified practitioner was key. I take the point made by the member for Mudgeeraba. The college representing rural generalists, for whom I have a great deal of respect as they do incredible work in rural, remote and regional Queensland, made submissions on this bill. Their speciality is currently before the Australian Medical Council for consideration. They do an outstanding job in regional Queensland.

The goal of reforming this national law to secure protection was widely endorsed. Queensland is very proud to be the host jurisdiction for the national law and to lead the nation in strengthening the regulation of the cosmetic surgery industry. At its core, the bill aims to protect the title ‘surgeon’ within the medical profession to safeguard the public and to strengthen the regulation of cosmetic surgery in Australia. The bill aims to clarify the decision-making authority of tribunals after hearing a matter about a registered health practitioner. The bill achieves its aims by amending the health practitioner national law. Queensland is proudly the host jurisdiction of the national law under the Intergovernmental Agreement for a National Registration and Accreditation Scheme for the Health Professions between all states and territories and the Commonwealth. Australian health ministers agreed to the amendments proposed in the bill.



Our committee considered a range of factors relating to the national law which included: the views of stakeholders who engaged with the inquiry, the majority of whom indicated support for the proposed changes; public confusion about the term 'surgeon' and the use of the term by some practitioners; the absence of minimum standards for who could call themselves a cosmetic surgeon; concerns about the regulation of cosmetic surgery and instances of risk and harm associated with the industry; and the expectation that all surgeons have comparable qualifications and advanced surgical training, including in respect of cosmetic surgery, which is not approved as a speciality under the national law.

The national law is the legal framework for Australia's National Registration and Accreditation Scheme for health practitioners. The scheme commenced in 2010 following the adoption of the national law by all Australian states and territories. Under the intergovernmental agreement for the scheme, Queensland is the host jurisdiction for this national law. The scheme ensures only health practitioners who are suitably trained and qualified to practise competently and ethically are registered to practise throughout Australia. It protects titles by restricting the usage of specified professional titles, including specialist titles. The scheme provides for disciplinary and prosecutorial sanctions against persons unlawfully using a protected title or falsely holding themselves out as holding either registration or a particular type of registration.


Restricting title usage to those appropriately qualified and trained allows the public to be confident that a health practitioner is registered under the national law. In respect of surgeons, the national law only protects the title 'surgeon' as an adjunct to approved specialist titles—for example, specialist plastic surgeon. As the national law does not protect 'surgeon' as a standalone title, any registered medical practitioner could call themselves a surgeon even if not registered in a surgical speciality and even without any significant postgraduate surgical training. As cosmetic surgery is not an approved speciality under the national law, those medical practitioners could market themselves as cosmetic or aesthetic surgeons regardless of qualifications and level of training. A diversity of qualifications and experience amongst purported surgeons confuses the public, who expect all surgeons to have comparable qualifications and appropriate advanced surgical training.

With regard to consultation, in response to concerns about adverse patient outcomes, in November 2021 the Medical Board of Australia and Ahpra commissioned an independent external review of patient safety issues in the cosmetic surgery industry. They received 249 submissions and 595 public survey responses, with the findings and recommendations handed down in September 2022. The consultation regulation impact statement, or RIS, *Use of the Title 'Surgeon' by Medical Practitioners*, sought feedback on potential issues arising from the use of the title 'surgeon' by the medical practitioners and proposed options for reform. It outlined a variety of patient harms caused by poor cosmetic surgery and post-surgery practices in cases where medical practitioners performed cosmetic surgery outside their scope of competence.

Submissions on the consultation RIS were received from 150 professional stakeholders and nearly 1,400 responses were made to a dedicated consumer survey. Further consultation findings demonstrated that there is significant public confusion about medical practitioners' titles and qualifications associated with the title 'surgeon' and a gap between consumer understanding of what a surgeon is and the use of the term by some practitioners. In December 2020 Australian health ministers published a decision RIS about medical practitioners' use of the title 'surgeon' under the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law. That decision RIS recommended restricting the use of the title 'surgeon' to medical practitioners with significant surgical training. This recommendation was informed by submissions to the consultation RIS, the independent review and the expert advice provided to health ministers by the Medical Board. The health ministers also agreed to strengthen the regulation of cosmetic surgery by protecting the use of the title 'surgeon' under national law to only being able to be used by those medical practitioners with appropriate advanced surgical training and qualifications.

As well as the title protection, health ministers agreed to further consumer protection measures for cosmetic surgery using complementary non-legislative actions which included: directing the Medical Board to develop an area-of-practice endorsement to establish the qualifications and training required to perform high-risk cosmetic surgery procedures; directing the Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care to review licensing standards; improving guidance and education for medical practitioners who perform cosmetic surgery; commissioning a public education campaign in relation to cosmetic surgery; and directing Ahpra to crack down—and that has recently happened—on misleading advertising in cosmetic surgery. As I stated at the beginning of my speech, that has only just happened

recently and is widely supported by the broader medical community and representative bodies and will no doubt be welcomed by the members of our communities throughout Queensland, because, again, it is all about patient safety. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Ms LAUGA** (Keppel—ALP) (12.13 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law (Surgeons) Amendment Bill 2023. This bill responds to findings and recommendations from numerous reports and reviews into the regulation of cosmetic surgery in Australia and the demonstrated need to strengthen title protections under the national law. The Minister for Health, Mental Health and Ambulance Services and Minister for Women has already outlined the major amendments in the bill. I want to focus my remarks on the critical role of this legislation in improving patient protection and transparency.

The cosmetic surgery industry is growing exponentially and the sector is becoming difficult and dangerous for healthcare consumers to navigate. That is why this bill is so important. It is a commonsense reform to reflect what the public already reasonably assumes—that doctors calling themselves a surgeon or a cosmetic surgeon should have the advanced surgical training to go along with the title. Feedback from a national consultation process on title protection and cosmetic surgery confirms some cosmetic surgery consumers bear heavy costs for their procedures. These have sadly included health complications, hospital visits to correct botched surgeries, loss of income and time, and mental distress.


I want to take a moment to give real-life examples of some of the heartbreaking stories we have heard in our consideration of the need to strengthen the regulation of cosmetic surgery in Australia. The Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal heard that a medical practitioner holding general registration had asked their receptionist to help perform several lengthy liposuction operations and translate signed consent forms for a consumer with limited comprehension of English. The tribunal further heard that on several occasions the practitioner's performance of these procedures resulted in adverse patient outcomes that required review by other medical specialties. The postoperative outcomes of several of these patients were found to warrant notification to the Medical Board of Australia.

In another case, the health complaints commission in New South Wales filed complaints against a practitioner for failing to adequately conduct assessments prior to the surgery of patients. The practitioner did not obtain informed consent from prospective consumers prior to performing various procedures. The practitioner was also said to have woken and sat patients up during surgical procedures to inquire if patients were happy with the size and positioning of breast implants inserted or instead requested associates to enter the room to comment. Information provided about postoperative care was also deemed insufficient or not provided to patients at all. Following breast augmentation procedures, patients reported being in extreme pain requiring medical intervention, developed fevers and infections, had wounds split open post surgery and had stitches dissolve, resulting in strep infections. Another person alleged that they arrived at the practitioner's surgery to undergo a breast augmentation and received no hospital gown or sedation and was in excruciating pain. They revealed that they were told they could leave immediately after the procedure.

The Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency provided the Health and Environment Committee with recent data on complaints about cosmetic surgery. Ahpra established a cosmetic surgery hotline in September of last year. As of 22 May, it had already received 222 calls leading to 112 new notifications related to cosmetic practices. The reality is that at times there are significant information and power imbalances between the public and these practitioners. The title protection system in the national law helps to balance this asymmetry by improving transparency for patients and consumers. Findings from the national consultation reveal that people are often confused about health practitioner titles and about the qualifications that go along with the titles. This has become increasingly evident when we look at the harrowing cases I have just spoken about. Let me be very clear: no person should have to endure such treatment from a medical professional. It is important to mention that most doctors are diligent, conscientious and work to the highest standards for their patients. However, there are some practitioners who perform beyond their scope, put profits before the interests of their patients and take advantage of the public's trust. This bill goes a long way to addressing these issues.

The bill protects the title of surgeon by creating new offences to ensure only those medical practitioners with significant surgical training can hold themselves out as a surgeon. This bill will assure Queenslanders that doctors using the title 'surgeon' have appropriate training and qualifications to perform surgical procedures. This reform will protect patients. It will increase satisfaction with operative outcomes and improve public confidence in the medical profession and the national scheme. While practitioners' scope of practice will not be limited by the reform, patients will have more insight when

choosing a practitioner to perform surgical procedures. By further strengthening title protections under the national law, this bill demonstrates the Palaszczuk government's commitment to protecting the safety of Queenslanders. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr MOLHOEK** (Southport—LNP) (12.19 pm): I rise today to speak on the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law (Surgeons) Amendment Bill. Queensland, as the host jurisdiction for the national law, holds a unique responsibility, one that this bill seeks to enhance. To give a brief overview, the bill's primary amendments to the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law Act 2009 are two-fold: to protect the title 'surgeon', strengthening the regulation of cosmetic surgery across our nation; and to refine and clarify the decision-making authority of tribunals after examining matters concerning registered health practitioners.

As deputy chair of the Health and Environment Committee it was my privilege to witness the deliberations and recommendations of the committee and to hear significant evidence from those many organisations that attended our public hearings on Monday, 22 May of this year. During the day we heard evidence from the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons, the Council of Procedural Specialists, the Australian Society of Plastic Surgeons and the Australian Medical Association. We also heard from the Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine, the Australian and New Zealand Association for Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons, the Australian Orthopaedic Association and, of course, Ahpra. Throughout the course of the day there were many concerns raised, but overall I think all of us are convinced that the recommendations as proposed in this legislation fulsomely and comprehensively cover most of the concerns.

There was a broad concern amongst patients around the uncertainty and flexibility of the use of the title 'surgeon' and an increasing prevalence of practitioners referring to themselves as a surgeon without proper accreditation. This has somewhat muddled the waters for those who do serve in this distinguished field and this situation is particularly pronounced in the field of cosmetic surgery, a domain that has witnessed its fair share of controversies over the years. I note that some of the other members of the committee who do not have the privilege of living on the Gold Coast were quick to make suggestions that there is perhaps a higher proportion of cosmetic surgeons on the Gold Coast than other parts of the state. I note that there are no cosmetic surgeons in Riverway Drive in Townsville—yet.

We have heard so many terms thrown around over the years in respect of cosmetic surgery and sadly there are practitioners who give the profession a bad name. We have heard people use words like dodgy, reckless, dangerous and cosmetic cowboys. We have even seen a growth in the number of fly-in fly-out cosmetic surgeons who seek to profiteer from procedures that are less than reasonable. I want to bring to the attention of the House the submission from Maurice Blackburn Lawyers which I feel sums up quite adequately the broader concern—

Cosmetic medicine and surgery occupy a unique position within the healthcare profession. Normally, medical or surgical treatment is provided in the context of some illness, injury or disease. By contrast, cosmetic surgery or treatment is generally non-essential, motivated by aesthetics and instigated by the patient. More than any other area of medicine, it is a commercial arrangement usually carried out in a 'for profit' environment and this dramatically changes the dynamic and the relationship between doctor and patient. The interpretation of what constitutes adequate consent and after-care under these circumstances, is wildly different from those that apply in other forms of surgery.

The term 'surgeon' carries enormous weight in the community and assumptions are invariably made about the expertise of the person using it. To allow people who have not undergone the appropriate training to use it is misleading, undermines informed consent and does nothing to protect the public.

At the heart of this legislation is a recognition that in protecting the title of surgeon we also protect the public from unnecessary harm.

During the course of our deliberations and during the public hearing we heard evidence that suggested there are some 200,000 cosmetic procedures per annum in Australia, which further highlights the need for this industry to be better and more adequately regulated. We received submissions from the Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine. They raised some legitimate concerns. There are a significant number of rural health specialists and qualified general practitioners in rural, remote and regional Queensland who undertake and perform various surgical procedures. The concern that the Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine raised was that the title restrictions proposed in the legislation could lead to competent and qualified practitioners in rural and remote areas being discouraged from providing critical surgical services and that the people in these locations who already face significant barriers to accessing this care will have their access restricted even further. The committee acknowledged their concerns in its report and also raised those concerns with some of the other parties that appeared at our hearing. I think all of us were fairly satisfied that those practitioners referred to, in particular in rural and remote Queensland, would not be unfairly disadvantaged.

The member for Surfers Paradise will be pleased to hear that there was an acknowledgement that oral surgeons or dentists may still carry that title. Having said that, I am not so sure I would want Mr Langbroek to be performing oral surgery on me.


**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Hart): Member for Southport, I draw you back to the bill.

**Ms Bates** interjected.

**Mr MOLHOEK:** I take the interjection from the member for Mudgeeraba. My comment was not so much a matter of wanting to offend the member for Surfers Paradise, but rather point out that it has been a while since he has practised oral surgery as he has been the member for Surfers Paradise for some time—and a great member he is.

I also want to reference the response to a question we posed as a committee to the Department of Health and further questions to Ahpra around trying to understand how many surgeons there are. There are 26,731 medical practitioners registered in Queensland. Of those, 17,209 hold specialist registration in an approved speciality. There are 1,293 practitioners registered in the medical speciality of surgery; 454 are registered in obstetrics and gynaecology; and 195 are registered in the medical speciality of ophthalmology. There is only one podiatric surgeon registered in Queensland and some 5,312 dentists, of which seven are registered in the speciality of oral surgery. I note that in the breakdown of those registrations there are only 47 who are registered as specialists in oral and maxillofacial surgery and a further 81 who have specialist registration in plastic surgery. To reinforce the concerns that the committee considered, if you are considering cosmetic surgery you want to make sure that the person you go to see has suitable qualifications and the right services available to support you if things do not go well.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Southport, I have just had the use of the dentistry skills of the member for Surfers Paradise myself today so I hope you have not done your dash.

 **Ms KING** (Pumicestone—ALP) (12.28 pm): I rise to make a contribution on the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law (Surgeons) Amendment Bill. We know that the popularity of cosmetic surgery is increasing. In Australia, the industry is now worth over \$1 billion a year. We heard, perhaps from the member for Southport, that that is around 200,000 procedures every year. Both the number of procedures that Australians undertake and the invasiveness of those procedures is increasing. There are approximately 130,000 registered medical practitioners in Australia and currently every single one of those has the capacity to describe themselves as a surgeon, even though in hundreds of thousands of cases they have not undergone the very intensive training and qualifications required by the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons. Because cosmetic surgery is not currently an approved speciality, any medical practitioner is able to market themselves as a cosmetic or aesthetic surgeon, even if they have not undergone the very rigorous training process.

As we heard throughout the committee process, the lack of title protection for the term ‘surgeon’ creates significant misunderstandings and reduces transparency for the hundreds of thousands of Australians who are considering cosmetic surgical procedures every year. Those procedures range from minimally invasive in-clinic care through to major surgery that carries with it high risks of infection, haemorrhage, embolism, chronic pain and even death. Some of the accounts that we heard through the committee process were, frankly, appalling. We heard of surgery conducted in what amounted to a broom closet with a lack of sterile procedures, a lack of not only trained surgeons but also trained assistants and receptionists being called in to assist. I would not wish that kind of medical care on my worst enemy. Even procedures that are generally thought of as very minor can, in fact, result in severe complications like blindness or facial paralysis. I think there is a lack of understanding of those facts within the Queensland community. These national law changes to protect the title ‘surgeon’ recognise that when cosmetic procedures are not performed by appropriately qualified surgeons they can lead to permanent harm and even put lives at risk.

Ultimately, cosmetic procedures are about personal choice. We believe that everyone has the right to make their own decisions about their own bodies. However, where cosmetic surgery poses a unique risk is at the intersection of high-risk health procedures and consumer decisions. We are simply not trained to view medical advice and medical care as a financial transaction, which more and more is where cosmetic surgery is creating an intersection. We are used to being able to trust that the doctors who care for us will always have our best interests at heart and will always put their duty to us as their patients ahead of any personal or financial interests. I do not think that, as consumers of cosmetic surgery services, the Australian public has caught up with this shift.

We have seen media reports of rogue cosmetic practitioners who hold themselves out to be surgeons and upsell their services to vulnerable people, often young women. Through the committee process we heard some reports, particularly from Private Healthcare Australia, describing non-surgically qualified practitioners encouraging vulnerable people to access their superannuation to pay for procedures or to take out high-interest loans to pay for their procedures. We heard of them having colleagues within their business provide a referral that improperly allowed access to Medicare rebates and private healthcare rebates, in some cases leading to the prosecution of those practitioners for fraud. A lot of that conduct is enabled by the fact that the title 'surgeon' is not protected. Most of those rogue practitioners describe themselves in some way, shape or form as a surgeon.

In addition, we know that when unqualified practitioners conduct surgeries they are not fully trained and qualified to undertake, it is the public healthcare system that provides care for the victims who are left behind and who may have complex complications. I would recommend that members google, but the content that you will see reported in reputable media outlets is really distressing, particularly the images in some cases, so do that at your own risk.

The impact of social media has unquestionably worsened the tension between health care and consumer choice, with consumers researching potential procedures via social media channels that have been created by practitioners primarily for the purpose of marketing. Those social media channels are aimed at capturing more clients so they often understate the risks and the recovery times for procedures, and they do not ever—almost—explain the difference between a practitioner who has undertaken full surgical qualifications and training and those who have not. That is why it is very welcome news that Ahpra and the Medical Board of Australia have already cracked down on advertising and social media being used to promote cosmetic surgery procedures.

We know that the vast number of doctors are doing the right thing and care for their patients with skill and integrity and within their skill set. Those who provide cosmetic procedures generally do so to a high standard of care and professional standards. Ultimately, good doctors, the professional colleges that we heard from and professional organisations clearly recognise the importance of potential patients being able to accurately assess the qualifications and experience of their proceduralist before making a decision. Ultimately, though, these changes are necessary because it is very difficult for members of the public to distinguish between, on the one hand, highly trained surgeons who are offering safe procedures and the so-called 'cosmetic cowboys' we have seen referenced in media reporting.


Surgical training is really tough and it should be tough. It takes between eight to 12 years to complete surgical training, which is on top of a medical degree and medical training, in accordance with the requirements of the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons. That eight to 12 years is significant. It brings professional standards, it brings oversight, it brings scrutiny and it brings the supervision of colleges that are invested in maintaining high standards. A big part of it is building in the practice of professional standards, which means that when you have an unexpected outcome or a patient has a bad outcome then you are trained to go to your professional colleagues and engage in M&M, or morbidity and mortality conferences, engage in peer review and talk about what went wrong and what could be done differently next time. That collegiate approach to maintaining professional standards is a really important part of the additional eight to 12 years of training.

As well as that, eight to 12 years of training means that, as a trainee surgeon, you have to undertake hundreds or thousands of procedures under the supervision of a senior practitioner, which is really important. By contrast, we have heard accounts of people who are holding themselves out to be cosmetic surgeons having done only a 15-hour online training course in order to provide breast augmentation or a four-hour online training course, with a small hands-on component, to provide facial injectables that, in a worst case scenario, can paralyse people's facial and optic nerves.

The need for higher standards is about the need for Queenslanders and people across Australia to be able to make clear decisions based on accurate information when they are making these really sensitive decisions about what cosmetic procedures they may choose to have. If you are offering to cut deep into a person's body, to break or reshape their bones or to lacerate their skin as a consumer transaction that is costing thousands of dollars, then your potential patients should have the tools to assess exactly how qualified you are to do that work. The eight to 12 years of training also means the difference between an in-depth understanding of how to manage complications and not knowing what to do when your patient develops an infection or bleeds excessively.

Surgical training teaches and requires peer discussion. That can be contrasted with accounts we have seen reported such as one non-qualified proceduralist whose advice to his practice staff was, 'Never, ever, ever—not slightly ever—ever, ever, ever, ever admit to a patient that something is bad or

wrong.’ Those proceduralists are appropriately described as ‘cosmetic cowboys’. As the host jurisdiction for the national law, we can be proud that Queensland is implementing these reforms to ensure that vulnerable people have the ability to make decisions about their cosmetic surgery on a fully informed basis. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr KELLY** (Greenslopes—ALP) (12.39 pm): I support the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law (Surgeons) Amendment Bill 2023. I will start by rebutting some of the things said by the member for Southport. I think the member for Surfers Paradise is such a consummate professional that he would absolutely refer the member to another professional if he felt that the procedure was outside his scope of practice.

**Mr Langbroek** interjected.

**Mr KELLY:** Absolutely. It is a good point to start my contribution to this debate because, while it is somewhat of a jovial point, it goes to the very serious nature of this debate and the issue at hand. What we are really talking about at the core here is the serious business of regulating the medical system. Key to that system of regulation is upholding the highest standards of patient safety. One of the very important elements of our system of not just medical regulation but also health professional regulation broadly is the very important business of nomenclature and assigning the right titles to the right people so that when people seek assistance or advice from those people they know that they are getting treatment and care of a certain standard and that those people are exhibiting certain professional qualifications. Under the system of Ahpra, we also know that those people carry appropriate insurance so that if they do make mistakes and intentionally or unintentionally damage patients then patients have a mechanism to seek redress from those people.

It is a really important process that we are going through here. I think all health professionals were reminded of the importance of proper regulation of health professionals during the COVID-19 period when we saw many self-appointed experts in the areas of vaccination, virology et cetera—people holding themselves out in relation to those matters and doing untold damage in the community by spreading false information. It is 70 to 80 years after we invented the polio vaccine, and most nurses will say that they have looked after patients with post-polio syndrome. I think 70 to 80 years from now we will still be dealing with the impacts of the misinformation spread about vaccinations during the COVID-19 period.

I want to talk about the shocking images and stories that we saw, particularly in relation to the very famous investigation done by *Four Corners*. I watched that with my wife, who is also a nurse. There were many things in that particular program that shocked us—the complete disregard for infection control procedures, the reported disregard in terms of safety around the administration of anaesthetics and the use of unqualified staff in various aspects of the procedures being performed—but most shocking was the cold and callous approach of some of the people involved in these procedures. I do not think that represents everybody, but, certainly in what was represented in that particular program and in many of the submissions made to this and other inquiries, it can be clearly seen that there is an element that needs to be cleaned up. We do that by applying proper standards as we do across all of the health practitioner regulation areas.

I want to talk about the type of surgery and why I think it is important that we have plastic surgeons and appropriately qualified surgeons involved in this. In the first weeks of my nurse training we did about six weeks in the classroom, and what they call ‘assaults to people’s body image’ were put in front of us at a pretty early point. It did not take long on the wards to see the impact on people when there is a change to their body image, whether that is having a stoma formed and having a colostomy, losing a limb or having some sort of surgery that causes some sort of facial alteration which is obvious to other people. All of those things have a really significant and severe impact on people. Probably some of the hardest situations I have been in as a nurse are when people face really significant alterations in their body image and helping those people work through dealing with those.

In preparation for this contribution I was reading an article by Aggarwal et al 2023 called ‘Effect of body image on self esteem: a systematic literature review and future implication’. It states—


It has been demonstrated that body image, particularly in respect to physical appearance, has a significant impact on how people perceive themselves and their level of confidence. Positive body image can result in increased confidence and general wellbeing can improve people’s mental health and general quality of life, whereas a negative body image can result in ... low self-esteem.

This is why I think it is really important that people seek treatment from a fully qualified surgeon rather than just somebody trying to sell a particular procedure. I would not make judgements about whether people are seeking treatment for what might be considered aesthetic reasons or if there is some clinical reason as to why they have to do that. In my view, body image is so important to people.

If people choose to have procedures to feel better about themselves then that is a very valid thing for them to do, but they want to do that in a safe way. If somebody has a perception of their body image and they are seeking surgery to assist with changing their perception of their body image, I think it is really important that people are offered a full range of options. Surgery may not be the only way that somebody has to deal with their perceptions around their body image. There are other ways that people can seek treatment and care in relation to those matters—ways that do not involve the risks involved with surgery.

I am always quick to point out to people who ask me about certain types of surgical procedures in the cosmetics sphere that they have to really take into serious consideration the risks involved in general anaesthetics. General anaesthetics are generally very safe, but there are risks involved in general anaesthetics. The more general anaesthetics that you have, the greater your risk of an adverse outcome. You do not really want to be pushing up your risk profile unless you absolutely have to. It is really important that people have an ethical surgeon who will offer a full range of options in relation to treatment. This applies not just around this type of surgery and the risk around general anaesthetics but also in terms of people travelling to international destinations—that is more common now—seeking similar sorts of procedures. There are significant risks in seeking treatment in countries where you do not necessarily understand the language let alone the medical regulation system.

For those reasons, I think this legislation is very sound. Perhaps I will leave the last word to my former colleague who used to sit just in front of me, Dr Anthony Lynham. He said, 'It is quite simple: the public just has to know who their surgeon is, who is operating on them.' I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr POWELL** (Glass House—LNP) (12.48 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law (Surgeons) Amendment Bill 2023. I do not know if from time to time other members in the House take an interest in surveys, but one I particularly take an interest in is how the public perceives or has confidence in various professions, particularly in terms of trustworthiness.

**Ms King:** It is always rather depressing.

**Mr POWELL:** It is rather depressing; I take that interjection from the member for Pumicestone. We elected officials often rank very low on that priority list of trustworthiness—

**Dr Rowan:** Unless you are the member for Moggill!

**Mr POWELL:** I will get to that, member for Moggill. We often compete with used-car salesmen down towards the bottom of that list. What you will regularly see on that list of trustworthy professions is medical professionals. What this bill has demonstrated to those of us who serve on the Health and Environment Committee is that within that classification of medical professionals there are degrees of trustworthiness as well. The member for Mudgeeraba and the member for Greenslopes could probably mount a very compelling case as to why nurses are considered the most trustworthy. The member for Surfers Paradise would probably present a case as to why dentists are considered the most trustworthy, but, of course, we cannot show you his face. The member for Moggill would say specialist physicians are the most trustworthy. What consideration of this bill identified is that when the people of Queensland and the people of Australia are operated on—when they go under the knife—they want to know that they can trust their surgeons. At the heart of it, that is what this legislation is about.

The bill aims to protect the title 'surgeon' within the medical profession to safeguard the public and strengthen the regulation of cosmetic surgery in Australia. The bill also aims to clarify the decision-making authority of tribunals after hearing a matter about a registered health practitioner. It is important to point out that the law we are amending is a national law. As other speakers have said, Queensland is the host of the national law. The law applies in all jurisdictions around Australia. That is a very sensible way of approaching issues around medical professionals and health practitioners across the nation. We do not want people going from one state or territory to another and having to operate—tongue in cheek—under different legislation or different regulations. In making these changes today we are making them for the nation, and other jurisdictions will adopt them. We are making these changes based on the Intergovernmental Agreement for a National Registration and Accreditation Scheme for the Health Professions. We do so knowing that all the Australian health ministers have agreed to the amendments proposed in the bill.

That being said, it was still important that we put this through the committee process to hear what various stakeholders had to say about the proposed changes. To be honest, the vast majority are very supportive of the proposed changes. What the feedback in the lead-up to this legislation found is that many consumers—that is, Queenslanders and Australians—were experiencing confusion around the titles and qualifications of various medical practitioners. As we have heard, including in the contribution

by the member for Greenslopes, there are significant concerns around some of the practices in cosmetic surgery. This change restricting the use of the title 'surgeon' has been put forward. There are copious amounts of support across the sector for this.

There were a couple that did not support the scope of title protection change. I want to mention those and unpack a couple of their concerns in a bit more detail. We are aware that there are still potential issues with these changes that need to be monitored and may need to be addressed further down the track. For example, the Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine advocated for surgical training in their fellowship program to be considered sufficient for being included within the surgical class. I will come back to that in more detail shortly. The Australian Orthopaedic Association and the Australian Medical Association provided feedback that podiatrists should also be restricted from using the title 'surgeon'. The Australian College of Cosmetic Surgery and Medicine gave their feedback that title protection is unnecessary and that the ministerially agreed non-legislative reform of establishing an area-of-practice endorsement in cosmetic surgery was sufficient to address public safety concerns. In terms of the last one, obviously that is not the case and that is not what this bill enacts; therefore, those contributions by the Australian College of Cosmetic Surgery and Medicine were not taken on board.

I will draw on the input of the Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine. ACRRM raised the issue around rural generalists. These are specialist GPs. They operate in many of the electorates that we on this side of the House represent. They are not just GPs; they have been provided specialist skills in scope of practice across primary, secondary and emergency care. They often provide surgical, obstetric, gynaecological and other non-procedural advanced skills. In that sense, they are the frontline heroes when it comes to rural and remote hospitals and rural and remote communities. ACRRM expressed concern that the amendments fail to recognise the role of rural generalist—the ones, to be blunt, we could not survive without.

The Australian Medical Association is considering whether a separate title of 'rural generalist surgeon' could be approved as a subspeciality, subject to appropriate consultation. The AMA has also identified rural generalist as a discrete skill and appreciate that in some cases they are providing surgical operations and therefore need to be considered as a surgical class. Ahpra advised the committee—

No one wants to bring surgical services in rural Australia to a halt. Title protection is a restriction on language, not a restriction on practice. Protecting the title 'surgeon' will not stop medical practitioners in rural and regional Australia from continuing to provide much needed surgical care when they have the skills to do so. It will simply stop these practitioners calling themselves surgeons. This is an important distinction in the context of wider conversations about pressures on Australia's health workforce.

GP surgeons and rural generalists are highly skilled individuals who have gained considerable surgical experience and have qualifications in surgery. However, they are not specialist surgeons. If the Bill is passed, the Medical Board would be happy to discuss with the Colleges, suitable title/s that could be used to inform the public about their advanced training, and extended scope and competencies, that does not put these medical practitioners at risk of inadvertently breaching the National Law.

I think it is important that that work happens. I think it is important that the AMA and Ahpra take on board the feedback that was received during the committee hearings on the bill and explore how to best recognise those rural generalists and the specialist skills that they have. Confidence needs to be provided to communities that rural generalists can do what they are doing and they have the training to do what they are doing. If there is a way to enshrine that in subsequent amendments to this legislation I think that would be a sensible outcome.


I want to pick up on an interesting issue given my former service within the Commonwealth Department of Defence. The Medical Indemnity Protection Society queried the impact of title protection amendments on medical practitioners employed in the Australian Defence Force, noting that some of them carry titles such as Surgeon General, Surgeon Commander, Lieutenant Surgeon or Staff Surgeon. We particularly raised this with the department. The department said it had had conversations with the Commonwealth Department of Defence about this. Their response was—

The title protection provisions should not be construed so broadly as to reach matters that have no connection to the regulation of registered health practitioners or the provision of regulated health services.

When read in the context of the objectives and guiding principles of the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law ... the purpose of the National Law's title protection scheme, and the stated purpose of the Bill, it is clear that the proposed title offences would not prohibit use of customary names or titles—such as 'Surgeon General', 'Surgeon Commander' or 'Staff Surgeon'—that are used to refer to an official rank or title, or that are otherwise generally understood to refer to matters distinct from the general provision of medical care.



That is an important issue that needed ventilation through the committee process. I believe there is adequate explanation, but, again, it is one that we will need to monitor as this legislation is enacted, put into force and policed. With those few words, as the shadow minister for health has said, the LNP do not intend to oppose this legislation, but it is important that we keep an eye on some of the things raised during the committee process.

 **Mr SKELTON** (Nicklin—ALP) (12.57 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law (Surgeons) Amendment Bill 2023. The bill's genesis was consultation in December 2021. Australian health ministers publicly released a consultation regulation impact statement on the use of the title 'surgeon' within the medical profession. To ensure everyone's voice was heard, an expert health consumer organisation was engaged to survey health consumers about their cosmetic surgery experiences. There was strong engagement in the consultation, with direct submissions from 150 professional stakeholders and nearly 1,400 responses to the consumer survey. In December 2022, Australian health ministers published a decision regulation impact statement which analysed the submissions and consumer survey responses. This informed the development of this bill.


In February of this year further targeted consultation was undertaken with professional stakeholders on all the cosmetic surgery legislative and non-legislative reforms agreed by all Australian health ministers. This included consultation on the classes of medical practitioner that will be included within the definition of 'surgical class', and thus able to use the title 'surgeon'. Feedback from consultation confirmed consumers often experience significant confusion about the titles and qualifications of medical practitioners. The feedback also indicated widespread concerns about the regulation of cosmetic surgery and instances of risk and harm associated with this industry. Although there were a variety of views about the most appropriate way to address the identified problems, stakeholders overwhelmingly did not support maintaining the status quo and largely supported title protection.

Debate, on motion of Mr Skelton, adjourned.

Sitting suspended from 1.00 pm to 2.00 pm.

## MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST

### Palaszczuk Labor Government, Performance

 **Mr CRISAFULLI** (Broadwater—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (2.00 pm): It has been a fortnight to forget not just for a dysfunctional government but for a state that deserves so much better. It has been a fortnight of leaks, of undermining, of backstabbing from a government. It has been a fortnight of chaos and crisis. It has been a fortnight with a government that stopped listening a long time ago and stopped caring about anything other than themselves—a government with no vision that only acts when it is forced to. The latest is the decision to put a representative on the Sentencing Advisory Council. I called for it in my budget reply speech. The minister said it was unnecessary, and today finally a decision. It has been a fortnight when the government agreed to an independent investigation into two boys harmed across multiple agencies, across multiple ministers, across multiple years. For three years there has been a calculated cover-up that denied two boys justice for their treatment.

**Mr Dick** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Kelly): Order, Treasurer! You are on the speaking list. You will have your chance.

**Mr CRISAFULLI**: Despite a royal commission, there is still no apology from either the Attorney-General or the former attorney-general. It is the latest example of a government that just wants to adopt our ideas and policies under pressure.

**Government members** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER**: Order, members! Pause the clock. Members, the level of interjection is far too high. I will start to warn people and we are only 1½ minutes into the debate.

**Mr CRISAFULLI**: It is a government that constantly adopts our ideas and policies under pressure—the DNA lab, the Coaldrake inquiry, Caboolture Hospital, Mackay Hospital, learner licence fees, breach of bail. I say to the government—and, indeed, the Treasurer—steal more of our ideas, please, for the sake of Queensland! When it comes to health, within a hundred days release data in real time and put doctors and nurses back in charge. When it comes to youth crime, commit to rewriting the act and remove detention as a last resort. Do not slug victims when they are replacing numberplates

and licences after being broken into or having their car pinched. When it comes to housing, commit to every cent in the Housing Investment Fund going to produce new stock to increase supply. When it comes to the cost of living, make a maintenance guarantee to keep the power plants operational.

The Premier promised today that she would listen. Yet all we got was a repeat of the same scare campaign and the same arguments time and time again from a government that after nine years could not even list achievements when the Premier was under siege from her own ministers and her own backbench.

We choose hope over fear. I say today to the tradie who went out this morning and their ute was not in their front yard, 'We will deliver more police and the laws they need to keep you safe.' I say to the ambulance officer on the Gold Coast who was crying because they had just been asked to do another shift, as reported in the media: 'Better resources and empowerment will be there for you in the future when this government, who no longer trusts you or has faith in you, is no longer in a position to do that to you.' We say to the investors leaving the housing market in Queensland: 'Don't give up on Queensland because we won't give up on you.'

**Mr Dick** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order, Treasurer! You are on the speaking list next.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** I know we have a Treasurer in this state who has caused great angst, who has constantly been at war with everyone. I say to those investors: 'Don't give up on Queensland because this is a great state. It is just under very bad management at the moment.'

The choice at the next election will be clear: a rabble of a fourth term government in a constant state of chaos and crisis versus a strong and united team, hungry and ambitious to serve Queensland; a government seeking 14 years in office not willing to admit the crises they have created versus a fresh and focused team that has the ability to listen and plan for the future; a Labor government desperate to scare Queenslanders one more time versus an LNP team offering hope over fear.

### Liberal National Party, Performance



**Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment) (2.05 pm): Of all the weak, sad, sorry and pathetic efforts we have seen from the LNP under the leadership of the current leader, the LNP's performance in question time this morning absolutely takes the cake. Let's lay it out. The Leader of the Opposition has two things to do in question time: ask two questions. He had to rephrase his second question. The former deputy had to rephrase his question. The question by the shadow minister for health was ruled out of order. The question by the shadow Attorney-General—a 17-year veteran of the House—was ruled out of order. Then the member for Everton in the debate on the business motion could not be relevant and was sat down in his chair, and the Leader of the Opposition, in his set piece each week, could not even speak for 10 minutes.

People talk about having a question time strategy. It might have been question time but there sure was no strategy. We all heard about it last week. They sent the key words off to the focus groups. They were pumping in the gym: 'We're going to be ready. We're going to take on the government. The Leader of the Opposition is going to show people who's the boss.' They had the rocket ready to launch, except no-one put the fuel in it. Seriously, did the member for Glass House and the member for Kawana stop at KFC at Caboolture on the way down and write it on the back of a refresher toweltte? Is that what they did? Is that how they put their strategy together? If the LNP cannot run question time, they cannot run Queensland. If they cannot run question time for one hour, how can they possibly run Queensland for four years? It is not possible.


The Leader of the Opposition might want to watch his back literally because there was the member for Bonney with that scintillating question, asking the government: 'Why does the government govern?' That is what he asked. It is right up there with: how do magnets work and why is the member for Kawana like that? They are the sorts of questions we get from the Leader of the Opposition and the members opposite. The geniuses who came up with that strategy must be the same geniuses behind the new big bold policy—the intergenerational equity report. The date of 29 August 2023 is the day we found out that the commission of audit is coming back to Queensland. They do not even have to rely on Peter Costello. They can go to Josh Frydenberg. He is looking for some work at the moment. He was sacked from the federal parliament. How incompetent he was as the federal treasurer!

I will give the shadow front bench some credit. Unlike their leader and their deputy, they do tell the truth sometimes. Remember the member for Chatsworth coughed up. He identified \$2 billion worth of savings. The shadow Treasurer foreshadowed the debt reduction strategy. In the Far North when

the LNP was asked about the Cairns Hospital Innovation Precinct at least they were honest. They said, 'All options are on the table.' What does all of this mean? It is all going to be cut because that is what they do. They are not even ashamed of it. 'We support cuts, just not savage ones.' There is a reason the Leader of the Opposition said that in his first year and has never resiled from it, and that is because that is his policy. He has never apologised. He has never said he was misquoted. He never said the words were wrong. He said, 'We support cuts, just not savage ones.' Look out, Queensland, because that is the single policy platform of the Leader of the Opposition. The cuts will come.

They have a shiny new label for it—the intergenerational equity report—but it is the commission of audit 2.0. Didn't they love that at the time! Of course, sitting around the cabinet table was the Leader of the Opposition. That is where he learned his trade and his desire for cuts—at the foot of his mentor, Campbell Newman. What does it mean? It means: 14,000 public servants—we have not forgotten, nor has Queensland; 14,400 health workers—we have not forgotten, nor has Queensland; the Energy and Jobs Plan, scrapped; the health and hospital expansion program, scrapped; and the Moranbah Hospital, scrapped. That is what will happen under this Leader of the Opposition. Only the Palaszczuk Labor government has a serious economic plan for this state and its people, and we are the only party that the people of Queensland can trust to deliver for them.

### Palaszczuk Labor Government, Performance

 **Mr BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (2.10 pm): Isn't the Treasurer a little grumpy today! I think he is a little grumpy because he heard last night on the news that his boss had not read his big election-winning manifesto for the Labor Party. The Premier said, 'I haven't read it.' She does not care what the Treasurer thinks. She has no interest in what he thinks about his manifesto. She ripped his manifesto up and threw it down the toilet where it belongs.

I would say to our honourable Premier 'bentornato!' Welcome back from Italy, the Premier's second luxury European escape in a matter of months. This is on top of her heavy workload: visiting Paris for three weeks, cancelling cabinet to hang out with billionaires on superyachts, neglecting budget preparations because she was high-end shopping in Sydney, the glitz, the glamour, the parties, the concerts, the interstate music festivals. There is more chaos in this Labor government than turbulence on a 747 coming back from Italy. This government smells more rotten to the core than an Italiano pizza covered in truffle. The ringmaster of the circus has been away for two weeks, but haven't the clowns come out to play!

We have seen the chaos and crisis unfold in this government. Yesterday government leaks were quoted in the paper. 'A Labor MP'—not a Labor source—said, "Yes, there's talk about whether she should stay. There's always a bit of talk, but after the week we've had there's no mechanism to remove her and she wants to stay." That is one of them. Who is it? Who is the leaker? There are many leaks. Labor members, stand up and tell us who the leakers against the Premier are.

Talking about leaks, the LNP has been leaked Labor's Greatest Hits album titled *Chaos and Crisis*. There are special songs each minister wanted played on this album, and for the Deputy Premier it is *I Want to Break Free* by Queen—

I want to break free, I want to break free  
I want to break free from your lies  
You're so self-satisfied I don't need you  
I've got to break free  
God knows, God knows I want to break free

That was the Deputy Premier on show for the last two weeks. The health minister, who is interjecting, requested *Six Months in a Leaky Boat* by Split Enz—

I just spent six months in a leaky boat  
Lucky just to keep afloat

...

So why should it stop me  
I'll conquer and stay ...

Colleagues, guess whose song this is: Carly Simon's *You're so Vain*—

You're so vain  
You probably think this song is about you.

Whose song would that be? Who has requested that? It is Treasurer Cameron Dick's song—a guy so arrogant that he looks down on people and polishes the chandeliers with his nose. That is how arrogant that man is. *You're so Vain*, Cameron Dick.

We had a mystery song on this album. It was from my old favourite Shannon Noll, *What About Me*—

"What about me, it isn't fair  
I've had enough ...

Whose song is that? It could be Minister Mark Bailey because he was absent for about two weeks. He did come out at the eleventh hour just before the Premier got back from her second luxury European getaway. He had to apologise again for a 'Bailey bungle'.


I have not forgotten the honourable Labor members from the backbench. They have collectively voted on their song, *Change in Mood*—

Now my eyes are open wide  
Fear in voice, I remember  
Change in mood  
I could sense it  
Changing every day

That is what the backbench says about the Labor Party.

The chaos and crisis is not to be underestimated: it is real. The Labor Party has stopped governing. They are rotten to the core. They have stopped listening; they have stopped caring. The only way to fix these issues in Queensland is to show Labor the door in 2024.

### Kindergarten

 **Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for Education, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing) (2.15 pm): I tell you what, Leader of the Opposition: to give up five minutes for that is a description of the opposition in this state. They honestly and truly gave up five minutes to talk about what they could be doing in this state, instead—

**A government member** interjected.

**Ms GRACE:** It was not even funny; I will take that interjection—using five minutes to quote songs. I really think those on the opposition backbench should be worried. If that is the best you can do then I say to you, 'You have nothing at all and are desperate to scare', and I use the words of the Leader of the Opposition. On this side of the House we will not let you get away with twisting the truth and propagating misinformation out there in the community.

When it comes to free kindy, it has not even started and already they are talking about a crisis. That is absolutely ridiculous and untrue. We want those 8,000 children not currently enrolled to enrol in kindy. It does not help to send out information when it has not even commenced. We started kindy for all this year. We have been working on this program with stakeholders for the last couple of years. We have worked with them on workforce challenges. We have worked with stakeholders who were all there when the budget announcement was made, and not one of them expressed concerns about being able to accommodate kindy for all or free kindy in 2024. What do we hear from them? Cheap political pointscore due to a slogan that has been invented, and every one of them over there parrot it every single time.

Let me tell you what the stakeholders have said. These are the facts, not the rubbish and nonsense being pedalled by those opposite. Early Learning and Care Council of Australia CEO Elizabeth Deeth commends the significant work our government is doing to build and retain a quality and valued early learning workforce. C&K CEO Sandra Cheeseman—

**An opposition member:** Guarantee it.

**Ms GRACE:** I will guarantee it. CEO Sandra Cheeseman said—

At C&K we are ready and excited for free kindy. We know there are staffing issues in some areas, but we are confident the work we are doing in partnership with the department and the broader sector will address these issues.

I was asked whether I will guarantee that free kindy will happen in 2024. I want to ask those opposite whether they can guarantee that they are going to fund it. I get an inkling here of maybe a few cuts happening with free kindy and using the teacher as an excuse in relation to doing it—making up an issue when there is not an issue there. Listen to the stakeholders. The president of the Australian

Childcare Alliance, Majella Fitzsimmons, said that they are ready and they know how important this is for families and children, yet those opposite mislead, misinform and twist the truth. They are the facts. We will not allow those opposite to scaremonger those families who deserve to have free kindy.

We have also assisted with the numbers in early child care. We have provided additional kindy programs in 65 long day care centres and we are looking forward. I fear that this program may be cut by those opposite. This is the start of the cuts. They have a track record. It is only a Palaszczuk Labor government that will ensure that free kindy remains in this state. What do we see from those opposite? We see absolutely nothing. They have the audacity—they have got more front than Myer—to come in here and say that all the programs and all the issues that we have are their ideas. I suppose free kindy was their idea too. They say that everything was their idea, yet there is nothing coming from them policywise. They are a vacuum and they are not fit to govern.

### **Palaszczuk Labor Government, Integrity**



**Mr NICHOLLS** (Clayfield—LNP) (2.21 pm): I want to raise an important issue. It is an important issue for integrity in government, especially for the Palaszczuk Labor government. As we all know and as Queenslanders are finding out, their integrity record is shameful and has been burnt and tarnished. It is also important for the parliamentary privilege of this place. Tomorrow in the High Court it is judgement day. It is judgement day in the matter of Carne and the CCC, and it is judgement day as a result in relation to the matter of Trad and the CCC.

Let us remember the background. Peter Carne—a Labor mate appointed by the former and now recycled Labor Attorney-General to the position of Public Trustee—was subject to a CCC investigation as a result of whistleblower complaints. That investigation was completed by the CCC and resulted in a show cause notice being issued to Mr Carne. Mr Carne then stayed in office for almost a year and received almost a year's worth of salary. The allegations included unauthorised travel, unauthorised education expenses and allegations of drunkenness at work, being absent without leave, bullying and conflicts of interest.

Let us talk about the Trad matter—a matter so sensitive that a Supreme Court order was made preventing the existence of the investigation itself being disclosed. That investigation was into the circumstances surrounding the appointment of probably the second highest public servant in the state of Queensland—that is, the Under Treasurer of the state of Queensland. These are two major CCC investigations into Labor luminaries, both of whom are so afraid of the antiseptic power of the sunlight that they have remarkably tried to stop the publication in this House of the reports of the independent Crime and Corruption Commission watchdog into those matters.


Let us not forget that Ms Trad's legal fees are being met by the taxpayers. Despite relentless questioning of the now health minister when she was attorney-general, Queenslanders are no clearer on how much is being paid to Ms Trad's lawyers to take this action. We do know that over half a million dollars has been spent in taking this matter to the High Court to prosecute the CCC's claim in terms of making sure that the sunlight gets in. We know what the chair of the CCC, Mr Barbour, says: 'The CCC and its predecessors have regularly reported on the outcomes of and lessons learned from corruption investigations.' Clearly, there are very significant ramifications from this court case.

The purpose of these reports that have been tabled in here as a matter of practice, procedure and regularity in the past is to raise the standard of integrity and conduct in units of public administration. Let us take some of those reports—the fake Tahitian prince; the Palm Island inquiries; the misconduct at the University of Queensland; the transparency in local government, including Paul Pisasale and the Ipswich City Council; the investigation into the Premier's former chief of staff, David Barbagallo; the investigation into Merri Rose back in the day; the investigation into Gordon Nuttall back in the day; and the investigation into the mangocube affair back in the day.

These are all matters where the CCC have provided reports that have served to improve integrity in this state. These are now two matters where two Labor luminaries—one of whom was a former deputy premier and former member of the Parliamentary Crime and Corruption Committee, I might say—have sought to stifle the reporting and have sought to block investigation. Two outcomes seem possible: either the CCC will prevail in the High Court and the practice that has been accepted and adopted in this place over many years will be confirmed and Queenslanders will see what happened in those two very significant matters, or in fact that will not be the decision and there will be some variation and we will see integrity in Queensland take another blow under the Palaszczuk Labor government.

The Palaszczuk Labor government have been remarkably quiet in all of this. They have not come out and said, 'We will fix this.' In fact, when asked directly in estimates about it, they refused to say whether they would amend the legislation to allow these reports to be made public. Will this government act to maintain integrity in this state or will they be complicit in the cover-up? Will the integrity inferno engulfing this government continue? Will the chaos and crisis distract them? Tomorrow is truly Labor's judgement day in Queensland.

### Cost of Living; Community Support

 **Mr KELLY** (Greenslopes—ALP) (2.26 pm): I want to assure this House and the people of Greenslopes that members on this side of the House are united, we support the Premier 1,000 per cent and we are focused on serving our communities. We are focused on creating a Queensland we can all be proud of. When people in my community talk about fear and hope, they fear that mob ever getting back in and they hope it never, ever happens.

I recently shared 30 days of social media posts highlighting what the recent state budget means for my community and for building my community. It was 30 days of highlighting things that are making a real difference in my community. Imagine if the LNP had tried to do that during their mercifully short time in government. It would have gone like this: day 1, let us build a big building for ourselves; day 2, crickets; day 3, crickets. I will not go on but we know where day 30 ends: crickets. Imagine if instead of posting our positive messages I had spent my time each day posting just another message about the damage these guys did the last time they were in office. I would have needed a lot more than 30 days.

**Ms Pease** interjected.

**Mr KELLY:** We would have 30 days just in Lytton. This year's budget tackled the No. 1 problem on the minds of people in my community—and that is cost of living. This included: free kindy; electricity rebates; energy efficient appliance rebates; and support for nursing students—something I am very happy about. We are tackling those issues. The Premier and the Treasurer know this is a big challenge for Queensland, and that is why we are taking real action to help Queenslanders.

What did the LNP do about the cost of living the last time they were in government? It is pretty hard to respond to the cost-of-living pressures when you are sacked, when your income is cut out from underneath you and when your electricity prices go up by 43 per cent. On our side of the House, we build community by investing in business and training. I am really proud of the Skilling Queenslanders for Work programs that are running in my electorate at Vision Australia, at Career Employment Australia and at the Institute of Culinary Excellence. I see graduates from those programs right here in Parliament House.

Guess what those on that side of the House did? They cut Skilling Queenslanders for Work. There are so many business basics grants in my electorate that I had difficulty contacting every person who received one, but they all said the same thing: 'These grants are helping my business to grow and helping me to employ people.' I can tell the House what damage those folk on the other side did. It is pretty hard to trade through that when thousands and thousands of people are sacked causing damage to the economy.

If you are going to build community, you better back community groups. If I look at the 30 days, I can see organisations like Lifeline, Kids Helpline, Stepping Stone Clubhouse, the World Wellness Group, BestLife Foundation, the Woodturners Society of Queensland, indelabilityarts, Share the Dignity and 4MBS Classic—all receiving help and assistance. What did the LNP government do to community groups last time they were in power? They defunded them and they gagged them.


Let's get onto education because if you are going to build community, you have to invest in education. I will not go through the list, but Whites Hill State College and Holland Park State High are getting \$30 million of investment. That is on top of all the investment that has gone into every other school in my electorate. The last time the LNP were in government, they did not build anything; in fact, we got a negative-one school, really, because they announced a hall at Cavendish Road High School and then Campbell Newman took it away and moved it over to Ashgrove. That was a negative-one. If you went a little bit further than just my electorate, it would be a negative-a-lot-more because they actually shut schools.

Coorparoo Bowls Club, Easts Rugby Club, Holland Park Bowls Club—we are investing in sports infrastructure. There is investment in Cross River Rail. If the opposition had been in government, we would not have the Olympics because we would not have Cross River Rail. I could spend another five minutes talking about the damage they did in health. However, we are increasing capacity at QEII and we are increasing the capacity at PA Hospital.

People have a clear choice. They have a choice for a Palaszczuk Labor government that is creating the Queensland that we all believe in, working hard every day for the people here, or they can vote for an LNP that is going to sack, cut and sell. They have no policy. They just want to do light cuts and they want to cave in on mining royalties and they will not explain how they are going to pay for anything. The choice is clear.

*(Time expired)*

### Water Security

 **Mrs FRECKLINGTON** (Nanango—LNP) (2.31 pm): I tell you what an LNP government will do and that would be plan for the future of water security for this great state. We would plan for Seqwater to meet the demands of the population growth that are coming our way. We would spend 10 years doing something, rather than doing what those opposite have done—sitting on their hands. Queenslanders are looking down the barrel of water restrictions. We have Wivenhoe Dam sitting at 70 per cent and predicted within the next two years to be down to 50 per cent. We know that that means more restrictions for people in South-East Queensland. One might ask why we got here? How did we get here? The last time there was a plan for water was back in 2013, and that was by the former LNP government. Then what did these jokers opposite do when they got in? They just ripped it up. There was a plan for the future. What have they done? Simply nothing. Nearly a decade later, we have no more infrastructure and no plans for infrastructure. Any ideas as to where the water will come from are not even on the table.

All the leaks that are coming to us, especially from Seqwater—and we know that Sunwater are leaking to our side as well—the leaks from the people of Seqwater and the information that is coming to us says they are sick of a tired government that is so riddled with chaos and crisis that they cannot even plan for people to have drinking water when the Olympics will be here.

**Mr McDonald:** They want dams.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** I will take that interjection. They do want dams. The Deputy Premier talks big about population projections with 2.2 million or more people calling South-East Queensland home by 2046, taking the population to six million, but we have not seen even an iota of a plan to go towards giving those people water. Looking at those opposite, their heads are down because they know that they have done absolutely nothing when it comes to building any form of water infrastructure for South-East Queensland. We know that when—

**Mr Healy** interjected.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I take personal offence. I ask that that be withdrawn. That is pretty ordinary behaviour.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Martin): I am not sure who that was. Member for Cairns, will you withdraw?

**Mr HEALY:** Withdraw the yawn?

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Cairns, will you withdraw?

**Mr HEALY:** I withdraw.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** I know I have taken up a lot of my time talking about water for South-East Queensland and the restrictions that are coming, but it is because this inept, incapable government are unable to plan for the future water security for the south-east corner. There will be no more water infrastructure. They did not even think to perhaps increase dam capacity. No wonder when you have members like the member for Cairns, who will soon be replaced by the wonderful Yolonde Entsch up in Cairns, because they do not have any plans for water in Far North Queensland either. The business case was made so difficult. They tried to say that you had to pay for a dam—sorry, a dam's life would only go over, I think it was, 20 or 25 years. No wonder the incompetent, inept Palaszczuk Labor government are so riddled with chaos and confusion, they cannot even realise and no wonder infrastructure will not be built under those projections. Let's bring on Yolonde Entsch in Cairns because the behaviour of the member for Cairns is absolutely showing.

We know it is unfortunate that Brisbane and the south-east corner could possibly be under water restrictions in a very short period of time—hopefully not. What is the solution of the Palaszczuk government? They have decided the solution is to put ads on the back of buses. We know that that was going to be the solution before we thankfully had a fair bit of rain over last summer, but it is obvious—

**Mr Walker:** Have some water.


**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order!

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** Excuse me. Thank you.

**Mr Crisafulli:** It is in short supply.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** I will be careful with how much water I do drink because we know that it is in short supply. I will take the leader's interjection in relation to that. No wonder there are so many leaks coming from the backbench in relation to the chaos and confusion of this government. They know in regards to their Brisbane seats, if and when water restrictions come into place, they will be the ones who will be answerable to their electorate when they know that no planning has been done and nothing has been built. That is why we need an LNP government.

### Health System

 **Ms LAUGA** (Keppel—ALP) (2.36 pm): Every day in Queensland Health, over 6,100 people present to an emergency department, over 12,000 people receive care as an inpatient, 25,000 people receive community mental health care, almost 3,100 calls are made to triple 0 for an ambulance, and 127 babies are delivered. Above all, there are over 100,000 Queenslanders working hard to look after all of us. They are caring for our kids, our brothers, our sisters, our parents, our grandparents, our friends and our loved ones. The people of Queensland Health are heroes in every sense of the word and deserve our gratitude and respect.

However, Queenslanders will never forget that both the member for Mudgeeraba and the member for Broadwater sat around the cabinet table with Campbell Newman and took an axe to Queensland Health, slashing \$1.6 billion from its budget. In fact, 40 per cent of the LNP's front bench sat around that cabinet table.

In Central Queensland alone, 197 doctors, nurses and healthcare workers were sacked by the LNP from our hospitals. Under Campbell Newman and the member for Broadwater, the LNP sacked 4,400 healthcare workers across the state, including 1,800 nurses and midwives. They went to war with the doctors, attacking their pay and conditions, all while spending \$500,000 a fortnight paying contractors and consultants. They also cut the graduate intake to record lows and axed nursing and midwifery support and education.

Shockingly, Campbell Newman, the member for Broadwater and the LNP were the first government in Queensland's history to cut funding from mental health. They cut \$45 million in their first year and gave Queensland the lowest per capita staffing levels in the country.

In 2015, Queenslanders trusted our government to rebuild our health system and that is exactly what we have done. We have hired almost 19,000 frontline health workers and we have delivered thousands of new beds. The Palaszczuk government continues to deliver a world-class health system for our community. We have delivered record upon record health budget every year since we came to government and we are continuing to do that with—

**Mr Head** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. Member for Callide, the member on their feet is not taking interjections. I have warned you before. I am giving you an official warning under the standing orders.

**Ms LAUGA:** I would love to know what the member for Callide thought about the LNP sacking 197 healthcare workers from the Central Queensland Hospital and Health Service—197 healthcare workers from the hospitals that serve our communities in Central Queensland. We are continuing to deliver record budgets with \$24.15 billion operational funding in this financial year alone, which is a 9.6 per cent increase. Already over 1,000 healthcare workers have expressed interest in the Workforce Attraction Incentive Scheme, which provides interstate health practitioners up to \$20,000 to move to Queensland and up to \$70,000 for doctors. I look forward to the boots hitting the ground in regional, remote and rural Queensland including in the electorate of Callide and across Central Queensland where we desperately need more healthcare workers, not fewer.

The Palaszczuk government's progressive coal royalties are delivering better health services for regional communities. I support progressive coal royalties, as does everyone on this side of the chamber and as does the majority of my community. Progressive coal royalties means that the royalties generated from our resources—Queenslanders' resources—go back into good jobs, better services and a great lifestyle. Progressive coal royalties are providing better and easier access to medical care for regional Queenslanders with a \$3.619 billion boost. Coal royalties are helping build, upgrade and expand hospitals across regional Queensland.



I would like to know whether the member for Callide supports progressive coal royalties which are building, upgrading and expanding regional hospitals, increasing treatment spaces and improving patient services. Does the member for Callide support the progressive coal royalties? Do those opposite support progressive coal royalties, because these progressive coal royalties are funding \$48 million for the new Moranbah Hospital, \$250 million for the Cairns Hospital expansion, \$250 million for the Mackay Base Hospital expansion—and I could go on.

Whilst the member for Burleigh has confirmed in this place that the LNP does not support progressive coal royalties, the rest of those opposite refuse to take a stance. All we have heard thus far is evasion, vagueness and ambivalence from the LNP. I am sure those opposite have made clear their position against progressive coal royalties behind closed doors with the Resources Council and multinational coal companies which, mind you, have all reported massive profits. I ask the question again: does the LNP support progressive coal royalties, which are delivering over \$7 billion to Queensland? Would the LNP keep our progressive coal royalties?

For so long as there is a Labor government in this state we will keep progressive coal royalties; we will invest in our healthcare workers and our hospitals; and we will invest in the health care of all Queenslanders no matter where they live.

### Property Developers



**Dr MacMAHON** (South Brisbane—Grn) (2.41 pm): The Brisbane LNP council have recently announced they are cutting infrastructure charges for property developers by as much 75 per cent, ripping up to \$30 million from essential public infrastructure and putting it into the pockets of property developers. This is money that we desperately need for parks, buses, bike lanes, libraries, ferry terminals and accessibility upgrades for public spaces. The state Labor government's cap on infrastructure charges already means that local councils are struggling to get the money they need, but this move by the LNP council will mean fast-growing Brisbane neighbourhoods will go without the public infrastructure they desperately need.

The LNP council have made it abundantly clear that they do not work for everyday people; they work for the property developers. Showering property developers with free money will not fix the housing crisis. There is a wealth of evidence showing that handouts for property developers do not create more housing. Rather, these handouts are added to the profits of property developers and drive up the amount of money that developers are willing to pay for land. Higher land values drive up rent and mortgages and are a barrier to new construction.

If allowing open season for property developers was actually going to deliver affordable housing across Queensland, we would already have it but we do not. We know that private property developers and land bankers will hold back supply until the timing is just right and they will make the most amount of money they possibly can. In pouring money into the pockets of developers, Labor and the LNP are guaranteeing that the housing bubble will just continue to grow. Property developers and land bankers are profiting from sitting on unused land and empty houses for years on end, because it is more profitable to wait for prices to go up than to build and sell today. There are hundreds of approved developments waiting to be built right across Queensland that developers are just sitting on and there are as many as 87,000 homes that are empty right across Queensland.

There is really not much more red tape that we could be cutting for property developers. In the year Labor wrote this Planning Act, they took over \$250,000 in donations from property developers and it shows; we have a planning system that is written by property developers for property developers. Labor and the LNP are little more than the parliamentary wing of the real estate lobby of this state.

This latest round of developer boot licking from the Brisbane City Council will only make things worse. We need new parks so that people living in apartments have somewhere they can go for a run, to teach their kids to ride a bike or to play soccer on the weekends. We need free and frequent public transport so that people can easily get to and from work and school. Instead, ordinary people are paying an arm and a leg to sit in buses that are sitting in traffic. We need active transport infrastructure so people can walk and ride where they need to go.


Way back in 2020 the state government promised that South Brisbane would be getting some new bike lanes; we are still waiting. We are still waiting for the completed river walk. The Palaszczuk Labor government cannot even complete a set of bike lanes on Vulture Street. How do we expect them to do something big like the Gabba redevelopment or the Olympics if they cannot do something as basic as this for a local community? They cannot deliver on these most basic bits of infrastructure, but

they are willing to tip billions of dollars into the Olympics—\$2.7 billion into a community-wrecking Gabba redevelopment, opening up our neighbourhoods to property developers who are salivating over the amount of money they will make from our neighbourhoods due to the Olympics. Labor will be handing over hectares of public land in Olympic precincts to private developers and now, thanks to a combined effort from the LNP and Labor, these developers will be contributing next to nothing to essential infrastructure that we really need. Every Olympic host city has seen rents go up, house prices go up, rampant property development, gentrification and people displaced from their neighbourhoods but Labor does not seem to care.

Cutting infrastructure charges will not deliver affordable housing, but Labor and the LNP do not want affordable housing. They do not want to stop unlimited rent increases. They do not want to introduce mandatory inclusionary zoning. They do not want to tax investors who leave homes empty. They do not want to limit Airbnb and short-term accommodation and they do not want to build enough public housing because affordability for renters, first home buyers or people with a mortgage means less profit for the banks, property developers and landlords.

Former Queensland Labor leader Anna Bligh is now the chief executive of the banking lobby. It is a joke to think that either of the major parties would be willing to stand up to these powerful interests, to their mates, to their donors, to their very own MPs. There is not a revolving door between the major parties and the corporate boardrooms; they are the very same thing.

### PCYC Queensland

 **Ms LUI** (Cook—ALP) (2.46 pm): The Palaszczuk government recently announced a \$56 million funding investment to support PCYC Queensland for the construction of new PCYC facilities or the upgrades of existing facilities in the state. I am absolutely thrilled that Mareeba on the tablelands and Aurukun in Cape York will both benefit from this funding boost. I have been working closely with PCYC in both locations over a number of years and am in full support of the work they do in these communities to make a positive impact on the lives of young people in the region.

Queensland PCYC is the leading charity organisation providing youth and community programs, services and facilities across the state. In my electorate of Cook their presence is having a long-lasting impact on the young people who utilise their service. PCYC offers programs and activities that engage young people in a safe and positive environment and encourages positive social interactions with PCYC staff and volunteers. Most importantly, it gives young people the opportunity to interact with each other in a positive and meaningful way. As a parent, I think we all want opportunities for our children to engage in extracurricular activities that would enable them to make friends, develop social and team-building skills and build self-confidence all while being part of a community.

Not all young people have opportunities to engage in sporting clubs to help them grow positive skills that would carry them into adulthood. I want to highlight that for many regional and remote communities, opportunities to engage in sporting clubs are often limited. So the idea of involving young people in extracurricular activities is somewhat unrealistic, and this is a huge deficit for young people living in Cook. This is why I support the work of PCYC, because they fill the void in some communities by providing a service that allows young people to realise their full potential and support positive behaviours into the future.

Mareeba will receive \$5 million to build a brand new PCYC facility and Aurukun in Cape York will receive \$1 million to upgrade the existing facility in the community. I acknowledge the work of sergeant Mary-Anne West in Mareeba, as well as sergeant Steve and his wife Norma, for the wonderful work that they do to support young people in these communities.

It is important that we have services and that we provide investment to support local initiatives that engage young people, to build them into strong individuals into the future. I think giving them a positive start by providing access to positive programs and an opportunity for them to be around other kids and make friends is an important part of growth and development for many young people right across the state. It is no different for the communities that I look after. In the current climate and all of the different issues relating to how we work with young people in this state, I think this is a positive announcement that will influence and build young people for tomorrow. I hope that the investment will have a long-lasting effect on these young people in that it will enable them to make better decisions for themselves. Again, I acknowledge the great work of PCYCs in my electorate, the work of volunteers throughout the region and the community for their support for such a wonderful local initiative.

**Disability Royal Commission, Recommendations**

**Ms CAMM** (Whitsunday—LNP) (2.51 pm): On 27 May 2020, at around 7.20 am, the Queensland Ambulance Service attended a home where they found a man in cardiac arrest and two young men who were locked in a room, naked and with no bedroom furnishings. Police also attended the home that day and they observed faeces on the floor of the spare bedroom and the main bedroom. The two young boys' bedroom was completely bare, with door handles removed, and the two boys were unclothed. These two boys we now know as Kaleb and Jonathon. They were admitted to hospital on that day—27 May—and were discharged more than 10 days later, on 10 June. They were diagnosed with severe malnutrition.

Through the Disability Royal Commission, we now know the real story of more than two decades in the lives of these young men. The findings state that the state of Queensland, through the departments and agencies that engaged with Kaleb, Jonathon and Paul Barrett, could have—and should have—done more to prevent Kaleb and Jonathon from experiencing violence, abuse, neglect and the deprivation of their human rights having regard to the particular department or agency's powers and responsibilities. Those departments and the ministers responsible over those two decades include Education, Housing, Queensland Police, Health and Child Safety.

The LNP acknowledges that it held power in this state for almost five of the 20 years and the Leader of the Opposition has made an apology to Kaleb and Jonathon. That does not take away, though, this government's effort to prevent a proper investigation into the system and departmental failings—as evidenced by the Disability Royal Commission. What we have come to learn through the findings of the royal commission was that back in 2020, on 20 August, the then attorney-general, Shannon Fentiman, withheld full details within a QFCC report that was provided to the royal commission. We then discovered that on 2 October, the then attorney-general, Yvette D'Ath, to avoid scrutiny—there was an upcoming election some several days later—decided and informed the principal commissioner that she would not refer certain matters outlined in the QFCC terms of reference to undertake a full review. This was almost three years ago. It speaks to the government's protection of its own reputation, not the protection of children.

According to the latest figures, released in March, there are 1,700 children in residential care. We do not know how many children are in residential care today. Fifty per cent of those children have a disability. I have zero confidence in any minister who has overseen the failings of the system that was set up to protect Jonathon, Kaleb and the many thousands of children who are in our child safety system. The government's announcement today is a little too late. It took a royal commission, the opposition calling for over a week, community outcry and disability advocates reaching out to the LNP to support our call for an independent review.

The Ombudsman's findings from the review that will be undertaken need to be publicly released. There needs to be accountability. Over the course of this royal commission and for the past three years there has been silence from multiple ministers of this government and the Premier. It is not just chaos and crisis—that does not even sum it up. Those words do not even come close to what those two young boys endured for two decades of their life. This is a cover-up. This is about a government that is more interested in protecting its own image and brand than it is in protecting vulnerable children and children with disabilities in this state.

**HEALTH PRACTITIONER REGULATION NATIONAL LAW (SURGEONS)  
AMENDMENT BILL****Second Reading**

Resumed from p. 2527, on motion of Ms Fentiman—

That the bill be now read a second time.



**Mr SKELTON** (Nicklin—ALP) (2.56 pm), continuing: The bill aligns with the recommendation from the decision regulation impact statement. Consideration was given to ensure the right balance was reached between the rights and interests of practitioners and the safety of the public. With changes to the title of 'surgeon' in the national law, the bill responds to findings and recommendations on the regulation of cosmetic surgery in Australia and the strong need to strengthen title protections under the national law. As the host of the national law, it is our responsibility to make sure that our laws are meeting national standards. That is why passing this bill is so important.

The bill amends the national law to protect the title 'surgeon' within the medical profession. It does so by restricting which doctors can use the title 'surgeon'. It creates new criminal offences for doctors who unlawfully use the title 'surgeon' and do not have appropriate medical training. Queenslanders rely heavily upon what they are told by their doctor. Queenslanders trust that a doctor who calls themselves a surgeon or cosmetic surgeon has the training to go along with the title. This bill gives Queenslanders the confidence that their doctors are appropriately trained and qualified. It is about reducing harm to Queenslanders. The serious and lasting harms that have been experienced by some patients are heartbreaking and unacceptable.

Cosmetic procedures seek to revise or change the appearance, colour, texture, structure or position of normal body features to achieve a more desirable appearance. In other words, they are procedures performed for non-medical reasons. Cosmetic procedures can be surgical or non-surgical. Cosmetic surgery comprises procedures that involve cutting beneath the skin—breast augmentation, rhinoplasty and liposuction. This form of surgery is often described as invasive. Purely cosmetic surgical procedures do not attract a Medicare rebate. Some other procedures may, such as for people recovering from breast cancer and so forth. Cosmetic non-surgical procedures do not involve cutting beneath the skin, although they may involve piercing of the skin. They include varicose vein treatment, laser skin treatment, mole removal, chemical peels and injections. These procedures are often described as non-invasive.

Cosmetic injectables, or injections, refer to prescription-only injectable medicines for cosmetic purposes. There are state requirements relating to permits, supply, storage and transport of these medicines. Cosmetic procedures are different than reconstructive surgery and other medical procedures. Reconstructive surgery is that which restores the form and function as well as normality of appearance. It may incorporate aesthetic techniques to restore normal appearance. Unlike cosmetic procedures, reconstructive surgery may be performed in a public hospital and attract, at least partially, a Medicare rebate.

Over the past year there have been a litany of appalling stories about poor practices in the cosmetic surgery industry, with permanent damage done to untold numbers of Queenslanders. Recent reviews across Australia showed the strong need to protect the title of 'surgeon' under the national law. During consultation, consumer surveys revealed that 237 respondents reported harm because of dodgy cosmetic procedures. We have heard heartbreaking stories from real-life people about practitioners inadequately prepared for emergencies to poor hygiene and infection control. The damage on some people's lives can be irreversible. These atrocious harms are the reason why we need to strengthen the definition of 'surgeon'.


Currently cosmetic surgery is not an approved speciality. This means that any medical practitioner may market themselves as a cosmetic or aesthetic surgeon even if they do not have the appropriate qualifications. Cosmetic procedures that are not performed by appropriately qualified practitioners are putting lives at risk and, in some cases, causing permanent harm. Ahpra and the Medical Board of Australia have already cracked down on advertising and social media used to promote cosmetic surgery. The amendments in this bill will give Ahpra powers to take action if the title 'surgeon' is misused or consumers are misled about the qualifications of their practitioner. It is about making sure Queenslanders are protected from predatory practitioners claiming to have qualifications beyond their scope. The vast majority of doctors are doing the right thing. They are hard working, principled and act with the best interests in their patients in mind. These reforms are about protecting Queenslanders from unnecessary harm.

With regard to the impact on rural medicine, this bill has been a result of extensive efforts and consultation. The amendments within this bill aim to safeguard the title 'surgeon' within the medical profession while balancing the expectations Queenslanders have of medical care and practitioners. We must ensure that those who bear this title possess the advanced surgical training required to do so. We have heard stories from patients who have faced devastating consequences, including health complications, financial burdens and emotional distress. Recent cases highlight the dire need for regulation. For instance, a Sydney doctor with limited surgical training performed a procedure resulting in cardiac complications due to inadequate preparation and equipment. We cannot allow this to continue.

Medical practitioners holding a specialist registration in surgery, obstetrics and gynaecology or ophthalmology are included in the definition of 'surgical class' as they have undergone extensive and accredited surgical training. Practitioners in these specialties often practice complex surgery as part of their normal scope of practice. Although rural generalists are not included in the initial scope of the

surgical classes, the bill has been drafted to minimise any impact on the provision of rural medicine. While rural GPs will not be able to use the title 'surgeon', their Medicare reimbursements and scope of practice will not be impacted or limited by these amendments.

We know that many doctors are professional. Still, deceptive practices by a minority jeopardise Queenslanders' trust and wellbeing. The bill seeks to prevent such misrepresentation, safeguarding Queenslanders' trust in the medical profession and the health of Queenslanders. I thank the health department, the health minister, the Health and Environment Committee and the parliamentary staff for their work on this bill. I would imagine that they would have seen some quite confronting things. I commend this bill to the House.

 **Ms PEASE** (Lytton—ALP) (3.04 pm): I rise to speak to the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law (Surgeons) Amendment Bill 2023. This bill responds to findings and recommendations into the regulation of cosmetic surgery in Australia and the strong need to strengthen title protections under the national law. With Queensland as the host of the national law, it is our responsibility to make sure our laws are meeting national standards. That is why the passing of this bill is so important. The bill amends the national law to protect the title 'surgeon' within the medical profession. It does so by restricting which doctors can use the title 'surgeon'. The objectives of the bill are to protect the title 'surgeon' within the medical profession to safeguard the public and strengthen the regulation of cosmetic surgery in Australia and to clarify the decision-making authority of tribunals after hearing a matter about a registered health practitioner.

Over the past year there has been a litany of appalling stories about poor practices in the cosmetic surgery industry with permanent damage done to untold numbers of Queenslanders, and this morning we have heard from both sides of the House some examples of these appalling behaviours. Recent reviews across Australia showed the strong need to protect the title of 'surgeon' under the national law. During consultation, consumer surveys revealed that 237 respondents reported harm because of dodgy cosmetic procedures. We have heard those heartbreaking stories from real-life people—from practitioners inadequately prepared for emergencies to poor hygiene and infection control. The damage on people's lives can be irreversible. These atrocious harms are the reason why we need to strengthen the definition of 'surgeon'.

Currently, cosmetic surgery is not an approved speciality. This means that any medical practitioner may market themselves as a cosmetic or aesthetic surgeon, even if they do not have the appropriate qualifications. Sadly, there is a growing trend to undergo cosmetic or aesthetic procedures and that means that potentially the community is unknowingly putting themselves at risk. It is understandable that the title of 'surgeon' would offer comfort to those who have chosen to undertake cosmetic or aesthetic procedures. This bill will ensure this will be an offence for medical practitioners who are not members of a defined surgical class or for those who recklessly hold themselves out as being members of the surgical class by using the title 'surgeon' or the use of another title, name, initial, symbol, word or description that could reasonably indicate that the practitioner is in the surgical class, and that will also apply to employees and other persons.

Cosmetic procedures that are not performed appropriately by qualified practitioners are putting lives at risk and in some cases can cause permanent harm. Ahpra and the Medical Board of Australia have already cracked down on advertising and social media used to promote cosmetic surgery. The amendments in this bill will give Ahpra powers to take action if the title 'surgeon' is misused or consumers are misled about the qualifications of their chosen practitioner. It is about making sure Queenslanders are protected from predatory practitioners claiming to have qualifications beyond their scope. The vast majority of doctors do the right thing. They are hard working, principled and act with the very best interests of patients in mind.

As members of parliament, each of us in this room has a responsibility to make sure Queenslanders are safe and to consider matters that impact on our community and to work to improve the lives of all Queenslanders. Just like doctors and surgeons, the public expects parliamentarians to conduct themselves in a manner appropriate to the important work that we do. That is why I have been absolutely appalled by the disgraceful behaviour of those opposite this week. The nastiness, personal attacks and divisions have reached a disturbing new level. This is my workplace. I do not and nor should I have to work in an environment where this behaviour is tolerated. My constituents expect me to ensure that they are safe and that I represent Lytton in a fair and respectful manner and that I conduct myself in a manner that would be acceptable at the Waterloo Bay Leisure Centre in Wynnum or the Wynnum or Manly bowls clubs. Unfortunately, that cannot be said of those opposite. Like my colleagues who have stood before me, I support the Premier and our government because we will continue to deliver and offer great representation in Queensland. These reforms are about protecting Queenslanders—

**Mr POWELL:** Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise on a point of order: relevance to the long title of the bill.

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms Bush): Order! I will take advice in silence. Member for Lytton, I ask you to come back to the long title or to the substance of the report.

**Ms PEASE:** Thank you very much, Madam Deputy Speaker. I appreciate your guidance. I am surprised that it took them so long to get there because they do not like to hear the truth.

**Mr Minnikin** interjected.

**Ms PEASE:** I reiterate: I am not taking interjections but I am reinforcing my comments about their poor behaviour. That is an example of poor behaviour.

**Opposition members** interjected.


**Ms PEASE:** Again, I reinforce my comments. That is a disgraceful display. Do I have to stand up and behave like a mother?

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order, members! Member for Lytton, I ask you to come back to the bill.

**Ms PEASE:** Thank you and I will, if the people opposite stop trying to interject and yell over the top of me. These reforms are about protecting from unnecessary harms those Queenslanders who choose aesthetic procedures. Again I call on those opposite to consider their actions and behaviour.

I would like to talk about the changes to 'surgical class' to include additional classes of medical practitioners, including rural generalists who are specialist GPs trained to provide context-appropriate skilled services in rural and remote areas. Their scope of practice is defined across primary, secondary and emergency care, including providing much needed surgical, obstetrics, gynaecological and other non-procedural advanced skills to Australia's rural and remote communities.

I was previously on the health committee. I acknowledge the work of the health committee. It was an honour to work with that committee on the many wonderful amendments and changes that have been introduced into Queensland. I thank the chair and the ministers who have looked after the health portfolio. I acknowledge the great work of the secretariat on this particular piece of legislation. I also thank the people who made submissions. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr LANGBROEK** (Surfers Paradise—LNP) (3.11 pm): I rise to speak on the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law (Surgeons) Amendment Bill 2023. It is interesting to follow the member for Lytton who said that politicians and parliamentarians should perform to the highest standards as we expect surgeons to do. That is interesting as she sits next to the member for Capalaba who, in the past week, questioned whether we have a crime crisis or whether it has been built up and then she is unhappy about interjections.

**Ms GRACE:** Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order on relevance.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you, member for McConnel. On relevance, I will bring you back to the bill, member for Surfers Paradise.

**Mr LANGBROEK:** I am always happy to respond to contributions made by those opposite. On 24 February 2023, Australian health ministers reached a consensus endorsing the proposed amendments outlined in the bill. We might call this a nip and tuck for the cosmetic industry.

These amendments primarily serve two key purposes. Firstly, the bill aims to enhance consumer protection by safeguarding the title 'surgeon'. This step is designed to strengthen the regulation and oversight of cosmetic surgery practices across the nation. The use of the word 'surgeon' has become increasingly common, causing confusion amongst patients who assume that all individuals using that title possess similar qualifications. As we have heard from others, including the shadow minister for health and member for Mudgeeraba, it should be noted that cosmetic surgeons are not plastic surgeons. Under the current law, anyone with a basic medical degree can call themselves a cosmetic surgeon. Plastic surgeons, on the other hand, have received at least 12 years of medical and surgical training.

I am pleased to see—and I acknowledge the contribution of the Health and Environment Committee—that the terms for 'dental surgeon', including 'dentist' and 'surgeon dentist', of which I am a registered non-practising member, have been excluded from being told that they cannot use those titles. Of course I consider that to be appropriate.

The Gold Coast has been dubbed the capital of cosmetic improvements. It has been home to a number of high-profile cases by surgeons known as 'cosmetic cowboys' whose procedures have put patients at risk. I acknowledge the contribution of the member for Mudgeeraba, who has had extensive experience in this area. We have seen publicised on *60 Minutes* and other programs stories about some of these issues. I refer to a news article from the *Gold Coast Bulletin* dated 24 April 2023 and titled 'Major changes coming for Queensland's cosmetic industry'. I table a copy of that article.

*Tabled paper:* Article from the *Gold Coast Bulletin*, dated 24 April 2023, titled 'Major changes coming for Queensland's cosmetic industry' [1316].

The article refers to Gold Coast cosmetic surgeon Dr Simon Rosenbaum who claimed to be an internationally recognised cosmetic surgeon but was found by QCAT to pose a serious risk of harm to people. The tribunal found that Mr Rosenbaum caused at least three patients actual harm, one of them permanent harm, as a result of poor post-operative care.

Concerns regarding the misuse of the term 'surgeon' by cosmetic practitioners were highlighted in the independent review led by the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency, Ahpra, titled *Independent review of the regulation of medical practitioners who perform cosmetic surgery*. The findings in this independent review had a significant impact that led to the state government reconsidering proposed changes aimed at lifting the ban on testimonial advertising. Those changes were part of the discussion surrounding amendments to the national law in the Queensland parliament in October 2022.

Secondly, the bill seeks to bring clarity to the decision-making authority of tribunals that handle matters related to registered health practitioners. While those changes are largely technical in nature, they are significant in streamlining the administrative processes that govern the oversight of healthcare practitioners.


Stakeholders have largely expressed their support for the bill. However, there were some divergent views. Of note, the Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine expressed apprehension that the changes fail to recognise the role of rural generalists, who can complete advanced skills training surgery and provide vital surgical services in remote, rural and regional Queensland. Presently, rural generalists are not accredited surgical specialists under the Australian Medical Council, or AMC. The profession is currently requesting the establishment of a separate accredited speciality through the AMC.

New research in June 2023 by the Australasian College of Cosmetic Surgery and Medicine suggested almost seven million Australians or 38 per cent of the adult population are considering undergoing cosmetic surgery in the next 10 years. With a projected increase in cosmetic procedures throughout our community, greater protections for patients is necessary and the opposition is not opposing the bill. I will table an interesting media release from the Australasian College of Cosmetic Surgery and Medicine that refers to the statistics I mentioned above.

*Tabled paper:* Media release, dated 18 June 2023, from the Australasian College of Cosmetic Surgery and Medicine, titled 'More than a third of Australians considering cosmetic surgery' [1317].

The article states that Queensland is the recovery state with more than half or 51 per cent of people undergoing cosmetic surgery to correct their appearance. That is partly due to Queensland having the highest rate of skin cancer in the world, suggesting that people are focused on repairing chronic skin damage. It also states that Queenslanders trust a medical recommendation when it comes to selecting a cosmetic surgeon, at 47 per cent, but that other things such as testimonials make a difference. That is why, as I understand it, these are issues that the health minister is also looking at. We have had some significant cases where doctors have written false testimonials and criticisms of surgeons. Obviously, it is extremely unethical to do that and they were subsequently penalised when what they were doing was found out.

Importantly, we want to ensure that we have faith in the quality of Australian trained doctors, dentists and other types of surgeons. Through my professional experience having practised in Surfers Paradise, England and Ashmore, I have seen dentistry that may have been done in other countries. Sometimes that is done based on price and the sorts of things that the member for Mudgeeraba mentioned, and repairs may need to be done back in our own country. Long after the price is forgotten, the quality of work done in other places may not remain.

 **Ms PUGH** (Mount Ommaney—ALP) (3.18 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law (Surgeons) Amendment Bill 2023. The committee report into this legislation unanimously recommended that the bill be passed. It has been great to hear that there is bipartisan support for the legislation from all speakers so far. In my view, this legislation certainly seeks to protect

Queenslanders from the rogue operators. Importantly, it also seeks to better educate Queenslanders about the qualifications someone should have if they are asking, as the member for Pumicestone put it so well, to lacerate your skin, to reshape your body by sucking some parts of it out or to break some of your bones. Members should make no mistake: this is really serious work that is being undertaken and that is why this legislation is so important.

The bill responds to findings and recommendations on the regulation of cosmetic surgery in Australia and to the need to strengthen protections under the national law. Members may recall that the committee had previously worked on this topic and deferred it for national consideration. We are back today strengthening these laws and restricting these titles. I commend the health committee for its ongoing work in this space, in conjunction with its federal counterparts.

As the committee report outlines, as cosmetic surgery is not an approved speciality under the national law any practitioner could have previously marketed themselves as a cosmetic surgeon—we now are seeing titles such as ‘aesthetic surgeon’ being used in the marketing materials—regardless of qualification or level of training. The committee report also notes that restricting use to only those who are appropriately trained and qualified allows the public to be confident that a health practitioner is registered under the national law and is therefore a competent and qualified person to carry out the work they are being asked to do.

As previous members have outlined, we heard in the committee hearings—many members will have seen those shocking media reports last year—firsthand accounts from people. It has to be said that so often those people were young women. Those stories were truly shocking. I recall watching last year some of the media reports about the after-effects following those surgeries and being incredibly appalled at what those young women endured and the conditions in which they were operated on. As the host of the national law, it is our responsibility to make sure our laws are meeting those national standards. As we all have outlined, that is why passing this bill is so important.

The bill ends the national law to protect the title ‘surgeon’ within the medical profession. It does so by restricting which doctors can use the title ‘surgeon’ and the specialist training they must have. It creates new criminal offences for doctors who have unlawfully used the title ‘surgeon’ but do not have the commensurate appropriate medical training. Queenslanders rely heavily upon what they are told by their doctor. I believe it was the member for Glass House who said that the medical profession is imbued with a high level of trust. When people hear that a medical professional has a particular title, they are generally inclined to trust that. It is incumbent on us as lawmakers to ensure that people can put their trust in those medical professionals and know that they have a commensurate skill set. If somebody calls themselves a surgeon or a cosmetic surgeon, they should have the appropriate training that goes with that title. This bill can give Queenslanders the confidence and the education that their doctors are appropriately trained and qualified.

In my view, this bill is about reducing harm to Queenslanders. The serious and lasting harms that I spoke about earlier which have been experienced by some patients are heartbreaking and unacceptable. In some cases, those effects will be lifelong. Some people will possibly never fully recover from the damage done by cosmetic cowboys—rogue surgeons who purported to have qualifications they did not have and carried out work they just were not qualified to do. Those women will pay for the rest of their lives for that work.

I think it is worth noting the context in which these changes are occurring. Until recently it simply was not possible to have any kind of cosmetic procedure in shopping malls on your lunchbreak. While I note that this legislation does not reach those particular procedures, it speaks to the overall increased popularisation of cosmetic procedures generally and why potentially this issue has grown bigger in the past 10 years or so. Cosmetic procedures generally are increasingly popular. I think the member for Surfers Paradise spoke about the increased number of cosmetic procedures happening right here in Queensland. Years ago it was not possible, but now you can go to the local shopping mall on your lunchbreak and get cosmetic procedures. You can get injectables and literally go back to work. Years ago, there was a longer recovery time and there were fewer places—it was an appointment type procedure—but now people can have a minor cosmetic procedure in the same time or less than it would take to go to Mecca to have a full face of make-up put on. That short time frame, for better or worse, has potentially had the impact of making those procedures seem less important. There is less gravity given to them. It is in that context that we have seen an increased appetite for more serious cosmetic procedures as well.




I want to be really clear: of course everybody should have the ability to make the decision to alter their appearance in whatever way pleases them, but I want it to be done with facts and education at the heart of that decision-making process—not some slick advertising campaign featuring what we have often heard to be false advertising and false testimonials from those slick cosmetic cowboys. As I have said before, people need to know that the people doing this work have the qualifications they need and that they are going to end up with a quality result—not end up like some of the sad stories we have heard in the media and heard during the committee hearings, with lifelong inalterable damage done either to their mental health or to their physical wellbeing.

When I talk about these cosmetic cowboys, I note that there is a lot of advertising around both those more low-level, minor procedures and the bigger companies doing the more major work. Almost every suburb now has an injectables clinic. As I said, there are several vendors in the Mount Ommaney Shopping Centre. As I noted earlier, those treatments can be seen as an upside. If you are busy, you can get the work done in your lunchbreak before returning to work.

There is training in place for those lower level procedures, with nurses getting that training and being upskilled. As I said—I want to labour the point—all of those factors have the result of minimising the impact of those smaller invasive procedures, and that cascades up to those larger ones. Even with those larger procedures we have seen a lot more young people undertaking these treatments because they have been popularised in the media, with many young women's role models having those more serious, larger cosmetic procedures. When young women in particular are making these decisions, they may not have access to the information or the life experience to understand what they should be looking for in the qualifications of the person undertaking that very serious surgery.

While the bill does not cover those more minor treatments, we need to recognise that the increasing uptake of the more minor procedures has the effect of normalising the more serious procedures such as the ones we saw play out to such devastating effect in the media last year where patients experienced excruciating pain and long-term harm. We also saw some very disturbing footage last year with patients being treated, I felt, with real disrespect. I remember when I viewed this material last year that their privacy was violated, the space was dirty and in terms of their bodily autonomy they were shown absolutely no respect. When a patient goes under general anaesthetic, they must have the utmost trust in their medical practitioner. The bill supports the aim of the patient being able to trust their doctors and their title—that that doctor does what it says on the tin. The first rule of medicine is always to do no harm. With this legislation, as parliamentarians we seek to ensure that our hardworking medical professionals can do exactly that and that only qualified people can perform this work. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Ms LUI** (Cook—ALP) (3.28 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law (Surgeons) Amendment Bill 2023. I acknowledge the Health and Environment Committee for their work in the examination of the bill. I commend the work of the committee during the consultative process, allowing a broad range of stakeholder views from peak bodies representing various medical practitioners and specialties as well as training organisations, lawyers and insurers.

A large number of submitters expressed direct support for the bill's title protection amendments, with advocates for title protection recognising that the amendments would likely reduce consumer confusion around practitioner titles, qualifications and skill levels thereby better informing patient decision-making and enhancing protections for cosmetic surgery consumers. Feedback from a consultation regulation impact statement has confirmed widespread uncertainty regarding the use of this title in the cosmetic surgery sector. The general public reasonably assumes that practitioners using the title 'surgeon', 'cosmetic surgeon' or 'aesthetic surgeon' have attained a minimum level of specialised surgical training. However, this is not always the case.

The intent of this bill is absolutely fair and necessary as it is about reference to a specific title to reduce confusion for the public. As highlighted in the bill, there are currently limited safeguards around the use of the title 'surgeon' in the medical context. Currently, the law only protects the title 'surgeon' as an adjunct to an approved specialist title—for example, specialist plastic surgeon—with specialist titles reserved for the practitioners registered in a relevant speciality. The title 'surgeon' as a standalone title is not restricted so any registered medical practitioner could call themselves a surgeon, even if not registered in a surgical speciality and even without any significant postgraduate surgical training.

It has become evident that a very small number of clinicians have breached the trust of their patients. By claiming the title of 'surgeon' without the requisite qualifications, these clinicians may have misled patients into the procedures they might not have otherwise consented to. Our paramount

concern is the safety and wellbeing of all Queenslanders. Surgeons hold a unique place in the public's esteem. They have to train for many years to attain their qualifications. Becoming a surgeon is an arduous journey that demands years of rigorous education, extensive training and unwavering dedication. I would like to extend my heartfelt congratulations to all Queensland surgeons and doctors for their invaluable contributions to our community, enhancing and saving lives through their exceptional and unwavering commitment to health care. While the majority of doctors in Australia uphold the highest ethical and professional standards, it is regrettable that a small number may engage in unethical practices, underscoring the importance of measures to protect patients and maintain trust in the medical profession.

Some of reported stories are deeply troubling—clinicians downplaying the recovery from major cosmetic procedures, patients experiencing severe post-procedure pain, infections, wound complications and allegations of malpractice leading to serious health complications. During the consultation process, consumer surveys revealed that 237 respondents reported harm because of dodgy cosmetic procedures. We have heard heartbreaking stories from real-life people, from practitioners, of inadequately prepared for emergencies, poor hygiene and infection control. The damage to people's lives can be irreversible. Even though the various medical bodies could not reach agreement on this issue, there was broad agreement that protecting the public from harm caused by unqualified or underqualified practitioners was key.

This bill aims to protect the title 'surgeon' within the medical profession to safeguard the public and strengthen the regulation of cosmetic surgery in Australia. The bill also aims to clarify the decision-making authority of tribunals after hearing a matter about a registered health practitioner. The bill achieves its aim by amending the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law.

In making its recommendation, the committee has considered a range of factors relating to the national law. These include: the views of stakeholders who engaged with the inquiry, the majority of whom indicated support for the proposed changes; public confusion about the term 'surgeon' and use of the term by some practitioners; the absence of minimum standards for who could call themselves a surgeon; concerns about the regulation of cosmetic surgery and instances of risk and harm associated with the industry; the expectation that all surgeons have comparable qualifications and advanced surgical training, including in respect of cosmetic surgery which is not an approved speciality under the national law; and ambiguity around the operation of section 196 of the national law that sets out the decisions a tribunal may make after hearing a matter about a registered health practitioner.

The amendments to this framework are supported under the national framework. Queensland is the host jurisdiction for the national law under the Intergovernmental Agreement for a National Registration and Accreditation Scheme for the Health Professions between all states and territories and the Commonwealth. All Australian health ministers agreed to the amendments proposed in this bill. The national law is the legal framework for Australia's national registration and accreditation scheme. The scheme ensures only health practitioners who are suitably trained and qualified to practise competently and ethically are registered to practise throughout Australia. These reforms, supported by the states and territories and the Commonwealth, will certainly provide clarity for use of the title 'surgeon' and address confusion surrounding the use of the title into the future. I commend the bill to the House.



**Dr ROWAN** (Moggill—LNP) (3.35 pm): I rise to address the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law (Surgeons) Amendment Bill 2023. On 20 April 2023, the former minister for health and ambulance services introduced this legislation into the Queensland parliament, specifically to amend the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law Act 2009. The main purpose of this legislation and, as stated in the explanatory notes, the objectives of these amendments are to, firstly, protect the title 'surgeon' within the medical profession to safeguard the public and strengthen the regulation of cosmetic surgery in Australia and, secondly, clarify through technical amendments the decision-making authority of tribunals after hearing a matter about a registered health practitioner.

The introduction of this legislation came following the February 2023 meeting of Australian health ministers where amendments to Australia's national registration and accreditation scheme under the national law were agreed to. As with previous amendments and legislation brought to the Queensland parliament in relation to the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law Act 2009, such amendments, when agreed to nationally, are first introduced into the Queensland parliament before then being adopted nationally. Queensland has proudly been the host jurisdiction for the national law after all states and territories agreed to the adoption of the national scheme in 2010.

Broadly speaking, the purpose and intent of this legislation is to address and clarify the specific use of the title 'surgeon' particularly in the context of cosmetic surgery. Over the last several years Australia has seen a growing and concerning trend in adverse patient outcomes and significant and permanent damage inflicted on an untold number of Australians due to substandard practices of various so-called cosmetic surgeons. Indeed, it has been acknowledged that reform to the cosmetic surgery industry and the associated restriction of the use of the title 'surgeon' to medical practitioners within approved surgical classes has gained more traction and public prominence due to the ongoing publication by national media outlets of the significantly inferior and alleged dangerous practices of cosmetic surgeons and the associated concerns for patient safety. There have also been various investigations undertaken by many regulators across multiple state jurisdictions.

The prevalence of such allegations and substantial examples of poor clinical practices and the jeopardising of patient safety has ultimately resulted in the labelling of such practitioners as being cosmetic cowboys. Such allegations made against the multibillion dollar cosmetic surgery industry in Australia have included serious hygiene and safety breaches, significant infections and various instances of botched procedures, resulting in patients suffering severe and lasting pain and patients requiring additional treatments and hospitalisations.

As the Queensland parliament's Health and Environment Committee identified, it was in response to the growing concerns about adverse patient outcomes and the jeopardising of patient safety that the Medical Board of Australia and the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency jointly commissioned an independent external review of patient safety issues in the cosmetic surgery industry in November 2021. Following extensive consultation, including the consideration of 249 written submissions and almost 600 survey responses, the independent review was handed down on 1 September 2022.

As a precursor to the consideration of amendments by Australian state and territory health ministers in February this year, the independent review found that, when it came to cosmetic surgery, universal minimum standards for education, training and qualifications were non-existent in Australia. The review also noted issues surrounding the use of the title of 'cosmetic surgeon'. The review similarly found that it was possible for any medical practitioner to offer and perform invasive cosmetic surgical procedures without having undertaken appropriate training or having amassed sufficient supervised experience to reach an acceptable level of competency. As was stated in the final review report—

In these circumstances, consumers are largely left on their own when it comes to selecting a practitioner to perform cosmetic surgery, having to sift through a plethora of advertising and marketing material and try to make sense of numerous qualifications, in an attempt to identify a qualified and competent practitioner.

Having identified, through a national consultation process, the need to restrict the use of the title 'surgeon' to medical practitioners with significant surgical training, additional and targeted consultation on which medical practitioners should be entitled to use the title 'surgeon' was undertaken in February 2023. As advised by Queensland Health in correspondence to the Health and Environment Committee, stakeholders overwhelmingly supported the scope of the title protection of the term 'surgeon' in the legislation, including submissions and consultation with the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons, the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists, the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Ophthalmologists, the Australian Medical Association, the Australasian College of Dermatologists, the Australasian Society of Aesthetic Plastic Surgeons, the Australian Society of Plastic Surgeons, the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners and the Cosmetic Physicians College of Australasia.

I note that Queensland Health advised that the Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine had raised some concerns with respect to the implications for rural medicine. However, Queensland Health further advised—

Although the ACRRM fellowship is not included in the initial scope of the 'surgical classes,' the Bill has been drafted to minimise any impact on the provision of rural medicine.

As such, I am satisfied with the advice at this point. However, there is still significant work to be undertaken with respect to rural medicine recognition and specifically the subspecialist areas including rural generalist surgery.

In my remaining time I wish to briefly acknowledge concerns pertaining to any potential impacts on Australian Defence Force surgeon titles. As per the Health and Environment Committee's report, I note that the Medical Indemnity Protection Society questioned the impact of proposed title protection amendments on medical practitioners employed in the Australian Defence Force, given that certain ADF medical practitioners carry titles such as Surgeon General, Surgeon Commander, Lieutenant

Surgeon or Staff Surgeon. The Queensland Department of Health, through its interactions with the Commonwealth Department of Defence on the subject of the use of the title 'Surgeon General', advised—

The title protection provisions should not be construed so broadly as to reach matters that have no connection to the regulation of registered health practitioners or the provision of regulated health services.

When read in the context of the objectives and guiding principles of the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law ... the purpose of the National Law's title protection scheme, and the stated purpose of the Bill, it is clear that the proposed title offences would not prohibit use of customary names or titles—such as 'Surgeon General,' 'Surgeon Commander' or 'Staff Surgeon'—that are used to refer to an official rank or title, or that are otherwise generally understood to refer to matters distinct from the general provision of medical care.

With reference to both current and former ADF personnel who have served as Surgeon General of the Australian Defence Force, I take this opportunity to acknowledge the service of the current Surgeon General of the Australian Defence Force and Commander Joint Health, Rear Admiral Sarah Sharkey RAN AM CSC. I also acknowledge Commodore Sonya Bennett, Director-General Royal Australian Navy Health Reserves, who will assume the position of Surgeon General and Commander Joint Health of the Australian Defence Force in December 2023. I congratulate and wish Commodore Bennett all the very best given her appointment.


I would also like to recognise former surgeon general of the ADF, Emeritus Professor John Pearn AO RFD. Professor Pearn is a world-leading paediatrician, academic and medical researcher. Major General Pearn served for 38 years in the Royal Australian Army Medical Corps, including three years as the Surgeon General of the Australian Defence Force.

Finally, whilst taking the opportunity to acknowledge senior military medical professionals, I also mention Brigadier Isaac Seidl AM, the Director-General of Operational Health within Joint Health Command in the Australian Defence Force. It was certainly a pleasure to catch up with Brigadier Seidl at the recent Combined Health Corps Conference, particularly given we completed our specialist fellowship training in medical administration together as health colleagues.

In concluding my contribution today, I believe it is important to acknowledge, just as the Queensland parliament's Health and Environment Committee has done, that whilst various medical bodies were not able to reach full agreement on the issue of who should be allowed to use the title 'surgeon' there was broad agreement that protecting the public from harm caused by unqualified or underqualified health practitioners is critical.

Ultimately, the goal of reforming the national law to secure patient protection was widely endorsed. It must be remembered that cosmetic surgery, as with any form of surgery, is invasive and carries associated risks to patients. Accordingly, it should only be performed by highly trained and appropriately accredited medical practitioners. The Royal Australasian College of Surgeons remains the appropriate specialist professional entity to ensure high standards of training, assessment and certification for medical professionals undertaking such surgical procedures in Australia.

As a registered specialist physician and senior leader of the medical profession in Queensland, I strongly support the amendments and reforms contained within the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law (Surgeons) Amendment Bill 2023.

 **Mr McCALLUM** (Bundamba—ALP) (3.45 pm): I rise in support of the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law (Surgeons) Amendment Bill. We know that community members and Queenslanders have a high degree of trust when it comes to the advice that is given to them by doctors. Indeed, we rely very heavily on the advice coming from our doctors. It is clear that the vast majority of doctors are giving us the best advice. They have our best interests at heart and they are giving us their qualified medical advice to help keep us well and to help us recover from injury. They are doing the right thing. They are hardworking, very principled and acting in the best interests of their patients.

That trust is the same, if not higher, when it comes to the use of the word 'surgeon' because the term 'surgeon' carries enormous weight in the community. Assumptions are invariably made about the expertise of the person who is using the title of 'surgeon'. Community members, whether in Bundamba or right throughout Queensland, trust that a medical professional who is calling themselves a surgeon, or indeed a cosmetic surgeon, has the full appropriate training that goes along with that title.

This bill gives Queenslanders the confidence that their doctors are appropriately trained and qualified. To allow people who have not undergone the appropriate training to use the term 'surgeon' is misleading and undermines the principle of informed and free consent and does absolutely nothing to protect the public and to give the public confidence. It is very pleasing to see that this bill responds to that issue, along with the findings and recommendations into the regulation of cosmetic surgery in

Australia and the strong need to strengthen title protections under our national laws. Queensland, as a host of the national law, has a responsibility to make sure that our laws are indeed meeting the national standards. That is why this bill is so important.


It amends the national law to protect the title 'surgeon' within the medical profession, and it achieves that by restricting which doctors can use the title 'surgeon'. Medical practitioners who hold specialist registration in surgery, obstetrics, gynaecology or ophthalmology are included in the definition of surgical class as they have undergone extensive and accredited surgical training. Practitioners in these specialities often practise complex surgery as part of their normal scope of practice. This bill creates a new criminal offence for doctors who unlawfully use the title 'surgeon' and do not have the appropriate medical training. It makes it an offence for a medical practitioner who is not a member of a defined surgical class to knowingly or recklessly hold themselves out as being a member of a surgical class and using the title 'surgeon' when they are not entitled to do so. Importantly, employers or other persons who knowingly or recklessly use the title 'surgeon' or hold a medical practitioner out as being a member of a surgical class when they are not are also culpable under these new offence provisions. These offence provisions carry maximum penalties of \$60,000 or three years imprisonment for an individual or \$120,000 for a body corporate. These provisions mirror maximum penalties for existing offences under the national law that prohibit the misuse of a professional and specialist title.

In reading the committee report and some of the submissions to this bill I want to mention the submission from Maurice Blackburn Lawyers. I will read an extract from their submission because I think it is a really good and clear communication of this issue. It states—

Cosmetic medicine and surgery occupy a unique position within the healthcare profession. Normally, medical or surgical treatment is provided in the context of some illness, injury or disease. By contrast, cosmetic surgery or treatment is generally non-essential, motivated by aesthetics and instigated by the patient. More than any other area of medicine, it is a commercial arrangement usually carried out in a 'for profit' environment and this dramatically changes the dynamic and the relationship between doctor and patient.

Recent reviews across Australia show the strong need to protect the title 'surgeon' under the national law. Currently, cosmetic surgery is not an approved speciality. That means that any medical practitioner could hold themselves out as a cosmetic or aesthetic surgeon even if they do not have the appropriate qualifications. Cosmetic procedures that are not performed by appropriately qualified practitioners are putting lives at risk and in some cases causing permanent harm to patients. We heard harrowing stories from patients who faced really devastating long-lasting consequences, including health complications, financial disaster and the emotional stress that goes along with all of that which they will carry with them for the rest of their lives. In one instance, a Sydney doctor with limited surgical training performed a procedure resulting in cardiac complications due to inadequate preparation and equipment. This is horrifying. Over the past year or more there has been a litany of stories about poor practices in the cosmetic surgery industry that caused permanent damage to patients in Queensland. Consumer surveys revealed that 237 respondents reported harm because of dodgy cosmetic procedures. These are heartbreaking stories from real people, and it is the result of practitioners inadequately being prepared for emergencies and poor hygiene and infection control. The damage that is inflicted on patients can be completely irreversible. That is why the amendments in this bill will give Ahpra the power to take action if the title 'surgeon' is misused or if consumers are misled about the qualifications of their practitioner.

Ultimately, it is about making sure that Queenslanders are protected from predatory practitioners who claim to have qualifications far beyond their scope. We need to ensure as best we can that those who bear the title 'surgeon' possess the advanced surgical training required to do so. It is about reducing harm to Queenslanders and making sure there are proper surgical outcomes. The serious and lasting harm that has been experienced by some plastic surgery patients is absolutely heartbreaking, it is unacceptable and it is completely avoidable. These reforms are about protecting Queenslanders from completely unnecessary harm. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mrs GILBERT** (Mackay—ALP) (3.55 pm): The public wants certainty and assurances when they access health care. The practitioner they choose must be trained, qualified and competent to carry out the procedures required. Medical practitioners also want their profession to be protected from practitioners who offer services without the required qualifications and registration. We have all heard stories in the media about surgery that has not gone well. People have been maimed for life or lost their lives due to errors in the performance of cosmetic surgery. We have seen an entire television show called *Botched* that usually features botched cosmetic surgeries. When 'Cheap Charlie' TV shows have enough fodder to make a whole series—not just one show—it is time we make these shows a thing of the past. We need to ensure that necessary boundaries are put in place in the medical arena to protect everyone.

Fashion trends, body image and beauty trends change with the generations. Unfortunately, we are seeing trends that require medical intervention to keep up with the modern look. Legislation and regulation are needed to keep pace with community trends and keep the public safe from cowboys in the health system who take advantage of people's insecurities and desire to get the current look. All patients seeking cosmetic surgery are required to have a referral from a general practitioner or other specialist medical practitioner. The referring medical practitioner must work independently of the medical practitioner who performs the surgery and must not perform cosmetic surgery or non-surgical cosmetic procedures themselves. This will not be a requirement for non-surgical cosmetic procedures. In both cosmetic surgery and non-surgical cosmetic procedures the medical practitioner who will perform the procedure must assess the patient for underlying psychological conditions. If there are indications that the patient has significant underlying psychological issues which may make them an unsuitable candidate for cosmetic procedures they must be referred for evaluation to a psychologist, psychiatrist or general practitioner.

The Health Practitioner Regulation National Law (Surgeons) Amendment Bill is necessary to ensure there is protection for the title 'surgeon' within the medical profession, to safeguard the public and strengthen the regulation of cosmetic surgery in Australia, and to clarify the decision-making authority of tribunals after hearing a matter about a registered health practitioner. With regulations and registration in place, practitioners who are not doing the right thing by their patients can be named and removed from the system.

This amendment sits with the national law and National Registration and Accreditation Scheme. The titles used by practitioners need to be regulated and protected for the protection of the public during services in health. As I mentioned, there are many fashion trends that require surgery. Because a person is not unwell at the time of surgery and it is elective, it does not mean that it does not come with the same health risks as any other surgery. The person performing the surgery needs to be qualified. Recent reviews into the regulation of cosmetic surgery in Australia demonstrated a need to strengthen title protections under the national law to ensure that medical practitioners using the title 'surgeon' possess the degree of advanced surgical training and qualifications that health consumers already assume and expect. This bill will protect their title as a standalone title.


Currently, there is confusion in the rising cosmetic surgery area, where any medical practitioner can market themselves as a cosmetic surgeon regardless of their qualification and level of training. This makes it confusing for the general public, who wade through mountains of advertising material trying to make sense of the many titles and understand the levels of qualification a practitioner may have when trying to identify somebody competent and qualified. The uncertainty that currently exists with understanding the title 'surgeon' is causing risk to health consumers.

There has been considerable consultation regarding this bill to ensure medical consumers are protected, medical practitioners are protected and regulation is formed as needed. This bill will not only protect their title but also make it an offence if a practitioner not sufficiently trained and a member of a defined surgical class knowingly or recklessly uses the title.

When we need the services of a medical practitioner holding a specialist registration in surgery, obstetrics, gynaecology or ophthalmology, we expect a level of care that goes with the reputation of this specialised training. They are included in the definition of 'surgical class' as they have undergone extensive and accredited surgical training. The same level of confidence in cosmetic surgery needs to be built up in this list of practitioners. The initial classes of medical practitioners permitted to use the title 'surgeon' were determined by the health ministers with the advice of the Medical Board of Australia.

We must ensure that legislation passed in this House does not adversely affect others with unintended consequences. I am pleased that our rural generalists have been included in the considerations. The initial classes include the recognised medical specialties for which practitioners are required to have successfully undertaken significant accredited specialist surgical training. Although rural generalists are not included in the initial scope of 'surgical classes', the bill has been drafted to minimise any impact on the provision of rural medicine. While rural GPs will not be able to use the title 'surgeon', their Medicare reimbursements and scope of practice will not be impacted or limited by the bill. They will continue to be able to perform surgeries within their scope of practice. The bill will enable ministers to prescribe additional classes as being able to use the title 'surgeon'. This may include considering adding rural and remote medical practitioners in the future.


We know that the majority of doctors are dedicated and principled professionals. Still, deceptive practices by a minority jeopardise Queensland's trust and wellbeing. I thank our practitioners who are out there doing the right thing by Queenslanders day after day. I support the bill.

 **Mr KNUTH** (Hill—KAP) (4.03 pm): I rise to give my contribution to the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law (Surgeons) Amendment Bill 2023. As I understand it, the bill amends the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law. The objectives of the amendments are: to protect the title 'surgeon' within the medical profession to safeguard the public and strengthen the regulation of cosmetic surgery in Australia, and to clarify the decision-making authority of tribunals after hearing a matter about a registered health practitioner. I note that all Australian health ministers agreed to the amendments on 24 February 2023. I also note that the committee's recommendation to pass the bill without any statements of reservation demonstrates that the changes are widely accepted and welcomed. The 19 submissions to the bill were overwhelmingly supportive of the changes.

It is important that we protect the term 'surgeon'. Surgeons are recognised by the public as highly respected and highly trained and qualified professionals. As such, the use of the term by some practitioners who do not meet minimum standards to call themselves a cosmetic surgeon should be subject to consequences. Cosmetic surgery has experienced an explosion in popularity in the modern era, with many wanting to capitalise on revenue generated by this growing industry. Australians spend big on cosmetic surgery, ranking in the top 10 countries. In 2017 Australia hit the billion dollar mark when they spent \$1 billion on cosmetic surgery, with the total number of procedures performed in Australia topping 200,000. With an industry with a large sum of money involved, you always get those who try to take advantage—or, in other words, cowboys.

Before I finish and while we are talking about surgeons, I want to mention the opening of the new \$86 million Atherton Hospital last week with the Minister for Health, the Hon. Shannon Fentiman. The new facility includes an emergency department, medical imaging, a general medical ward, a maternity ward, birthing suites, and, yes, two new operating theatres for those qualified surgeons. I commend the bill to the House.

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

 **Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (Minister for Health, Mental Health and Ambulance Services and Minister for Women) (4.06 pm), in reply: I acknowledge all members for their contributions to the debate on the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law (Surgeons) Amendment Bill 2023. I thank members for their support for the bill. As we have heard from members across the House today, protecting the title 'surgeon' will provide important public health protection for Queenslanders and for all Australians.

At its core, this bill is about ensuring Australians can trust that a doctor using the title 'surgeon' has the appropriate qualifications and experience to do so. Throughout this process and in the chamber today, we have heard countless devastating stories of people being misled by unscrupulous doctors who use the title 'surgeon' to misrepresent their qualifications and put patients at risk of harm. This bill will put an immediate stop to this unethical behaviour.

I would like to respond to a matter raised by members opposite regarding our vital rural generalists. Our rural and remote GPs work tirelessly to provide quality, contemporary health services for our wonderful rural communities. They go above and beyond for their patients, and I want to thank each and every one of them for their work. This bill is about who can call themselves a surgeon. It defines the approved surgical classes to include medical practitioners who hold specialist registration in surgery, obstetrics, gynaecology and ophthalmology. These initial classes were determined by all health ministers with the expert advice of the Medical Board of Australia. This does not take away from the vital work performed by rural and remote GPs or the respect they deserve. As Ahpra made clear in its response to a question on notice to the committee—

No one wants to bring surgical services in rural Australia to a halt. Title protection is a restriction on language, not a restriction on practice.

This bill has been drafted to minimise any impact on GPs and the provision of rural medicine. While rural and other GPs will not be able to use the title 'surgeon', their Medicare reimbursements and scope of practice is not limited by the bill.

The bill also enables the ministerial council to make regulations prescribing additional classes of medical practitioner that can use the title 'surgeon'. The ability to prescribe additional classes will accommodate future changes to the medical profession and provide flexibility for health ministers to consider and adapt to new and unanticipated circumstances. As the member for Surfers Paradise noted, the Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine and the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners have made a joint application to the Medical Board to recognise rural generalist

medicine as a specialist field of practice. The application also seeks approval of the protected title of rural generalist. I trust the Medical Board will thoroughly assess this application and I look forward to the outcome of this process.

The members for Glass House and Moggill mentioned concerns raised by stakeholders about the impact on medical practitioners in the Australian Defence Force where titles such as Surgeon General are used. As the members noted, Queensland Health has discussed this issue with the Commonwealth Department of Defence. When read in the context of the objectives and guiding principles of the national law and the stated purpose of the bill, it is clear that the proposed title offences would not prohibit the use of customary names or titles used to refer to an official rank or title or otherwise generally understood to refer to matters distinct from the general provision of medical care. That includes titles such as Surgeon General, Surgeon Commander and Staff Surgeon.

The protection is just one of the actions health ministers are taking to improve the safety of the cosmetic industry. This bill will work in the context of these wider reforms which are designed to make the cosmetic surgery industry safer for consumers.

On 5 April this year, the Australian government, with the support of Queensland and all other states and territories, launched a national public education campaign to highlight the need for Australians to be aware of the risks involved in cosmetic surgery. The campaign advises the public to report cosmetic surgery issues to Ahpra's cosmetic surgery hotline. In addition, just last week health ministers approved new national cosmetic surgery standards and a new licensing framework for cosmetic surgery. These will contribute to the safe delivery of high quality cosmetic procedures in private health facilities. Health ministers have also approved an area-of-practice endorsement for cosmetic surgery to introduce new minimum standards for the education, training and qualification of Australian medical practitioners seeking to practise as cosmetic surgeons. Together these reforms will ensure the people of Queensland and Australia can be protected from predatory practitioners claiming to have qualifications beyond their scope. I am pleased the Australian health ministers prioritised this work so people can be confident they are receiving world-class health care by an appropriately accredited and qualified doctor.

Cosmetic surgery is invasive. It comes with the potential for serious complications. It is frequently irreversible and, sadly, it is often sought by potentially vulnerable people. As noted by the member for Southport and the submission he referenced made by Maurice Blackburn to the committee, cosmetic surgery has a unique position in the medical profession in that cosmetic surgery is commercial and for-profit, rather than being based on medical need. It can be a lucrative area of practice and financial gain that can compete with, and sometimes outweigh, patient wellbeing and safety considerations.

This bill will put an end to doctors labelling themselves cosmetic surgeons and misleading patients about their qualifications, skills and experience. There will now be serious consequences for those who flaunt the rules. Misusing the title 'surgeon' will be an offence that carries a maximum penalty of \$60,000 or three years imprisonment for an individual or \$120,000 for a body corporate. Ahpra will diligently enforce these new title protection provisions and ensure those few doctors who continue to falsely claim to be a surgeon suffer the appropriate consequences.

The bill demonstrates the Palaszczuk government's commitment to protecting its citizens and it will stop doctors from misleading their patients through the use of unearned titles. It will help patients to make informed decisions about their health care, and it will make a significant contribution to patient welfare.

I thank the Health and Environment Committee for its detailed examination of the bill, and I am grateful to the staff of the committee and stakeholders who made submissions and appeared before the committee. I would like to acknowledge my fellow health ministers for the spirit of collaboration with which they have approached the bill and for their ongoing commitment to strengthening regulation of the cosmetic surgery sector. Likewise, I extend my sincere thanks to the health departments of all states, territories and the Australian government and to the staff of Ahpra for their efforts in urgently progressing these national reforms. I thank the hardworking staff at the Department of Health and the former health minister for progressing work on this important reform. 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 6, as read, agreed to.

### Third Reading

 **Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (Minister for Health, Mental Health and Ambulance Services and Minister for Women) (4.14 pm): I move—


That the bill be now read a third time.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a third time.

### Long Title

 **Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (Minister for Health, Mental Health and Ambulance Services and Minister for Women) (4.15 pm): I move—

That the long title of the bill be agreed to.


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

Motion agreed to.

## JUSTICE AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Resumed from 25 May (see p. 1689).

### Second Reading

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence) (4.15 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a second time.

On 25 May 2023, I introduced the Justice and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023 into this House. The bill was referred to the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee for consideration. The committee tabled its report on 28 July 2023, making seven recommendations. I table the government's response to the committee's report.

*Tabled paper:* Legal Affairs and Safety Committee: Report No. 50, 57th Parliament—Justice and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023, government response [\[1318\]](#).

I will address the committee's recommendations in more detail shortly, however, I can foreshadow that I propose to move some amendments to the bill to address some of the issues raised during the committee process. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee for its detailed consideration of the bill. A total of 12 submissions were received by the committee in the course of its inquiry. I extend my thanks to the organisations and individuals who made submissions and gave evidence before the committee.

The committee's first recommendation was that the bill be passed. I thank the committee for supporting the passage of the bill. The bill delivers a number of justice-related initiatives for Queensland. It also clarifies, strengthens and updates legislation concerning the administration of justice, including the operation of courts and tribunals, regulation of the legal profession, conduct of civil proceedings and electoral matters.

I turn firstly to those amendments in the bill which remove the restrictions which prohibit identification of an adult defendant charged with a prescribed sexual offence prior to finalisation of committal proceedings. These amendments implement recommendation 83 of the Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce, *Hear her voice—report 2: Women and girls' experiences across the criminal justice system*. These amendments bring Queensland more closely into line with other states and territories in Australia. They also bring the position for these offences into line with other offences in Queensland.

Part of the basis of this protection for accused rapists is that women maliciously make up complaints to damage reputations. These rape myths have no place in our society. Recommendation 84 of the taskforce report 2 is that the government develop a guide for the media to support responsible reporting of sexual violence. The taskforce recommended that the amendments to the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences) Act 1978 not commence until this guide has been developed.

I acknowledge that many submitters to the committee raised the critical importance of guidance for the media to support the amendments and that the committee recommended the government prioritise the development of a media guide to support responsible reporting of sexual violence. The government supports this recommendation. I am pleased to say that the guide is being developed well ahead of schedule and will be ready for the proposed commencement date of 3 October 2023. It had been intended that the amendments commenced by proclamation to allow for the development of the media guide. I would like to foreshadow that I will be moving an amendment during consideration in detail so that these amendments to the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences) Act 1978 commence on the fixed date of 3 October 2023, rather than by proclamation.

It is anticipated that the guide will be distributed to media organisations and journalists in advance of the commencement date to assist their reporting on relevant sexual violence matters before the courts. The guide will address the topics proposed by the taskforce and will also be informed by consultation with relevant sector stakeholders including media, service providers and the legal profession. I thank them for their consultation with my department in the development of that media guide.

The committee also recommended that the government monitor whether the naming of offenders unintentionally creates barriers for women to report sexual offences. The government supports this recommendation. Consistent with recommendation 186 of taskforce report 2, the operation of taskforce related legislation will be reviewed as soon as practicable five years after the last of the relevant legislative amendments from both taskforce reports has commenced. This was the type of evaluation recommended by the taskforce. Consistent with the recommendations made by the taskforce, the government will also continue to monitor the system-wide impacts and outcomes of the reform program.

The second key area of reform in the bill is strengthening the recognition of the death of an unborn child as a result of criminal conduct and improving support available to families. I would like to again acknowledge everyone from both sides of the House who has advocated for reform to better recognise the deaths of unborn children as a result of criminal conduct. In particular I recognise the courage and advocacy of Sarah and Peter Milosevic and thank them for their contribution to the committee's inquiry. The loss of an unborn child to a criminal act is an unimaginable tragedy. The bill allows for recognition of the death of an unborn child in the criminal justice system by providing that the name or a description of an unborn child may be stated in an indictment for a relevant offence. The bill also increases the consistency and transparency in sentencing for relevant serious offences by requiring the court to treat the destruction of an unborn child's life as an aggravating factor unless there are exceptional circumstances.

I acknowledge that some submitters raised concerns that the reforms regarding indictments and statutory aggravating factors represent a recognition of fetal personhood and may have implications for the rights and criminal culpability of the pregnant person. I can assure submitters that the amendments in the bill do not displace the born-alive rule, which deems legal personhood to apply when a child is born in a living state independently of its mother, and do not extend criminal culpability to the pregnant person for acts or omissions that cause the destruction of the life of their unborn child. The bill strikes the right balance through reforms that better acknowledge the death of an unborn child as a result of criminal conduct while preserving the born-alive rule and the rights of the pregnant person. The bill also allows those who would have been a family member of the unborn child had they been born alive to make a victim impact statement and explain to the court the impact the destruction of the life of the unborn child has had on them.

Finally, the bill provides that a person responsible for the cost of a funeral for an unborn child is eligible for funeral expense assistance of up to \$8,000 to ensure families who wish to hold a funeral can do so without being financially burdened. Recommendations 4 and 5 of the committee's report relate to the assistance and support provided to victims of crime. The Palaszczuk government is committed to improving the way the justice system supports victims, and the bill progresses an important aspect of this work.

Recommendation 4 of the committee's report is that the proposed reforms introduced by the bill relating to victims are accompanied by trauma informed training for those interacting with victims in the criminal justice system including legal services, victims' services, and investigating and prosecution bodies. The government supports this recommendation in principle. The Palaszczuk government is committed to implementing and embedding trauma informed practices across government agencies. Significant work is underway to support trauma informed training within government, including work in response to recommendations of the taskforce and the Independent Commission of Inquiry into Queensland Police Service responses to domestic and family violence. The government is also

committed to ensuring victims of crime have access to non-government victim support services, and \$3.4 million per annum is provided under the victim services funding program for services to provide trauma informed support to victims of crime.

Recommendation 5 of the committee's report is that the government consider the service and resourcing impacts the reforms will have on the victim support and community legal service sectors. The government supports this recommendation in principle. I can advise that potential impacts were considered in the development of the reforms and planning for implementation subject to the passage of the bill.

While devastating to the families and the community, the events are relatively rare. Consequently, the number of victims seeking support or making an application for funeral expense assistance is expected to be very small. It is also likely that victims of crimes resulting in the death of an unborn child are already seeking support or making an application for financial assistance in relation to the injury to, or death of, the pregnant person, and the reforms will therefore not result in a significant increase in the number of victims seeking support or applying for assistance. While it is not expected that the reforms will have a significant impact on victim services, the effects of the reforms will be monitored. The government has also committed to a review of legislated financial assistance. I remind all in the House of our announcement around appointing an interim Victims' Commissioner with a permanent Victims' Commissioner to be appointed next year who will be looking at that trauma informed training across government services.

I will now turn briefly to the amendments in the bill that clarify that a person providing financial assistance to enable a pregnant person to access a lawful termination does not commit an offence. I acknowledge that most submitters were generally supportive of the amendments and that the committee was pleased to note the support.

Recommendation 6 of the committee's report is that the government consider changing 'woman' to 'pregnant person' in proposed section 319A of the bill to better reflect the diversity and modern community expectations of Queensland. The government supports this recommendation and consideration will be given to changing 'woman' to 'pregnant person' in section 319A of the Criminal Code. The bill makes amendments to the Oaths Act 1874 to address issues that have arisen during implementation of the Justice and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2021, including to clarify the types of information that witnesses are required to provide in affidavits and statutory declarations.

Recommendation 7 of the committee's report is that the Queensland government continue to undertake work in relation to improving safety for victims of domestic and family violence, noting the prevalence of systems abuse. I note that this recommendation relates to the Women's Legal Service submission, which recommends that further work be undertaken separately to address safety concerns for victims of domestic and family violence due to requirements for the signatory to include their address and place where the document is made. The government response supports this recommendation and will continue to undertake work to improve safety for victims of domestic and family violence, including further considering court rules and forms as well as approaches in other jurisdictions.

In relation to amendments to the Electoral Act 1992 relating to redistributions, the LNP statement of reservation in the committee report expressed concern about the amendment to replace the 60-day time frame associated with the Queensland Redistribution Commission finalising an electoral redistribution with a requirement that the redistribution is finalised 'as soon as practicable'. As previously indicated, this change, which is consistent with arrangements in the Commonwealth and in New South Wales, reflects the reality that there is increasing participation by stakeholders and the general public in the electoral redistribution process in Queensland and will ensure objections received and public comments thereon are considered ahead of the redistribution being published. I note the various provisions in the Electoral Act 1992 already require the electoral redistribution commission to undertake various functions as soon as practicable. The proposed change is consistent with this approach and ensures that strict time frames do not stifle the commission's ability to conduct and finalise an electoral redistribution in a meaningful way. Of course, we welcome the public being more involved in that process and making sure they get heard.

I would also like to foreshadow that I will be moving amendments during consideration in detail in response to submissions to the committee in relation to the amendments in the bill to the Legal Profession Act 2007. The first amendment relates to the implementation of the government election commitment to increase the threshold for detailed disclosure of legal costs by a law practice from \$1,500 to \$3,000. In implementing this commitment, the bill also introduces an abbreviated form of cost disclosure where legal costs are likely to exceed \$750 but not the detailed disclosure threshold of more

than \$3,000. The \$750 abbreviated disclosure threshold is based on that applicable in the uniform law states: New South Wales, Victoria and Western Australia. Concerns were expressed that this requires disclosure where none is required under the current threshold of \$1,500. The Legal Services Commission has been consulted and advised that the absence of a disclosure regime for matters under the current full disclosure threshold of \$1,500 has not been an issue in practice. Therefore, it is proposed to increase the threshold for abbreviated disclosure to \$1,500.


I acknowledge the Queensland Law Society's view that the detailed disclosure threshold should be set at \$5,000. This threshold amount may, of course, be varied by regulation. I would be pleased to keep the amount under review, including having regard to whether the new abbreviated disclosure is adequate for higher value matters.

The second amendment relates to proposed new section 713A of the Legal Profession Act, which also implements a government election commitment. It allows for the destruction of client documents without a client's consent if: a period of seven years has elapsed since the completion of the matter; the law practice has been unable to obtain instructions from the client, despite making reasonable efforts to do so; and it is reasonable in the circumstances, having regard to the nature and content of the document, to destroy the document. This is intended to address the increasing risk to clients' privacy and confidentiality arising from the prolonged retention of client documents and the mounting substantial costs associated with securely storing large volumes of client documents that are no longer of utility.

Further to submissions to the committee, technical amendments are proposed to clarify the meaning of 'client document' and to ensure that, for the Queensland Law Society, its application is not limited to the client documents of law practices that have gone into receivership. For example, the Queensland Law Society may hold client documents that have been abandoned where efforts to locate a responsible practitioner have been unsuccessful.

Finally, I would like to respond to concerns expressed by opposition members of the committee about the use of an omnibus bill to include many issues that are unrelated and that should, in their view, be dealt with by specific bills. They have argued that this reduces the ability of all parties—including stakeholders, committee members and members of the public—to have their say and contribute to the parliamentary process. I remind those members that the use of omnibus bills is not new and that it has been common parliamentary practice for governments on both sides of politics. Omnibus bills are an efficient and effective way of dealing with a wide range of legislative amendments in one legislative vehicle. This bill has gone through the same parliamentary processes and scrutiny as any other bill that comes before the House.

As I indicated in my introductory speech, the bill makes important amendments to justice portfolio legislation across a diverse range of subject matter. The bill also contains a number of important reforms to improve Queensland's justice system which will further protect women, mothers, victims and survivors. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr NICHOLLS** (Clayfield—LNP) (4.32 pm): I listened to the Attorney's comments, particularly her comment in relation to the opposition members' statement of reservation regarding the treatment of the omnibus bill and her comment that this bill has been brought to the House with the usual respect for parliamentary process. I reflected only two weeks ago on where the usual respect for parliamentary process was thrown out the window after a business motion that was agreed to in good faith had been passed.

**Mrs D'ATH:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order in relation to relevance. The matter is about the bill before the House and the parliamentary committee process of this bill, not unrelated bills.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Hart): Member for Clayfield, I draw you back to the bill.

**Mr NICHOLLS:** In my defence, let me say this: it was the Attorney-General who said 'like other bills brought before this place'. It was not just in relation to this bill. The record will reflect what the Attorney said. The Attorney is obviously embarrassed enough to take exception to that comment.

**Mrs D'ATH:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I take personal offence at that comment and ask that he withdraw.

**Mr NICHOLLS:** I withdraw. The government is obviously embarrassed to such an extent that the Attorney has felt it necessary to jump up and try to stifle any proper, reasoned and rationed debate in a house of debate like the Queensland parliament. The Attorney, who is more than willing to try to argue the case across the floor, takes exception when I point out this government's failings in relation to the parliamentary process only two weeks ago when they trashed their own human rights bill.

**Mr Bailey:** You'd never do that.

**Mr NICHOLLS:** I take that interjection, because I got up to speak on the human rights bill and I was guillotined when I wanted to speak on it. I was guillotined by the Labor lefty loveys, who said, 'No, human rights are so important we are going to guillotine debate on it.'

**Mr BAILEY:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The member for Clayfield is straying even further away from the bill and I ask that he be brought back.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Minister, resume your seat. There is no point of order. The member for Clayfield is responding to a remark that you made.

**Mr NICHOLLS:** It is been a tough fortnight for the member—double penalties, cost blowouts.

**Mr Bailey** interjected.

**Mr NICHOLLS:** I remember the member for Miller going back a long way, and there is a reason that he was never appointed chair of a council committee and that he took his bag, packed up and disappeared.

**Mr HARPER:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order under standing order 118 on relevance. Can you ask the member to come back to the bill?

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Thuringowa, the member for Clayfield is responding to continual interjections from the minister and I find that completely relevant.

**A government member** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Who was that? Was somebody reflecting on the chair? I will start warning people if I hear that again.

**Mr NICHOLLS:** In the interests of the decorum of the House, I will move to further discussion in relation to this bill. This is an omnibus bill amending 30 pieces of legislation and four regulations—

**Mrs Frecklington:** Not as many as two weeks ago.

**Mr NICHOLLS:** That is quite a substantial number of pieces of legislation but not as many as two weeks ago, as the member for Nanango points out. It also repeals the Court Funds Act 1973.

In a significant recognition of the hard work and persistence of Peter and Sarah Milosevic and the representations of their hardworking local member, Jim McDonald, the member for Lockyer, the bill acknowledges the devastation experienced by families who lose an unborn child as a result of the criminal actions of others. It does so by making the death of an unborn child an aggravating factor.

The bill addresses many and disparate issues and, arguably, some of these should be dealt with in specific and separate legislation. I will touch on that later. I again note the Attorney's sensitivity in relation to the statement of reservation filed by LNP members. The convenience to the executive and the bureaucracy of omnibus legislation should not be at the expense of parliamentary scrutiny and the consideration of individual significant amendments on their merits, particularly as there may be good reasons to amend or express a view in opposition to the bill. I do not dispute that omnibus bills have their place. Omnibus bills of non-controversial matters that make a series of procedural or less significant changes to a number of pieces of legislation have their place, but to continually rely on omnibus bills to make substantial and significant changes to legislation is the hallmark of a bureaucracy and an executive that does not invite or appreciate scrutiny and does not want reasoned and rational debate from the members of this place of any political persuasion or the members of the public who may have differing points of view and wish to express that point of view.

The idea of tying something that is positive with something that is controversial and may be subject to opposition or amendment in one bill is something that should be avoided in almost every instance, but it is something that this government seems to be continually relying on. It needs to be called out when it happens. It is not to say that every bill will be opposed or that every omnibus bill should not come forward, but it should be subject to a far greater degree of scrutiny. It is the laziness of government that allows it through and that lets the bureaucracy drive it through them. I have seen it happen before in this place and this is, again, why we make our statement of reservation. Anyone with experience—on both sides—knows that this is an ongoing and difficult matter to try to resolve. You are presented with a piece of legislation and 'if you do not do it within the next 30 days the world will come to an end', and in it comes. 'We have to fix it up tomorrow', and in it comes. It should not be as a matter of standard practice that that continues.

I want to deal with some of the major issues in the bill. The first one obviously is the amendments to the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences) Act 1978. Again, this goes to the point about an omnibus bill. This is significantly of importance and will amend four pieces of legislation. It could have been and

should have been perhaps a separate bill, and I will explain why. Dealing with the changes as they are presented in the bill, a fundamental principle of the Queensland legal system is that legal proceedings be administered in an open court with public access where the parties can be named and the subject of fair and accurate reporting without fear of being sued for contempt or defamation. That is important for public confidence in the administration of justice because it demonstrates the integrity and independence of criminal justice proceedings by ensuring that they can be scrutinised and analysed.

We only have to compare places where that is not allowed and the outcomes in jurisdictions where that is not allowed to realise how fundamental this principle is. Closed courts where they are not subject to published scrutiny, they are not subject to questioning, where the judges are not subject to the oversight of elected representatives or a parliamentary process or media scrutiny are proceedings that cannot be fairly called fair and independent, and we can think of many countries around the world where that occurs. We used to have the show trials in Russia. We have the current proceedings in places like China where representation and court proceedings are all in camera, so it is a fundamental principle of our system that that occur. It is not absolute and there are certain exceptions to ensure that the interests of justice are served, but they have to be clearly enunciated and the primacy of the principle is that in all cases that is the principle unless a very good reason can be made as to why that should not occur. Instances of this exception to the rule of open justice could, and do, include the protection of individuals where to name the accused may lead to a victim's identity being revealed and further trauma occurring. The law is especially aware of this when it comes to offences against children and we as a society accept that restriction.

In Queensland the issue has been in relation to the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences) Act, which has been in place since 1978. The identification of someone accused of a prescribed sexual offence is restricted before that person is committed for trial or sentenced on that charge. Members will no doubt be aware of a high-profile case in Toowoomba that is being reported where the name of the accused or the subject of that proceeding has not yet been made public but the case is drawing a lot of attention. Times have changed since 1978 when that legislation was introduced, as have community attitudes and the willingness of victim-survivors to tell their stories and to be part of highlighting issues around sexual violence which we would all agree, I am sure, is a good thing—that is, a victim-survivor's capacity to be part of highlighting those issues.

Apart from the Northern Territory, Queensland is the only state that does not currently allow for the disclosure of a sexual offence defendant's identity prior to committal. This proposed amendment comes following recommendation 83 of the second Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce report *Hear her voice*. In that report it is argued the provision is outdated and associated with an historical mistrust of sexual violence reporting, and we have had a number of debates in this place about the fallacy of that particular belief or state of mind, and we are now much more attune to and much more cognisant of the reality of the reporting and the difficulties that go with that reporting. The recommendation by the taskforce was for the Attorney-General to—

– remove the restriction on publication of the identity of an adult accused of a sexual offence before a committal hearing where it would not identify—

and this is the second part of the recommendation—

or tend to lead to the identification of a victim-survivor

– require a court to take the views of the alleged victim into consideration when deciding whether to order that the identifying details of an accused person should be suppressed.

There are two parts to it. Clearly the taskforce took the view that the provisions are outdated and there is a sound argument that they are inconsistent with the principles of open justice. Indeed, when we think of other serious offences such as murder and manslaughter where the accused is named almost immediately, along with similar serious offences, the logic of retaining the restriction seems even less tenable. As the taskforce pointed out—

Removing the prohibition would align the position in Queensland with the majority of other Australian jurisdictions—

with the Northern Territory being the only one similar to Queensland—

and with the United Kingdom and New Zealand. It would facilitate media reporting about people who are charged with sexual offences, which may encourage victims and other witnesses to come forward. It could help prevent further offending by the same perpetrator. Increased publication as a result of this option may contribute to constructive community discussion about sexual violence by removing protections that are not in place in most other jurisdictions.

It is also important to note that there do not seem to have been any significant negative consequences in those many jurisdictions where publication of the accused person's identity has been

permitted at an early stage. This is often a fear raised in relation to the early identification about trial by media, unfairness to the person alleged and a number of other issues, but the experience seems to be that that is not the case and that this is able to be managed sufficiently by the courts and by the media organisations themselves, so fears about the early identification of the offenders causing harm do not seem to have been realised.

Within the *Hear her voice* report, feedback from legal stakeholders originally was not positive towards the removal of this protection for defendants, and that is understandable. The legal profession has its job to do and it has views about it and, of course, the potential for trial by media should not be disregarded. These are serious matters to be considered, and that is why the committee report makes it clear there needs to be media guidelines in place to ensure the reporting is done fairly and accurately and with consideration of the principle of innocence until proven guilty. I will discuss that a bit more and a few other matters as I address some of the matters raised by the Attorney. There is more openness to these changes in the submissions made to the committee on this bill. The submissions that were against it tended to be in the *Hear her voice* report; the submissions in relation to this bill that went to the committee tended to be more supportive of it, and I note the Queensland Law Society now supports the proposal. However, a number of submitters to the committee noted that recommendation in relation to the guidelines.

The taskforce also recommended the amendments not commence until the Queensland government developed a guide for the media to support responsible reporting of sexual violence, which is recommendation 84, and this was included as a recommendation—I think recommendation 2—of the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee. I had here a whole series of questions which the Attorney will be pleased to know she no longer has to answer: has the work been done and, if so, has the guideline been released? I would not mind knowing that—that is, whether or not the guideline has been released for consideration. Can she inform the House when it is likely to be done and when the section will commence? We now know it will be 3 October. Will a draft be circulated for consultation before the final guideline is issued and has that been done? Will the Attorney table the guideline in the House for the information of members and, if so, will she be able to do that before debate on this bill is finished? I think it is as a courtesy to the House, if it is in a reasonably final format, for members of this place to know what those guidelines are going to be, given it was a part of the committee's recommendations and a part of the *Hear her voice* report recommendations, because at the time of the submissions to the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee a couple of months ago the guidelines had then not been produced and some submitters raised questions about it. In that sense it is heartening and reassuring to hear that those guidelines have been developed and are being consulted on and that they will be ready for the commencement of part 9 of the bill on 3 October.

I also just want to touch briefly on the fact that part 9 of the bill provides a process for a non-publication order. There is a provision there that allows an applicant to make an application to the court for a non-publication order, but that must be made on at least three days notice and there must be a good reason provided to the court or it must be in the interests of justice. The grounds for making that order—that is, the grounds the court must take into account—are set out in proposed new section 7B of the act. Importantly, none of the reasons specify reputational harm as being a reason for preventing publication. I think that is an outmoded form of defence or rationale for the provisions there. The ostensible reason was to protect victim-survivors, but in many instances people regarded it as protecting the reputation of the accused before the committal took place and that, I think we would agree, these days is now no longer a valid reason to do that, if it ever was.

It is easily foreseeable that this provision will be tested on a number of occasions and we know that because the current experience is that that is the case. The non-publication orders that are made are subject to review, including on the application of an accredited media outlet as well as by the court on its own motion and another person with sufficient interest. On balance, the LNP believe the provision adequately weighs up the rights of the accused to a fair trial and the presumption of innocence as against the importance of ensuring public confidence in the administration of justice as well as the protection and the support of victim-survivors.

Continued monitoring of the operation of these provisions may lead to change and improvement in the future. If I heard correctly, the Attorney said that would be an ongoing review although I am not sure if that was of these provisions. However, there will be a five-year review of the operation of the provisions. That was a suggestion on our radar in relation to seeing how they work. They may require change, they may not work as anticipated and there may be need for further work.

I turn to the death of an unborn child. This bill proposes to better recognise the death of an unborn child as the result of a criminal act. It amends four acts to do so: the Criminal Code, the Penalties and

Sentences Act, the Youth Justice Act and the Victims of Crime Assistance Act. A major change to the Penalties and Sentences Act will make the death of an unborn child by a criminal act an aggravating factor for the defined relevant offence. 'Relevant offence' is defined to include murder, manslaughter, grievous bodily harm, wounding, dangerous operation of a motor vehicle, assault occasioning bodily harm and careless driving. Changes to the Criminal Code—and this is important—allow for the naming or a description of the unborn child in the indictment. This change to the Criminal Code may well be of some comfort to those who have lost a child, and their loved ones, as the result of a criminal offence. It gives recognition to the child and that very significant loss.

It is important to note, as I did in my introduction, the longstanding committed and passionate advocacy of Peter and Sarah Milosevic following the tragic loss of their baby in a motor vehicle accident. In Peter and Sarah's case, the court acknowledged that the driver's actions caused their unborn daughter's death but, ultimately, the penalty was \$950 and the loss of a licence. Many would argue that that is insufficient for the tragedy that occurred. As parents we can only imagine the grief of losing an unborn child. It is something that I have seen and experienced firsthand. While many continue with their lives, the grief and hollowness of the loss endures and is a longing ache in your heart that I can imagine would be there forever. Jim McDonald, the member for Lockyer, obviously understands Peter's and Sarah's grief. He should be lauded for his determination and persistence and for the caring and considered way he agitated for this change to the law. I know that Jim has been doing that for the past five years.

It is a pity this change is included in an omnibus bill because, as I pointed out earlier, it could have been dealt with separately and been known as Sophie's Law in memory of Sophie, in recognition of the Milosevics' effort and as an enduring testament to the work that they have put in and the change that they have been able to effect in Queensland. Often times, as members of parliament we hear people say, 'What change can I make? How can I make things better?' Peter and Sarah, through their advocacy and with the assistance of their member of parliament, have been able to make a very significant change to a very longstanding part of the law. I think it would have been entirely appropriate for this law to have that name. We have seen other instances where that has occurred in bills.

**Mrs Gerber:** And other jurisdictions could then adopt this and call it Sophie's Law.

**Mr NICHOLLS:** And other jurisdictions; I thank the member for Currumbin. Of course, there is difficulty with any change to the Criminal Code. Indeed, as the Attorney mentioned in her contribution, the importance of preserving the born-alive rule, unless there is a very substantial reason to amend it, is a significant consideration and that rule is not being changed in this legislation. This change preserves that rule while ensuring consequences for criminal acts that cause the death of an unborn child. The LNP will obviously be supporting the legislation in that respect.

The changes to the Legal Profession Act are the other significant part of this package of changes, although as I have indicated there are many others in relation to the Oaths Act, the Supreme Court Act, the QCAT Act, the Magistrates Courts Act and the list goes on. The changes to the Legal Profession Act give effect to commitments made by the government as part of the lead-up to the 2020 election and that were mirrored by the LNP in relation to many of the changes. Of course, one change is in relation to increasing the threshold for complicated or complex cost agreements from \$1,500 to \$3,000.

Recently I had the—I was going to say 'misfortune' but that would be unfair—opportunity to engage lawyers on a relatively straightforward matter of granting probate on a very simple estate. That is not a difficult thing to do at all. However, the length of documents that you have to go to, simply to get the probate of a will, is longer than any other piece of paper you need. The whole process is unduly complicated for the simple administration of a will. It is confusing in and of its own volition. The very document you are obliged to look at in order to be able to do something relatively straightforward is more confusing than the thing you are trying to do in the first place. By the time you have looked through it you have already earned \$1,500 worth of lawyer's fees. Many lawyers are great friends of mine and I come from a background in the law so I understand the value of getting an independent lawyer and paying them appropriately for the work that they do. This change is well overdue. Indeed, in my view, the whole system needs to be made a whole lot simpler than it is, not to remove its efficiency or effectiveness but simply to make it simpler.

I note again that the amendment proposed by the Attorney in relation to changing the threshold back to what it currently is, that is, back to \$1,500 from \$750, was another recommendation made by the LNP members in the committee stage of the process. They highlighted the difficulties with the \$750 change.


**Mr Krause:** It's just more red tape.



**Mr NICHOLLS:** More red tape, absolutely; I take the interjection. It would have been more red tape and we are now back to where we were before the bill was introduced. Of course, we will support that because it shows that the government is listening to the ideas and the comments being put forward by the LNP in relation to these matters. That is a good thing.

The document retention rule is a good thing. I can remember back many years—more than I care to remember—to my first job as an articulated clerk. At Christmas time, for the princely sum of \$96 a week, I was sent down to the basement to shred the legal firm's files that were more than 20 years old. We had a little shredder that we put everything through. Those days are well and truly behind us. The volume of documents now is far greater. As anyone who goes to court knows, there are whole worlds of IT systems set up to keep track of documents. The information overload, as parliament itself knows, is enormous. Being able to sensibly move documents that have reached their use by date out of the system makes perfect sense. That is something that we will support as well, going as it does some way towards simplifying the process for businesses, particularly small businesses, which legal professions predominantly are throughout the state.

With those few comments, I will leave there. No doubt we will hear from other members of the opposition in relation to some of the other provisions of the bill.

 **Mr HUNT** (Caloundra—ALP) (4.57 pm): I rise to make a contribution on the Justice and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023. I thank my fellow committee members: Chair Peter Russo, the member for Toohey; Jonty Bush, the member for Cooper; Sandy Bolton, the member for Noosa; Laura Gerber, the deputy chair and member for Currumbin; and the immutable Jon Krause, the member for Scenic Rim. As is always the case, the secretariat set the standard in terms of maintaining a huge workload while effectively running the process and delivering a very high standard of service to all members of the committee. The committee invited stakeholders and subscribers to make written submissions on the bill and received 12 submissions. The committee received a written briefing on the bill from the Department of Justice and Attorney-General on 13 June 2023 and a public briefing on the bill from DJAG on 13 July 2023.

Following the hearings, the committee made seven recommendations, firstly, that the bill be passed. Secondly, the committee recommended that the Queensland government prioritise the development of a guide for the media to support the responsible reporting of sexual violence in accordance with recommendation 84 of *Hear her voice* report 2. In recommendation 3 the committee recommended that the Queensland government monitor whether the naming of offenders unintentionally creates a barrier for women to report sexual offences. In recommendation 4 the committee recommended that proposed reforms introduced by the bill relating to victims are accompanied with trauma informed training for those interacting with victims in the criminal justice system, including legal services, victims' services and investigating and prosecuting bodies.

In recommendation 5 the committee recommended that the Queensland government consider the service and resourcing impacts that these reforms will have on the victim support and community legal service sectors. In recommendation 6 the committee recommended that the Queensland government consider changing 'woman' to 'pregnant person' in proposed section 319A of the bill to better reflect the diversity of modern community expectations in Queensland. In recommendation 7 the committee recommended that the Queensland government continues to undertake work in relation to improving safety for victims of domestic and family violence, noting the prevalence of systems abuse.

One of the more significant and I think extremely civilised outcomes that will come into being as a result of this bill will be to better recognise the deaths of unborn children as a result of criminal conduct. These self-same changes were informed by targeted consultation with a range of stakeholders including legal stakeholders, the judiciary, human rights organisations and families impacted by the death of an unborn child as a result of criminal conduct. Currently, Queensland law does not give an unborn child legal status as a person. This only occurs when it has completely proceeded in a living state from its mother, a legal position known as the born-alive rule. This means that offences such as murder and manslaughter do not apply in relation to an unborn child.

This bill includes changes to the sentencing principles in the Penalties and Sentences Act 1992 and the Youth Justice Act 1992 that require the court to treat the destruction of an unborn child as an aggravating factor. Further, it provides that a person is eligible for funeral expense assistance up to \$8,000 for the cost of a funeral of an unborn child who dies as a result of an act of violence. With great sensitivity, the bill also makes changes to the Criminal Code to clarify and enable the name of an unborn child or a description of an unborn child to be stated in an indictment for an offence committed in relation to a pregnant person that allegedly results in the destruction of the life of the unborn child.

Sentencing outcomes are one of the ways that victims feel validated. They feel that they matter. They feel that they have been heard. This amendment is pivotal to addressing those very human feelings. It is worth noting that there were some reservations and objections to the proposed amendments. While DVConnect was broadly supportive, Women's Legal Service Queensland strongly objected to the creation of an offence that gives legal status to a fetus, stating that 'any attempt to change the legal status of fetuses risks undermining women's rights'.

WLSQ further strongly objected to the bill's use of the term 'unborn child', stating that it 'encourages and reinforces anti-abortionist views and is unnecessarily emotive'. I believe that this concern is entirely justified in some respects. There is no doubt in my mind that some people will, either inadvertently or through being deliberately obtuse, try to equate these laws with a woman's right to choose. This of course is pure nonsense, but I sincerely thank Women's Legal Service Queensland for raising what I think is a very valid point.

The department's response did provide the necessary assurance on this very important point. It is worth repeating here but, before I do, the words of Sarah Milosevic provide a very heartfelt and poignant reminder of the motivation of the amendments. She said—

... having your child acknowledged as an unborn child and not a fetus, which is not a very nice term when you are going through what we have been through, gives a sense of healing. I talk to a lot of women who have lost children. ... having that acknowledgment of your child helps in the healing process. It helps you to heal and grieve and to know that your child mattered, just as much as they mattered to you.

I thank Sarah for her very well-chosen words and I thank the member for Lockyer for his very sensible work in this space. The department added—

The reforms in the bill to better recognise the deaths of unborn children do not create criminal culpability for the actions of the pregnant person. The bill preserves the 'born alive' rule, which means that an unborn child does not have legal personhood to conflict with the rights of the pregnant person. It also means that the pregnant person cannot commit offences such as grievous bodily harm or manslaughter in relation to their unborn child.

I believe that these assurances are both necessary and highly instructive.

I would like to move on to another aspect of the bill that I believe is of great importance and will be received as such by the people of Queensland. The bill proposes to remove restrictions in the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences) Act 1978 prohibiting the identification of an adult defendant charged with a prescribed sexual offence prior to finalising of committal proceedings. Currently, only Queensland and the Northern Territory protect the anonymity of a defendant charged with rape, attempt to commit rape, assault with intent to commit rape and sexual assault. This means that not only will we be bringing Queensland into line with every other Australian state but also, crucially, these classes of offence will be brought into line with all other criminal offences in Queensland regarding publishing information about a person accused of an offence.

The Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce *Hear her voice* report 2, quite correctly in my view, concluded that there was no justification for the law to treat these defendants differently from any other. From DVConnect we hear—

These protections are in part due to historical mistrust of sexual violence reporting. ... the ongoing application of such protections perpetrate rape myths and general community mistrust that victims of sexual violence make up complaints ...

...

Removing this protection adds supports the concept that victims must be believed.

In tandem with this support is the committee's recommendation that asks the government to prioritise the development of a guide for media on the responsible reporting of sexual violence. Recommendation 84 of the Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce *Hear her voice* report 2 specifically asks that the Queensland government develop a guide for the media to support responsible reporting of sexual violence. The development of the guide will be followed by implementation activities with media across the state to promote the guide and encourage compliance. Our government supports this recommendation and, in response, indicated that the Queensland government will develop and promote a sexual violence media guide to support responsible reporting of sexual violence. Where relevant, the guide will be consistent with the revised domestic and family violence media guide as per recommendation 6 of report 1. This government is not just implementing this media guide; it is accelerating it, entirely consistent with the recommendations of the committee.

I commend this bill to the House both to protect the victims of sexual violence and to acknowledge the pain of parents who have lost their unborn children to criminal acts. It is, as the Attorney-General has outlined already, an unimaginable tragedy, but this government has heard the pleas of family members and acted. For that reason, I commend the bill to the House.



**Mrs GERBER** (Currumbin—LNP) (5.07 pm): The bill we are debating today is a large omnibus bill dealing with amendments completely unrelated to each other and others that are so substantial and important that they should be in their own standalone bill. The bill deals with: disclosure of a sexual offender's identity prior to a committal; criminal conduct causing death of an unborn child as an aggravating factor—Sophie's Law; legal cost disclosure obligations; and changes to electoral redistributions within the Electoral Act. The government has chosen to lump all of these issues into the one omnibus bill—they have no place being debated together—to avoid proper scrutiny and debate on aspects that are contentious. Members need not take my word for it. The QLS stated in the public hearing—

The Justice and Other Legislation Amendment Bill is a large omnibus bill that significantly amends several pieces of legislation, many of which are unrelated. We note, and have noted previously, that omnibus bills are inappropriate. They have the potential to breach fundamental legislative principles because members are required to support or oppose the bill in its entirety, whereas several of the amendments proposed in the bill would be more appropriately addressed in specific standalone bills.

It is yet another sign of the chaos and crisis within this tired, third-term Palaszczuk Labor government that is putting forward disputed matters together with positive changes in the one tranche of amendments to stifle debate and avoid scrutiny.

I turn first to criminal conduct causing death of an unborn child as an aggravating factor—Sophie's Law. Sophie's Law will allow the courts to recognise an unborn child who has been killed due to criminal conduct and allow the cost of their funeral to be covered, up to \$8,500. Sophie Ella was Sarah and Peter Milosevic's unborn child. On 29 August 2014 she was horrifically taken from them by a driver who was speeding, drunk and high on drugs. His car collided with Sarah and Peter's car and baby Sophie was killed. I think this House should hear directly from Sarah, so I am going to read into the record her statement to the committee. She stated—

Sophie's Injuries were so severe she was no longer compatible with life, she had significant internal organ damage along with brain damage. She suffered pain in utero before her heart finally stopped.

It took 2 hours to extract me from the vehicle while being in labour the whole time I was 39 weeks and 6 days pregnant. We were ready to welcome Sophie at any moment, the family heirloom cradle was set up her, her clothes washed and hospital bags packed and car seat in the car. But on the 29th of August that all changed. She was taken from us. It was close to midnight when they confirmed she had passed but as her mother I knew she was gone I had no more movement she wasn't kicking anymore she was gone all because someone committed an offence that cost us the life of our child. He hit us with such force that my uterus ruptured and she was no longer in my womb but was in my abdomen. He took away my right to bare more children I lost 2 more pregnancies following the crash ...

The court acknowledged that the drunk, speeding and drug driver caused the death of Sophie Ella, but there was no law that he could be charged under that would serve justice. Instead, the perpetrator lost his licence for five months and received a \$950 fine. It is incomprehensible—the most egregious form of crime that could be committed against a family and the perpetrator only received a fine and a loss of licence.

**Mr Krause:** More for a mobile phone offence.

**Mrs GERBER:** I take that interjection. With the support of their local member, the LNP member for Lockyer, the Milosevics, galvanised in their grief, campaigned for change. It was a long, hard fight to get the Palaszczuk government to this point.

I need to put on the record that, as a result of this government's chaotic legislative process, it has deprived Sophie's Law being called Sophie's Law because this extremely important amendment has been lumped in with amendments to legal costs disclosure agreements and changes to the Electoral Act. We are debating the Justice and Other Legislation Amendment Bill when we should be debating Sophie's Law. Sophie's Law should be a separate bill and should be so named. Even though this bill does not name the changes to the Criminal Code as Sophie's Law, the LNP will be referring to this as Sophie's Law. Any other jurisdictions that adopt this law should recognise this as Sophie's Law out of respect to Sarah and Peter Milosevic.

I thank Sarah and Peter and the member for Lockyer for their dedication to this reform and for the support over many years that they have provided to other families. Tragically, over the past eight years, while waiting for this reform, 15 women in Queensland have unthinkably had their unborn child taken from them in circumstances where justice has not been served. Baby Miles is among them. This reform comes too late for them, but the incredible courage and strength of these families to advocate for this change, alongside the LNP member for Lockyer, after suffering such imaginable loss is truly remarkable. In Sarah's words: 'Families need to know their baby mattered. Sophie's Law means there is some justice in the devastation of losing a child.' This is Sophie's legacy.

In what is quite an unnatural segue—but I guess that is what we have come to expect from this chaotic Labor government—I now turn to the legal profession and costs disclosure obligations contained within this omnibus bill. Lawyers and law firms are required to inform clients what costs they will be charged and how they will be calculated. This is a costs agreement. The provisions of a costs agreement to the client is strongly supported, regardless of the amount of legal costs. This does not change under this amendment.

The proposed amendment deals with the threshold amount that triggers when a law practice must provide a costs disclosure notice. The amendments proposed to increase the threshold for when a law firm has to provide a client with a detailed costs disclosure notice from \$1,500 to \$3,000. Like everything with Labor, the devil is in the detail. While on one hand they are increasing the threshold for law firms in relation to when they must provide a detailed costs disclosure notice, on the other hand the original amendments created a new obligation on law firms, increasing the regulatory burden to provide an abbreviated costs disclosure notice for any costs expected to be \$750 or more.


The amendments as originally proposed would have meant that practitioners who are currently required to provide a costs disclosure notice for matters less than \$1,500 would need to provide an abbreviated costs disclosure notice. Both the QLS and principal of Sterling Law Leon Bertrand expressed concerns that this is contrary to the legislative intention to reduce the regulatory burden for law practices. The LNP expressed a similar concern. We said in our statement of reservation that the current \$1,500 threshold should be maintained as the disclosure threshold. I am pleased to hear today that the minister has backflipped on this amendment and has bowed to requests and will amend this clause so that the threshold is maintained. I thank principal of Sterling Law Leon Bertrand for coming forward and presenting his well-reasoned and sound submissions to our committee in this regard.

Turning to yet another unrelated issue, this bill seeks to address the issue of the electoral redistribution process. The bill removes reference to the 60-day time frame associated with the Queensland Redistribution Commission's finalisation of an electoral redistribution and instead inserts 'as soon as practicable'. This means that it is now possible for a new electoral boundary to be declared within 60 days of an election. This creates incredible uncertainty for the political process and is unfair to Queenslanders, especially when these changes could see Queensland residents still unclear which seat they will be voting in as few as three weeks out from an election and candidates uncertain of the boundaries of the electorate they are seeking to serve. In our view, the mandate upon the Redistribution Commission to finalise boundaries in a set time frame when all the prior work around the redistribution has been completed should be maintained.

Finally, in the short amount of time that I have left, I will try to address yet another part of this bill that should be debated separately—the new provisions allowing for the disclosure of a sexual offender's identity prior to the committal hearing. This amendment follows recommendation 83 of the Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce's *Hear her voice* report 2. The report also asked for an interim guide to be developed for the media. It is unlikely that that would have happened before 2024. I note that the minister announced some amendments. Like the shadow Attorney-General, I am concerned that these are the only checks and balances for this part of the bill. I would like to see these media guidelines tabled in the parliament and distributed before coming into effect.

The LNP will not oppose the bill because it contains Sophie's Law, which LNP members have been fighting for for years. It is obvious that there are issues with other amendments in this bill but they have been lumped together so they can be debated together. This is the hallmark of a government running from scrutiny—a government that is avoiding transparency and stifling debate.

*(Time expired)*

 **Mr RUSSO** (Toohey—ALP) (5.17 pm): I rise to speak to the Justice and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023. The Legal Affairs and Safety Committee, in its report No. 50, tabled in the Assembly on 28 July 2023, has recommended to the Assembly that this bill be passed. Our committee made a total of seven recommendations as a result of our consideration of the proposed bill.

The purpose of the bill is to clarify, strengthen and update legislation concerning the administration of justice, including legislation relating to the operation of courts and tribunals, the regulation of the legal profession, the conduct of civil proceedings and electoral matters. Overall, the bill amends 30 acts and four regulations, as well as repealing the Court Funds Act 1973. Further amendments for consideration in detail have been recommended and will be introduced, as the Attorney-General outlined during her second reading speech.

These amendments relate to the removal of restrictions in the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences) Act 1978 prohibiting the identification of an adult defendant charged with a prescribed sexual offence prior to the finalisation of committal proceedings. Other than the Northern Territory, Queensland is the only state or territory that currently maintains a defendant's anonymity in these cases. Further deliberation proposes the amendment to commence on 3 October 2023 for part 9 of the bill to ensure the amendments to the act commence in a timely way, and to provide maximum clarity, transparency and notice to relevant stakeholders. A media guide is to be developed and distributed to media organisations and journalists prior to this date to assist their reporting on relevant sexual violence matters before the courts.

These amendments were proposed in response to the government's commitment to implement recommendation 83 of the Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce report *Hear her voice—report 2: Women and girls' experiences across the criminal justice system*, which concluded that there was no justification for the law to treat defendants who are charged with a prescribed sexual offence differently to those who are charged with any other criminal offence. DVConnect, in their submission to the inquiry, put it plainly when they stated—

These protections are in part due to historical mistrust of sexual violence reporting. Not only is it evident that this was implemented into our legal system based on false assumptions, but the ongoing application of such protections perpetuate rape myths and general community mistrust that victims of sexual violence make up complaints to damage reputations of defendants or to preserve their own reputation or regret ... Removing this protection adds support to the concept that victims must be believed.

The committee recognised the importance of the development of a sexual violence media guide being developed and distributed prior to the introduction of the amendments in order to provide a framework for media organisations to incorporate a trauma informed approach to reporting and interviewing. The positive outcomes that would potentially arise from the development of a guide for the media led to recommendation 2, which states—

The committee recommends that the Queensland Government prioritise the development of a guide for the media to support responsible reporting of sexual violence in accordance with Recommendation 84 of the Hear her voice Report 2.

The committee noted the Women's Legal Service Queensland's feedback and their general support for the CL(SO) Act amendments, including the increased media reporting possibly leading to more victims coming forward to report sexual offences, as well as greater positive community discussions about gender-based violence. The committee considered that the removing of restrictions in the CL(SO) Act may have undesirable or negative consequences for the victims of any alleged sexual offence. This could take the form of an increase in the reluctance of victim-survivors to report due to fear of retaliation and create a barrier for women making a complaint.

The committee's recommendation 3 was that the Queensland government monitor whether the naming of offenders unintentionally creates barriers for women to report sexual offences. This was an important recommendation as the committee noted the purpose of the amendments is to promote open justice and freedom of speech and to bring the class of offences in line with all other criminal offences in Queensland. However, this was regarding publishing of information about a person accused of an offence.

The bill proposes to better recognise the deaths of unborn children that have occurred as a result of offences committed in relation to a pregnant person. As it is currently legislated, Queensland law does not give an unborn child legal status as a person. This only occurs when a legal position is attained known as the 'born alive' rule. This means offences such as murder and manslaughter do not apply in relation to an unborn child. Sarah and Peter Milosevic support the recognition of an unborn child who has been killed due to criminal conduct, with their submission reflecting on the loss of Sophie Ella. They told the committee—

The impact on a family that loses a child because of someone else's actions adds another layer of grief, there was no justice for us ... this law reform while it doesn't bring your child back at least you know that your baby counted. She received a birth certificate, death certificate and was counted as a death on the road toll, the only place she wasn't counted was in a court.

In response to concerns raised by other stakeholders regarding the inference of creating a legal status of an unborn child, the department provided the following advice—

The bill does not introduce a new offence and it does not introduce a circumstance of aggravation. The bill introduces an aggravating factor. An aggravating factor only comes into play after the person has been convicted of the offence.

This amendment will allow the unborn child to be recognised on an indictment at the discretion of the parents, which will aid in the healing process for many parents and families.

The bill makes several amendments to the Legal Profession Act 2007 by proposing changes to the requirements of law practices to retain client documents. The bill proposes to allow a law practice, the Queensland Law Society and community legal centres to destroy or dispose of any client documents if seven years have passed since the completion of the matter if the practice was unable to obtain instructions from the client, despite making reasonable efforts to do so.

The bill will also apply to client documents held by the Queensland Law Society where it holds client documents of law practices that have gone into receivership with this section applying to the documents held by QLS for a reason other than an appointment of a receiver for the law practice. This amendment was welcomed by representative stakeholders, many of whom expressed a similar view in that file maintenance and destruction, particularly legacy paper files and archives, can be a time-consuming, painstaking and expensive process.


While some concern was raised regarding the destruction of client records, DJAG noted that the provisions do not compel a law practice, or community legal centre, to destroy records. The provision is proposed to apply in the absence of client instructions and any decision must be reasonable in all the circumstances and having regard to the nature of the documents.

The bill further proposes to increase the cost disclosure threshold in section 311 of the Legal Profession Act to \$3,000. An amendment will be introduced to increase the proposed threshold for abbreviated cost disclosure in the Legal Profession Act from \$750 to \$1,500 on the basis that non-disclosure below the current detailed costs disclosure of \$1,500 has not been identified as an issue in practice. Some stakeholders suggested a higher increase in the cost disclosure threshold will reduce the regulatory burden for law practices and promote cost transparency for consumers of legal services. The committee noted the concerns raised. However, it supported the premise that clients should have full and frank disclosure of legal costs.

Amendments to the Electoral Act 1992 would allow completed postal votes that are not inside the reply paid envelopes supplied by the Electoral Commission of Queensland to be counted. The Electoral Commission is particularly supportive of this amendment and estimates this measure will save up to 30 per cent of the 57,000 rejected postal votes, which is a significant number of postal votes deemed invalid under the current act. I am sure there would be some candidates who ran in previous elections who would also welcome this amendment. Furthermore, by adopting this measure Queensland will align with other jurisdictions around postal votes.

The Electoral Commission also welcomed the bill's proposed changes to the definition of 'special postal voter' to include patients in a hospital that is not a polling place or who are ill or infirm and unable to travel to a polling place as this amendment will align the act with the Commonwealth definition of 'general postal voter', 'providing those electors certainty about their status in both State and federal elections'.

This bill will also amend the Supreme Court of Queensland Act 1991 to provide that an admission guideline takes effect on the day it is published on the court's website, or a later day fixed in the guideline, rather than on the minister giving notice of the issuing of the guidelines. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Ms BOLTON** (Noosa—Ind) (5.27 pm): The Justice and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023 contains a range of amendments, as we have heard, to 16 various acts, most of which are administrative changes to improve the operations of government. However, there are also substantive policy changes introduced.

The bill will remove restrictions currently in place in the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences) Act 1978 which prohibit identification of an adult defendant charged with a sexual offence until the completion of a committal proceeding, and only if they are then committed to trial can they be identified. The argument put forward by government is that it will promote open justice by bringing defendants of sexual offences in line with all other criminal offences in Queensland regarding publishing information about a person accused of an offence, as well as other states. It also implements recommendation 83 of report 2 of the Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce.

The amendment includes an ability to apply to the court for a non-publication order with a three-day notice period for the application. The vast majority of stakeholders supported the amendment. However, there were issues raised. DVConnect submitted that abusive partners may use courts to create a sense of ongoing insecurity and distress for their victims. This can involve repeatedly filing unfounded claims, making false accusations or engaging in aggressive litigation to maintain power and control, further traumatising their partners.

In addition, expanding the use of preliminary disclosure to lower courts broadens both the number of people and the types of cases that can seek to access information about the other party before court proceedings. The Women's Legal Service Queensland also noted that the change may increase the reluctance of some victim-survivors to report sexual assault due to the fear of retaliation by the defendant. The department in response to this said that the legislation will be reviewed as soon as practicable five years after the last of the relevant legislative amendments from both taskforce reports has commenced.

The committee report recommended that the government monitor whether the naming of offenders unintentionally creates barriers to women reporting sexual offences. Legal Aid Queensland submitted that the *Hear her voice* report identified these changes should be introduced in conjunction with a guide for the media to support the responsible reporting of sexual violence. The department stated they anticipate the development of the interim guide to be completed by January 2024—before the commencement of the amendments—and the committee recommended that the government prioritise this work to ensure this responsibility is understood.

The Queensland Law Society raised the time period of three days for an applicant seeking a non-publication order, stating that it creates a number of hurdles for the defendant and complainants. Other states and territories do not always have a time constraint on these applications, but where they do, as in Victoria, it is three days. The department argued that it is also consistent with other urgent applications in Queensland courts.


The bill also proposes to better acknowledge the deaths of unborn children due to criminal conduct. These changes come after a decade of advocacy by Sarah and Peter Milosevic, who were the victims of a criminal motor vehicle crash. They tragically lost their unborn daughter, Sophie, at 39 weeks and six days. My deepest sympathy and appreciation goes to them both and the member for Lockyer for his work. The three main changes regarding unborn deaths are as follows: (1) allows the death of an unborn child to be an aggravating factor in sentencing for serious offences such as murder, grievous bodily harm and dangerous operation of a motor vehicle; (2) enables an unborn child victim to be named on an indictment; and (3) expands the definition of victim to include an unborn child for the purpose of the Victims of Crime Assistance Act.

Legal Aid Queensland stated that the current law already appropriately addresses the death of an unborn child and expressed concerns that the changes are misguided and may cause injustice and even harm where a pregnant mother's self-regarding behaviours, particularly drug use, results in fetal harm. However, the department pointed out that complexities in the current law mean it is not equivalent to the proposed amendments and the bill does not create any new offences and thus cannot create new offences for when a pregnant mother's self-regarding behaviours result in fetal harm. They also confirmed that adding an unborn child's name to the indictment does not change the offence or criminal culpability. The committee also recommended that the bill be accompanied by trauma informed training for those who interact with victims in the criminal justice system, including legal services, victims' services and investigating and prosecution bodies. This is desperately needed.

Finally, the QLS raised the problems that can arise with these long and disjointed bills which contain many, many amendments and highlighted the previous comments of the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee back in report No. 18 of 2012, which noted that these types of bills may arguably breach the fundamental legislative principle in section 4(2)(b) of the Legislative Standards Act 1992. Even without reference to the Legislative Standards Act, it is detrimental to representative democracy when members of parliament must vote up or down on a bill containing wildly different provisions, making it difficult for their electorate to understand their position on any of them. This was also emphasised in the statement of reservation, and I wholeheartedly agree.

This bill has provided insights into the trauma inflicted every day in our communities by those who have little regard for others through their dangerous behaviours as well as concerns about disclosure. However, the number of Queenslanders who may be saved as a result of the publication of an identity is extremely relevant. There has not been any evidence in other jurisdictions of identity disclosure creating unintended consequences, including the tarnishing of reputations. This should mitigate these concerns.

I want to thank our chair, the member for Toohey, and my fellow members of the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee for their efforts on this bill, our secretariat for their incredible work and all Queenslanders who participated in this inquiry. To Sarah and Peter and all who have lost their children through acts of violence: our hearts go out to you every day. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Ms BUSH** (Cooper—ALP) (5.34 pm): I rise to support the Justice and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. I would like to begin by saying how proud I am to be on the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee which considered this bill. I would like to thank our committee members, the member for Toohey, our secretariat and all those who made submissions in the public hearings. I thought that was a tremendous effort, so thank you to those submitters.

The bill provides for two really important outcomes for victims of two separate crimes: victims of sexual assault and victims who experience the tragic loss of an unborn child as a result of criminal acts. I am also really proud to be part of a government that does listen to the voices of victims. Something I often talk about is that victims of crime are not homogenous. Our needs are not the same. They are quite distinct, they are different and they are constantly evolving as society evolves. I am really proud to be part of a government that listens to that, responds to that and meets that head on. I think it is important to acknowledge that as one step forward is taken in the victim space we are looking up and looking at what is that next step. That is a conversation that is forever evolving, and it is important that we as a government are able, ready and willing to take that step head on. I am really proud to be part of a government that can do that.

We have had a tremendous amount of reform in the victims of crime space over the number of years I have been involved in this area but also obviously in the last week. Last week I was happy to join with the Attorney-General and Deputy Premier to announce the interim Victims' Commissioner Jon Rouse. For those who are unaware, Jon is a fantastic individual who has had a really long, positive and recognised career in policing, particularly in the provision of supports and the investigation and prosecution of child sexual assault offenders, so the appointment of the interim Victims' Commissioner is fantastic. Today it was announced that a select committee chaired by the independent member for Noosa will consider the impacts of crime on victims. I know that the member for Noosa will do a fantastic job in that role. These announcements come off the back of a range of reforms, most notably in the *Hear her voice* reports, which contained over 200 recommendations to better respond to women's experiences of justice. This bill and the recommendations that were made by our committee and in our report uphold some of those recommendations.

The committee report did make seven recommendations. I am pleased that the government has supported those. I will speak to those recommendations shortly, but I will briefly outline the intention of the bill. The bill amends a broad range of legislation relating to the administration of justice, including the operation of courts and tribunals, the regulation of the legal profession, and the conduct of civil proceedings and electoral matters. Importantly, the bill includes amendments to the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences) Act to remove restrictions prohibiting the identification of an adult defendant charged with a prescribed sexual offence prior to the finalisation of committal proceedings. Currently, only defendants charged with rape and attempted rape, assault with the intent to rape and sexual assault have their identity protected before committal. As we know, Queensland is one of two remaining jurisdictions in this country which offers this protection. When I speak to people about this, most people are stunned to learn that accused rapists have these protections. While victims are identified and their life and experiences are rolled out in the public domain, those accused of these crimes have that protection. Even alleged murderers and people accused of serious crimes do not have that level of protection. These amendments implement recommendation 83 of report 2 of the Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce.

The minister has already touched on the use of rape myths to defend this practice. I would like to commend all of the women and men involved across the nation in the Let Her Speak movement which has powerfully and appropriately debunked these myths and advocated for the voices of victims to be heard. The committee recommended that the Queensland government prioritise the development of a guide for the media to support the responsible reporting of sexual violence in accordance with recommendation 84 of *Hear her voice* report 2. I would like to congratulate and thank the minister on her decisive action on this. The publishing and circulation of this guideline, along with the expedient introduction of these reforms, will be welcomed by victims of sexual violence in Queensland.

The committee also recommended that proposed reforms introduced by the bill relating to victims are accompanied with trauma informed training for those interacting with victims in the criminal justice system, including legal services, victims services and the investigating and prosecuting bodies. Like I said, I was really pleased to join with the Deputy Premier and Attorney-General to announce the appointment of Jon Rouse to the role of the interim Victims' Commissioner. One of the functions for this interim Victims' Commissioner will be to work with the sector to ensure that agencies are increasing their professional development and responding to victims in a trauma informed way. I acknowledge that the victims sector continues to face resourcing impacts, and the committee recommended that the



Queensland government continue to monitor those impacts. I think it is really important that we do this. If we are to have a robust and responsive service sector, we need to be alive to their resourcing impacts here in Queensland.

The bill also delivers on the Palaszczuk government's commitment to consider reforms to better recognise the deaths of unborn children as a result of criminal conduct. We would all acknowledge that the loss of an unborn child is devastating. To lose a child as a result of another person's criminal conduct is profoundly distressing for the parents, their families and the whole community. We know from listening to victims that there are two assaults that can occur on this occasion for all victims of crime. The first is the initial act of violence which is so damaging to people. The lesser known assault to victims is that systemic trauma—the trauma that they experience when they try to navigate a criminal justice system that simply was not designed with victims in mind. We can all imagine what it is like to lose an unborn child through a criminal act, but to then be told that that child cannot be named on the indictment and cannot be recognised is just beyond belief.


I would like to take the opportunity to acknowledge all of the families and the broader community who have advocated for reform to better recognise the death of an unborn child as a result of criminal conduct, particularly Sarah and Peter Milosevic. I acknowledge the member for Scenic Rim in his support of the family and his advocacy for the family, as well as his support of our committee.

**Mr Krause:** It was the member for Lockyer.

**Ms BUSH:** I am sorry. It was the member for Lockyer. The member for Scenic Rim was fantastic on the committee. Member for Lockyer, I apologise.

These amendments in relation to the loss of an unborn child due to criminal conduct go to allowing the name or description of an unborn child to be stated in relevant indictments and requires the court to treat ending an unborn child's life as an aggravating factor in sentencing for relevant serious offences. It is important to acknowledge what those serious offences are under the Criminal Code. We are looking at charges relating to murder, manslaughter, grievous bodily harm, wounding, dangerous operation of a vehicle and assault occasioning bodily harm. In addition, the careless driving of a motor vehicle under the transport operations act will be included as a serious offence so that the aggravating factor can be applied to those offences at sentencing. The bill will expand the definition of 'victim' to include family members of an unborn child, allowing those family members, including siblings, to have a voice in the court proceedings and to articulate to the court the impact of the crime on them through a victim impact statement. It will also expand eligibility for funeral financial assistance for unborn children.

The committee did make a recommendation in relation to these aspects of the bill. The recommendation was that the Queensland government consider changing 'woman' to 'pregnant person' in the Criminal Code to better reflect the diversity and modern community expectations of Queensland. That recommendation came through submissions received and aligns with previous commitments from our government through the Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Bill to update the language throughout all Queensland legislation. These amendments will certainly progress victims' rights and victims' voices here in Queensland. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr KRAUSE** (Scenic Rim—LNP) (5.43 pm): This bill should be known as Sophie's Law, but unfortunately due to the government putting these provisions into an omnibus bill it cannot be known expressly as Sophie's Law. However, the LNP welcomes the adoption of that law with the passage of this bill to recognise unborn children who die due to criminal offences. I want to recognise the advocacy of the member for Lockyer, who worked with Peter and Sarah Milosevic over many years to bring about the legislation we are debating today, including through collecting over 100,000 signatures on a petition. That takes a lot of work not just by the member for Lockyer but by others, including Sarah and Peter. This is a tribute to Sophie and hopefully will see justice for other unborn babies who are involved in such tragic circumstances in the future.

In relation to other matters concerning this bill, I want to touch on changes to the Legal Profession Act regarding disclosure obligations when it comes to a costs agreement. I note the Attorney-General has flagged changes in relation to this. They step back from what looked like would have been an imposition of more regulatory burdens for what are relatively low fee arrangement transactions for legal practices, up to \$3,000. Imposing another layer of burden for such low value practices would not have helped particularly sole practitioners who are managing their costs and time in dealing with clients. It would have ended up being passed on to clients.

I want to recognise the single advocate who came to the committee about this—a gentleman called Leon Bertrand from Sterling Law. He seems to have quite a flourishing small practice in Brisbane. In fact, if you look at his website, it is quite interesting to read some of the things that Leon has been involved in, including obtaining a verdict of not guilty for a taxi driver charged with fraud after ‘a brutally effective cross examination of the complainant’. He also was involved in defamation action with the former senator David Leyonhjelm against current Senator Sarah Hanson-Young. In addition, he was actually the president of the Griffith University SRC back in the day. He is a very interesting character but very much on point when it comes to reducing red tape in small legal practices. I acknowledge the government’s amendments, and it is good that they are doing that. Well done, Leon.

I turn to the Electoral Act to talk about the changes to the redistribution process and the removal of the 60-day time frame for the finalisation of a redistribution when all the consultation has been done. I know this is only one small part of that whole process and I know there are a whole lot of other parts. I also know that a redistribution is unlikely to be held this term. There are three triggers for it: 7½ years, 30 per cent of seats being under or over quota, or parliamentary seats being added to this place. Maybe that will not occur this term, but there are a lot of time frames in the bill which already say ‘as soon as practicable’. This amendment adds another one. As I see it, the way the Electoral Act stands at the moment there is nothing to stop a redistribution being finalised as late as about 60 days before an election. Now that we have fixed terms, that is not appropriate. We know when the election is going to be and there needs to be reform in the Electoral Act around that entire process, particularly the timing of redistributions.

This amendment adds one more layer of uncertainty by taking away that 60-day time frame after all the consultation has been done. We have had comments, we have had suggestions, we have had comments on suggestions, and then we have a draft redistribution and comments and suggestions on that. It is all over bar the shouting, and we should be able to have some certainty around the time frame when it gets to that stage of a redistribution. Members, you have to forgive my cynicism when it comes to this Labor government amending the Electoral Act because we have seen it before.

**Mrs Frecklington:** How many minutes?

**Mr KRAUSE:** I will take that interjection. This government came into the House with 17 or 18 minutes notice and introduced compulsory preferential voting. It did not go to a committee. At least this went to committee and we got to have submissions about it. Forgive my cynicism that there is not some underlying motive behind this amendment to suit the Labor Party’s agenda—just like they did with the change to the voting system and just like they have done with the financial gerrymander they have introduced through a range of changes to the electoral laws. There was 18 minutes notice. We must never forget that. They changed the voting system with 18 minutes notice. They need to clarify this redistribution process by reforming that entire part of the Electoral Act now that we have fixed terms, but the 60-day period should stay as it is.

**Ms Leahy:** A bit like the council runner-up laws.

**Mr KRAUSE:** The council runner-up laws as well. Thank you, member for Warrego. I had forgotten about that one.

**Ms Leahy:** The pineapple.

**Mr KRAUSE:** That was about the pineapple and then he was not allowed to take his seat because they did not like him. Anyway, that is a digression from what is before us here, member for Warrego. You are distracting me.

**Mr Russo:** It’s not hard.

**Mr KRAUSE:** ‘It’s not hard.’ Member for Toohey, I think I heard you say that. This bill is an omnibus bill: it is dealing with 30 pieces of legislation, and that undermines democracy, member for Toohey.

**Government members** interjected.

**Mr KRAUSE:** It does, because there are so many people out there who would have wanted to have their say and would have wanted us to talk about Sophie’s Law for 10 minutes, but we did not have 10 minutes because we have 30 acts in this bill that are being amended and we have to try and cover them all.

**Mrs Gerber:** Controversial.

**Mr KRAUSE:** Some of them are controversial—I take that interjection. Some of them are controversial amendments.

The final matter I want to speak about is the changes to the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences) Act and recommendations 83 and 84 that came out of the *Hear her voice* taskforce report 2. In relation to this, I note that the Attorney has made some comments about the guidelines being available when those provisions commence. However, I note that those guidelines were not available for review at the committee stage. They were not available for anyone to comment on during that stage and, to my knowledge—I did not hear exactly what the Attorney said—I am not sure they have been distributed in the public domain yet, so how is anyone meant to make any sort of judgement about—

**Mrs Gerber:** We're just meant to trust them.

**Mr KRAUSE:** I will take that interjection. I think we can all agree that that is not something we can actually do in this place. I am suggesting that those guidelines should have been available at the time this bill was reviewed because, as the QLS points out in their submission, recommendation 83 in report 2 is contingent upon implementation of recommendation 84. What is recommendation 84? That is the sexual violence media guide to support responsible reporting of sexual violence. This is all from the QLS submission. I want to highlight some elements of that submission, and I am going to read part of the QLS's submission, which states—


... QLS considers that the current position in Queensland provides for the protection of the complainant's identity in certain circumstances whilst seeking to strike a balance between the right of the accused to a fair trial and the general rule of openness of the court and that court proceedings may be openly reported.

In jurisdictions such as New South Wales and Victoria, the complainant must not be identified without authorisation by the court unless consent has been obtained from the complainant (over the age of 14). Whilst it is recognised that complainants being able to self-publish details (and others publishing details with the consent of the complainant) provides a complainant with control over the circumstances in which their 'story' is told, there are obvious risks to the accused's ability to receive a fair trial in circumstances where jurors may have access to details of the complaint of which the prosecution, court and defence have not been made aware. It has been long recognised by the courts that:

- 'If material is obtained or used by the jury privately, whether before or after retirement, two linked principles, bedrocks of the administration of criminal justice, and indeed the rule of law, are contravened.'

That comes from a case of *R v Karakaya*. The point that the QLS were making is that they think there is an appropriate balance between the ability of the complainant to tell their story and the right of the accused to a fair trial, and they were emphasising, in my view, the need for these two recommendations—83 and 84—to be implemented jointly, at the same time. The committee could not do that.

*(Time expired)*

 **Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (Minister for Health, Mental Health and Ambulance Services and Minister for Women) (5.53 pm): I rise to speak on the Justice and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023. The bill clarifies, strengthens and updates over 30 different legislative instruments, all concerning the administration of justice. Today I would like to focus on just three. Nothing compares to the pain and grief of losing a child, and when that loss is caused by criminal conduct profound distress is felt not only by the parents and their families but also across the wider community, and this is true for unborn children. Whilst this bill does not confer upon them fetal personhood, it does enhance the formal recognition of unborn children in our justice system.

I would like to acknowledge Sarah and Peter Milosevic, who were present when this bill was introduced to the House and with whom I had the great honour of meeting during my time as Attorney-General. I witnessed firsthand their testimony and strength in the face of losing their daughter, Sophie, at 39 weeks pregnant. These changes are in large part due to years of powerful advocacy on Sophie's behalf, and I also want to acknowledge their local member of parliament, the member for Lockyer, who has been on this journey with them for many years.


I would like to touch on something that Sarah said in her submission to the committee. She said these enhancements 'mean that there is some justice in the devastation of losing a child ... Having justice supports healing'. My heart goes out to the families and communities who have or will experience a tragedy of this kind. It is my sincerest hope that the bill will bring them justice and, in time, healing.

The bill also amends the Criminal Code to clarify the scope of the offence under section 319. This offence relates to assisting in the performance of a termination of pregnancy with respect to 'supplying or procuring the supply of a termination drug'. Children by Choice, a wonderful organisation that the government funds and supports, had expressed concern that this offence may apply more widely than we had originally intended and that it could extend to a person providing financial support to a pregnant person to access a lawful termination. The Palaszczuk government has listened to these concerns. The amendment contained in the bill makes it abundantly certain that this interpretation will

not arise. Queensland women absolutely deserve safe, compassionate and accessible reproductive health care. I continue to be proud of the work done by our government to ensure that Queensland women do not have to risk their physical or legal safety in order to make legal, autonomous medical decisions about their own bodies.

Finally, the bill removes the prohibition on the identification of an adult defendant charged with a prescribed sexual offence prior to the finalisation of committal proceedings, and this amendment was made in accordance with recommendation 83 of the second report of the Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce. The taskforce, led by the Hon. Margaret McMurdo, concluded that there was no legal or moral justification for distinguishing between defendants charged with a prescribed sexual offence and those charged with any other criminal offence. Under current law, only defendants charged with rape, attempted rape, assault with intent to rape or sexual assault have their identity protected before committal, while other accused, including alleged murderers and drug traffickers, are freely named.

A number of stakeholders, including Women's Legal Service Queensland and DVConnect, argued in their submissions to the committee that the status quo perpetuates the false notion that victims, most often women, maliciously make up complaints in order to damage a man's reputation. This is a rape myth. Removing these protections is in line with community understanding and the empirical evidence that victims should be believed. I commend this bill to the House.

 **Mrs FRECKLINGTON** (Nanango—LNP) (5.57 pm): I rise to contribute to the Justice and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. Like others on this side of the House have talked about, it is a very large omnibus bill which covers much ground. The one thing I will agree on with the current Attorney-General is the fact that, yes, governments of all colours and persuasions do introduce omnibus bills, but this government's new record from two weeks ago and how large and irrelevant the different topics are being tacked onto different bills is something that I think is deeply concerning for openness, transparency and accountability in this great state of ours.

This very large omnibus bill—not as large as the one we were covering here two weeks ago—covers much ground. It amends 30 acts and four regulations across many issues that are unrelated and, quite frankly, should be dealt with by specific bills. Included in this bill today are changes relating to the operation of courts and tribunals, the regulation of the legal profession, the conduct of civil proceedings and electoral matters, just to name a few.

With so many issues wrapped up in this one bill it has reduced the ability for all parties in our legislative process—the stakeholders, the committee members, the members of the public—to properly have their say and to contribute. Of course, that is just a sign of this tired, third-term Palaszczuk Labor government that has run out of ideas and is struggling to put forward any legislative agenda.

However, my contribution today will focus on a very positive part of the bill which is fully supported by the Queensland LNP opposition. We also know that the former attorney-general—and I will acknowledge the former attorney-general now health minister's contribution to this bill because had it not been for that former attorney-general we would not be standing here today debating the insertion of Sophie's Law into this bill. I will get to the member for Lockyer, who was the one, along with Peter and Sarah Milosevic—and I will talk to them in a moment—who was successful in lobbying the former attorney-general to get this up. Their lobbying to the current Attorney-General when she was previously attorney-general was very disappointingly unsuccessful—

**Mr Janetzki:** It went nowhere for years.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:**—and it went nowhere for years. I take that interjection. I met with Peter and Sarah many times in relation to that. It was just unbelievable to see the closed door approach of the former attorney-general who is currently the Attorney-General again. I give all credit where credit is due to the former attorney-general now health minister for her contribution to making sure that Sophie's Law comes before the House. Would we have liked our own bill called Sophie's Law? Absolutely!

**Ms Boyd** interjected.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** I did not hear that interjection.

**Ms Boyd:** Do a private member's bill.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms Lui): Order, member!

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** For a government member who has never spent a minute in opposition it surely shows the chaos and the crisis from this government. It never ceases to amaze me.

**Government members** interjected.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** I will take that interjection. They do not think the matter is important enough to actually draft a piece of legislation for years and years. That is someone who has never seen a minute in opposition and it shows; the community can see it. It is absolutely mind blowing.

**Ms Boyd:** Get some tips.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** The member for Pine Rivers has so much to say. No wonder there has been leaking to the *Courier-Mail*, the *Australian* and everywhere else. We now know where it has come from.

**Ms BOYD:** Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I find the member's comments personally offensive and I ask her to withdraw.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** So did the Premier. I do withdraw.

It is important today that we do acknowledge what I think is just incredible. Through the hard work and tenacity of many people in a terrible situation part of this bill will enact Sophie's Law, a law which will recognise unborn children who die as a result of a criminal offence. This is a law which has been a long time coming for both Sarah and Peter Milosevic and their family and community who have spent years tirelessly campaigning since the tragic loss of their baby Sophie. As I said, I have met Sarah and Peter and I want to give them a massive shout-out. I have met them many times. I want to pay them my greatest respects for their courage, strength and tenacity.

As we have heard, Sophie lost her life just six days before her due date on 29 August 2014 when a drug driver slammed into her parents' car. Sophie's Law is her legacy. I acknowledge the work of the member for Lockyer, Jim McDonald, who worked alongside—and continues to work alongside—Sarah and Peter to help bring this law into fruition. I did see Sarah and Peter when they came in to submit on one of the many occasions. They were talking to many people on level 3. I want to read into the record Sarah and Peter's submission to the committee. They said—

The impact on a family that loses a child because of someone else actions adds another layer of grief, there was no justice for us. He lost his licence for 5 months and a \$950.00 fine for the cost of a life, this law reform while it doesn't bring your child back at least you know that your baby counted. She received a birth Certificate, death certificate and was count as a death on the road toll, the only place she wasn't counted was in a court ...

The bill amends the Criminal Code to enable indictment for an offence committed in relation to a pregnant woman. It allows for the name and description of an unborn child to be stated in the indictment regardless of the age of that unborn child. I note in the committee hearing Sarah went on to say—


... having your child acknowledged as an unborn child and not a fetus, which is not a very nice term when you are going through what we have been through, gives a sense of healing. I talk to a lot of women who have lost children.

She went on to say—

... having that acknowledgement of your child helps in the healing process. It helps you to heal and grieve and to know that your child mattered, just as much as they mattered to you.

I can say to you Sarah: Sophie does matter and that is why we are debating this bill in Sophie's memory today.

The Victims of Crime Assistance Act will also be changed to expand the definition of victim to include a person who suffers harm because they would, if an unborn child had been born alive, have been a family member of the child. It will expand the eligibility for funeral expense assistance for the funeral of an unborn child whose life is destroyed by a criminal offence. This law is an important change which we recognise as a tribute to Sophie and to ensure justice for other unborn babies who may, sadly, meet a similar fate in the future.

 **Mr SULLIVAN** (Stafford—ALP) (6.05 pm): I rise to support the Justice and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023. This bill might not be one that is splashed across the front page of the newspapers tomorrow or lead the nightly news bulletin, but it is important because it touches on crucial institutions in our democracy—our courts and tribunals, the important third tranche in our system of government with our separation of powers; the legal system more broadly, the profession, individual practices and advocates and community legal centres; interaction between the law, criminal prosecutions and the Fourth Estate in the media; and the conduct and rules around conducting elections, which are obviously fundamental to our very system of democracy. All these reforms are perhaps technical or legalistic in nature, but they make very important changes. In the clear message this bill sends and in the policy settings as well as the very practical daily operation of legal practitioners, advocates and the court system more broadly, it creates real changes on the ground.

This all takes a lot of hard work. To deliver these reforms an extraordinary amount of work has been carried out behind the scenes. Anyone who knows me and my background will know that I very much appreciate the work that goes on behind the scenes to deliver a bill like this. You could say that I value intelligent hardworking public servants so much that I ended up marrying one. Jokes aside—that was not a joke, Carolyn, sorry—

**Mr Russo:** Forever in *Hansard*.

**Mr SULLIVAN:** Oh Lord! The depth of the work involved in getting to where we are can be seen quite openly in the consultation conducted. Obviously it did not involve just the legal stakeholders, the Bar Association, Law Society, heads of jurisdiction, relevant statutory bodies and office holders who are in the public sector but sit independently such as the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions, Legal Aid Queensland and similar bodies; it also involved the admissions board, the Appeal Costs Board, the JP associations, the Australasian Cemeteries and Crematoria Association, the Queensland branch of the AMA, Rural Doctors Association, Victims of Crime Queensland and other CLCs—the list goes on. I think the breadth and depth of work that has gone on to get us where we are today is evident in the quality of the bill we are debating and the importance of the changes that hopefully will go through this week.

One of the key changes is that the bill removes the restrictions which had prohibited the publication of the identity of an adult offender charged with an offence of a sexual nature as prescribed in the code. This implements a recommendation from the *Hear her voice* report in relation to media guidelines.

As the Attorney-General has outlined, this is well ahead of schedule. I welcome the amendments flagged by the Attorney-General that, in fact, the proclamation of these reforms will be delivered far earlier than initially anticipated. I thank the Attorney-General, her department and her team for the work in getting that done. It is now set for 3 October, so well done.

I recognise the subtlety and complexity of drafting in this bill. The bill recognises the ability to grant non-publication in very specific circumstances. The court is able to make that decision against that criteria in the public interest, such as for the safety of the victim. Importantly, it is not based on an outdated suggestion of reputational damage to an alleged offender. That caveat will be an important tool for courts to have going forward. As the Attorney set out, this bill will be accompanied by guidelines for the responsible reporting of such cases by our media outlets. This is an important element to ensure we can provide both more transparency for the public and greater support for victims as well as ensure the core elements of our criminal justice system and the balance of probabilities.


The changes to better recognise the life and identity of an unborn child killed through criminal activity represent practical and emotional reforms to support families in several ways. It is powerful to be able to add the name of the child to the indictment. It is really important that families are able to present victim impact statements in relation to the loss of a child. The bill will provide aggravating circumstances for associated offences in terms of real outcomes in the criminal justice system. In all of the turmoil that the family is going through, the myriad changes to Victim Assist Queensland to provide for things as simple as support for funerals in those tragic circumstances will make a really big difference. I thank the Attorney-General for progressing these changes.

In the short time I have left to me I will touch on a couple of other changes. It is worth touching on the electoral reforms—things such as expanding the definition of ‘special postal voter’ to include electors who are patients in a hospital that is not a polling place and electors who are ill or infirm and unable to travel. Hospitals are often a standalone booth on the day. The Prince Charles Hospital has for decades been a standalone booth but more recently has been removed. Unlike people who may want to go to pre-poll or organise a postal vote in advance, if someone or their child has a fall and they have to go to emergency, that is not planned. If you suddenly become ill and have to go to hospital, that is not planned. It is important that we provide as much support and empowerment as possible to make sure those people have their say. I was offended by the suggestion from the member for Scenic Rim that somehow, in a derogatory sense, we are implementing a Labor agenda. Helping sick people to vote is well and truly what this Labor government stands for, and to suggest otherwise is just offensive.

There are some clarifying and modernising amendments for our JPs and commissioners for declarations. I take this chance to thank the JPs and Cdecs in our community—those who do night shift, those who do professional development and those who sit down at Stafford City Shopping Centre on a weekly basis to help people. They are not just professional in what they do; they also deal with people at very stressful times of their lives. I thank them for their work.

Last but not least, there are some technical changes that support our legal firms. This includes the small but important changes not only to the fee structure but also to the requirements to store documents and the ability to destroy them responsibly. We know that the more documents we have, the more it creates a burden for law firms. I know that the Law Society and individual firms have been really engaged throughout this process. I think where we have landed is really sensible and I hope provides practicality. There are other technical changes to the Cremations Act—simple things like recognising other jurisdictions and the orders of coroners. These are small and technical changes but really important when we are talking about things like findings from a coroner. It makes a big difference to those individual cases.

I thank the Attorney-General and her ministerial team, her department, the drafters and the committee led by Mr Russo. I thank the submitters—not just those who participated in the committee process but also those who have been engaged in these issues for a long time and who negotiated and participated in good faith in what was complicated, technical and important law reform—for their part in getting us to where we are today. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr LANGBROEK** (Surfers Paradise—LNP) (6.15 pm): I rise to speak on the Justice and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023. I thank the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee for report No. 50 to the 57th Parliament. The main objective of the bill, as we have heard from others, is to modernise several legal statutes that have been in place for decades. The bill was introduced by the Attorney-General on 25 May 2023 and subsequently referred to the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee. This has led to a number of recommendations.

It is important to note that the committee report highlights the extensive nature of this legislative undertaking. The bill introduces amendments to a staggering 30 acts and four regulations. Notably, the bill addresses the sensitive issue of recognising the deaths of unborn children resulting from criminal conduct. The sheer breadth of topics covered in this single legislative package has sparked questions—from the shadow Attorney, the member for Clayfield, the member for Currumbin and others—regarding its appropriateness, considering the diverse range of legal matters it encompasses. Once again we witness a concerning disregard for the parliamentary process by this government. This situation severely curtails the ability of members to engage in thorough and robust debates on each proposed amendment.

The bill addresses the need to clarify specific provisions within the Civil Proceedings Act 2011, particularly regarding interest payments on money order debts and the recognition of interstate cremation permits under the Cremations Act 2003. Additionally, the bill seeks to enhance the appointment, disqualification and complaints processes for justices of the peace and commissioners for declarations. It also addresses critical concerns regarding the privacy and confidentiality of client documents stemming from the prolonged retention of such documents by law practices, the Queensland Law Society and community legal centres. The bill also streamlines various administrative processes such as those related to the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal, admission guidelines under the Supreme Court of Queensland Act and the scope of the Trust Accounts Act 1973 by removing public accountants from its purview.

The issue of disclosing sexual defendants before committal is a significant concern in Queensland. It stands out as the only state, apart from the Northern Territory, that does not allow such disclosure. This issue gained prominence following recommendation 83 in the second Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce report, known as *Hear her voice*. *Hear her voice* argues that this provision is outdated and rooted in historical mistrust of sexual violence reporting. Other members have spoken to this particular provision.


Another significant aspect of the bill pertains to recognising the deaths of unborn children resulting from criminal conduct. As we have heard many times, this amendment is the result of advocacy efforts by Peter and Sarah Milosevic, with support from their local member and my colleague the member for Lockyer, over an extended period. It should be noted the Department of Justice and Attorney-General has clarified that this amendment does not confer legal status to a fetus, addressing concerns raised by several stakeholders who feared it might pave the way for establishing fetal personhood.

The bill aims to reduce the regulatory burden on law firms by modifying cost disclosure requirements under the Legal Profession Act. Stakeholders have expressed concerns that these changes might inadvertently increase regulatory burdens for those currently exempt from providing cost disclosures. There is also apprehension that these alterations could dissuade practitioners from handling smaller low-fee cases, potentially leading to unintended consequences.

The bill introduces substantial amendments to the Electoral Act. Notably, it eliminates the reference to the 60-day time frame associated with the Queensland Redistribution Commission's finalisation of an electoral redistribution, replacing it with 'as soon as practicable'. This move introduces uncertainty into the overall time frames of the political process given that several other time frames within the redistribution process are also defined as 'as soon as practicable'. The opposition calls for reforms in the electoral boundary redistribution process under the Electoral Act to ensure that boundaries are finalised well in advance of scheduled elections.

Stakeholder submissions from DVConnect along with the Queensland Law Society expressed strong support for the removal of the prohibition of adult defendant identification prior to committal for certain sexual offences. The Queensland Law Society did raise reservations about provisions related to unborn children, expressing concern that these provisions might be used oppressively against pregnant individuals in the future. Legal Aid Queensland raised concerns about the removal of eligibility for litigants funded by LAQ who are claiming on the Appeals Cost Fund, fearing substantial impacts on its operational capacity. Legal Aid Queensland also raised objections to the proposed addition of an unborn child's details to an indictment, viewing it as a step towards fetal personhood and called for the development of a media guide to support responsible reporting of sexual violence before legislating the change.

As we have heard, the opposition will not oppose the bill. I want to thank the deputy chair and member for Currumbin for raising the opposition's support for the adoption of Sophie's Law and the efforts of Sarah and Peter Milosevic in campaigning for this law in memory of their daughter Sophie, who tragically passed away nine years ago. This law aims to recognise unborn children who died due to criminal offences.

 **Mr SKELTON** (Nicklin—ALP) (6.21 pm): I rise to support the Justice and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023. This bill proposes miscellaneous amendments to multiple pieces of legislation across a diverse range of subject matter. The overarching focus of the bill is to clarify, strengthen and update legislation concerning the administration of justice, including legislation which relates to the operation of courts and tribunals, the regulation of the legal profession, the conduct of civil proceedings and electoral matters. This bill amends more than 30 different laws, so in the interests of brevity I will touch on some of its key reforms.

One of the key measures in this bill is delivering on the Palaszczuk government's commitment to consider reforms to better recognise the deaths of unborn children as a result of criminal conduct. The loss of an unborn child is devastating and to lose an unborn child as a result of another person's criminal conduct is profoundly distressing for the parents, their families and the wider community. Tragically, several families in Queensland have suffered this horrendous loss. In some cases, the criminal conduct has also resulted in the death of an expectant mother and others. Amendments in the bill will strengthen the recognition of the loss of an unborn child as a result of criminal conduct and improve the support available to families. The amendments do not displace recognition of the harm caused to the expectant mother as the primary victim of the criminal conduct, but they ensure independent recognition of the unique harm caused when the life of an unborn child is ended as a result of criminality.

Importantly, the amendments also do not affect a woman's ability to obtain a lawful termination of pregnancy and do not displace the born-alive rule, which deems legal personhood to apply when a child is born in a living state independently of its mother. This rule ensures that an unborn child does not have a legal personhood that can compete with the rights of the mother. The amendments in the bill provide a way to maintain this fundamental aspect of the law while creating better recognition of the death of an unborn child as a result of criminal conduct.

The bill also amends the Victims of Crime Assistance Act to expand the definition of 'victim' for the purpose of the Charter of Victims' Rights and how prescribed persons deal with victims. The expanded definition includes a person who suffers harm because they would, if an unborn child had been born alive, have been a family member of the child in circumstances where a crime is committed against a pregnant person and as a result of the crime the pregnant person dies or sustains a bodily injury resulting in the destruction of the life of the unborn child.

The bill also includes amendments to the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences) Act 1978 which remove the prohibition on identification of an adult defendant charged with a prescribed sexual offence prior to finalisation of committal proceedings. These amendments are made in response to the government's commitment to implement recommendation 83 of the second report of the Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce. The taskforce, led by the Hon. Margaret McMurdo AO, concluded there was no justification



for the law to treat defendants who are charged with a prescribed sexual offence differently to those who are charged with any other criminal offence. Under the current law, only defendants charged with rape, attempted rape, assault with intent to rape or sexual assault have their identity protected before committal. Other accused, even alleged murderers, defendants accused of indecently assaulting a child and accused drug traffickers do not have this protection.


The amendments in the bill mean that there will no longer be a distinction between those prescribed sexual offences and other offences. The amendments will mean that a defendant charged with rape, attempted rape, assault with intent to rape or sexual assault will be able to be identified before going to trial. The existing distinction in the law is based, at least in part, on a harmful myth that a complainant in a sexual defence case is somehow less reliable than a complainant for any other offence and that a magistrate must scrutinise the complaint before a defendant can be identified. These amendments ensure that the criminal justice system does not continue to perpetuate this myth and that complainants in prescribed sexual offences are treated with the same dignity as complainants for all other offences. The amendment also aligns Queensland with all other jurisdictions in Australia which permit identification of a defendant during committal proceedings. The amendment also promotes open justice, which is fundamental to the administration of justice.

The Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce heard that victims are reluctant to report sexual offences to police and that conviction rates for these offences are alarmingly low. It said that increased media reporting of sexual offences in a trauma informed way can result in more victims coming forward to report sexual offences. The taskforce said that, if handled sensitively, accurate public reporting may also contribute to positive community discussions about gender-based violence, challenge stereotypes and reduce the level of secrecy and stigma involved. Removing barriers to that reporting is essential if we are to hold perpetrators to account.

An application for a non-publication order can be brought by the defendant, the victim or the prosecution. The court has to take into account a broad range of circumstances in considering whether to make the non-publication order. Regardless of who makes the application, the court will be required to consider the view of the victim about identifying the defendant. This is in keeping with the recommendation made by the taskforce and ensures victims are given a voice when these applications are heard. To ensure open justice is promoted, the amendments also provide a right of appearance to accredited media entities or any other person who the court considers has sufficient interest in the question of whether the non-publication order should be made. The media has an important role to play in open justice. It serves the public and ensures people know what is happening in the courts. These amendments will help it to play that role.

Defendants charged with a prescribed sexual offence will be able to be identified when the amendments commence, irrespective of when they were charged. That approach provides for the greatest clarity and is most consistent with the underlying policy intent of the amendments to promote open justice and consistency with other offences. Finally, the amendments also provide for a right of review before the Magistrates Court and make it an offence if a person or corporation contravenes a non-publication order. Importantly, these amendments do not vary existing laws, which prohibit the identification of a victim of sexual offence without their consent or the identification of a child. Where identifying a defendant is likely to lead to the complainant being identified, this would still be prohibited.

Victim-survivors and those who support them have spoken. The government has heard their voices. I thank the community, especially those who have been victims and have advocated and submitted in the formulation of this bill. I thank both the former and current attorneys-general and their department, the members of the committee, the secretariat and Hansard. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr BERKMAN** (Maiwar—Grn) (6.30 pm): I rise to speak on the Justice and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. I begin, as just about every non-government member has, by making a few observations about the nature of the bill and the fact that it simply lumps far too many issues in one piece of legislation for us to be able to sensibly debate them. That does not appear to concern the government members, although the member for Nicklin came as close to critiquing as any government member has by calling them 'miscellaneous' amendments. It was almost appropriately pejorative but not quite there.

The bill amends over 30 different acts. The amendments range from minor clarifications to the Electoral Act and the Motor Accident Insurance Act right through to the introduction of a new aggravating factor in the Penalties and Sentences Act. It is important to note that it is not just the opposition and the crossbench that are taking issue with this. In their submission, the Queensland Law

Society very sensibly flagged that these kinds of omnibus bills are not appropriate. They went one step further this time, citing the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee that reviewed a previous omnibus bill. A past iteration of the committee that undertook this inquiry commented that such bills—

Arguably may breach the fundamental legislative principle in section 4(2)(b) of the Legislative Standards Act 1992 because they fail to have sufficient regard to Parliament, forcing Members to vote to support or oppose a bill in its entirety when that ... bill may contain a number of significant unrelated amendments to existing Acts that would more appropriately have been presented in topic-specific stand-alone bills.

The QLS did not say that. I make the point again: a committee of this parliament made the observation that we could fall foul of the Legislative Standards Act. Nonetheless, the issue obviously becomes even more pronounced when we are also supposed to consider the entirety of the bill and proposed amendments, although mercifully fewer amendments than last week, I note. It is useful for that point to be brought up again. I think we should take every opportunity to remind the government of just how disgraceful their efforts were in the last sitting week. I digress.

We are likely to have only 30 minutes for the Attorney-General's summing-up and consideration in detail so clearly we are not going to get through the vast majority of the bill. There will be no meaningful consideration of the vast majority of the bill in those 30 minutes or whatever time is left is after the Attorney has finished. I will use the time I have now to focus on some of the key issues that were raised in submissions to the bill.

The bill makes quite a lot of small administrative changes and the feedback from submitters is that those are largely positive changes. I do want to note specifically the clarification around section 319A of the Criminal Code Act. This clarification reinforces that anyone providing financial support to a pregnant person seeking a lawful termination is not committing a crime. This is a small but really important key clarification to ensure that the reproductive rights of pregnant people are protected.

It really takes only a moment's consideration to appreciate the countless circumstances in which a pregnant person could require financial assistance to exercise their reproductive rights. The cost of the termination of a pregnancy itself can be prohibitive. Public health care across pretty significant parts of this state simply does not provide access to abortion, which leaves lots of people—I note, especially, regional folks or people on visas—needing to pay for termination services. At best, I think we can observe that there are very confusing public pathways to accessing termination in Queensland at the moment.

The Greens have long held the view that cost should never be a barrier to exercising the full range of reproductive rights and that abortion should be free, safe and legal. Sure, we have dealt with the legalities, but for abortions to be safe we need to make sure that access is better across the state. Regional access is pretty terrible in large parts of the state. It also creates countless incidental costs for people seeking abortion, such as travel and accommodation costs. People may need to take time off work or access child care to access this simple healthcare service. The burden might be especially acute where a person could be facing reproductive coercion, that is, circumstances where they are facing potentially an immediate threat of harm for seeking an abortion. That is just another direct barrier that might be overcome only with direct financial support. Again, it is an excellent clarification in that amendment.

Part 9 of the bill removes the prohibition on identifying an adult defendant charged with a prescribed sexual offence prior to a committal hearing. This is undoubtedly a very important amendment that stems from the Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce recommendation in the *Hear her voice* report. The additional context for this recommendation is that the restriction on reporting is not afforded to other offences and it perpetuates the 'rape myth that women and girls often make false complaints of sexual assault', to quote the *Hear her voice* report. Being able to report the identities of persons accused of these crimes is particularly important in helping other victim-survivors feel safe in coming forward.

Before the commencement of this debate and following the attorney's second reading speech, I had a number of questions and concerns about the related recommendations and submissions to the committee regarding the development of media reporting guidelines to accompany the amendments. Obviously, I am relieved and I commend the Attorney for her efforts to consult on and develop those guidelines at this stage. QLS, DVConnect and Legal Aid Queensland all flagged this issue in their submissions. All of those submitters and the very report that spawned the amendment make clear that an accompanying media guide is really key to making sure that reporting does not result in the further spreading of harmful myths about sexual violence. I trust that all of the key stakeholders who contributed


to the proceeding processes are afforded meaningful opportunities for input into the media reporting guidelines, which will ensure we ultimately have a complete trauma informed guide at the point of commencement.

The bill makes a number of very significant changes that use the term 'unborn child' and I want to touch on those briefly. The committee received submissions from DVConnect, the Women's Legal Service and Legal Aid Queensland that all raised concerns around the constant use of that term throughout the bill. The Women's Legal Service points out that the correct or more appropriate term would be 'fetus' or 'pregnancy'. As others have mentioned, DJAG made the observation that the bill preserves the born-alive rule. However, the Women's Legal Service was still at pains to make the case that there is no need to introduce the very emotive term 'unborn child' and that the use of that term in this legislation gently paves the way for arguments for 'fetal personhood'. We have made strides in our legislation around reproductive rights in Queensland in recent years. I quote the Women's Legal Service which stated—

It is disappointing to see the government take a step backwards on this issue.

Another key amendment in the bill is the creation of an aggravating factor for causing the destruction of a fetus in section 9 of the Penalties and Sentences Act. In their submission, Legal Aid Queensland points out that the courts are already required to have regard to the extent of injury in assessing the seriousness of an offence. By introducing a new aggravating factor we risk impeding the discretion of the sentencing court. As the QLS raised, the aggravating factor must be applied regardless of intent. This factor will equally apply when someone intentionally assaults a person and when someone is driving recklessly, resulting in the destruction of a fetus. The loss of any wanted pregnancy, especially in some of the kinds of circumstances we have heard about in this debate, is obviously tragic. However, we always need to exercise the utmost caution when we are considering any changes such as this one that will limit the exercise of discretion by our courts in issuing sentences.

As I have said, there are a lot of positive steps in this bill, but I will conclude by lamenting the inclusion of such disparate and significant amendments in one bill. We saw last sitting week the government ramming through its amendments to the child protection bill. It appears to be completely unconcerned by this kind of trashing of the parliamentary process. Maybe we should not be surprised. I guess I still hope for more. We should have the opportunity to address some of the more significant amendments more thoroughly and specifically in consideration in detail. I have a strong suspicion that I will not get to that, again thanks to this wonderful institution known as the business program motion which gives up that grand total of 30 minutes for consideration in detail.

 **Mr McCALLUM** (Bundamba—ALP) (6.40 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Justice and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. The bill amends the Criminal Code, the Penalties and Sentences Act, the Youth Justice Act and the Victims of Crime Assistance Act to enhance the recognition of the death of an unborn child as a result of criminal offending in relation to a pregnant person. Apart than the Northern Territory, Queensland is the only state or territory that currently maintains a defendant's anonymity in certain cases. It is time to change that. In terms of the offences that are covered by the provisions in this bill, the prescribed sexual offences are defined as rape, attempt to commit rape, assault with intent to commit rape and sexual assault. The amendments that form part of this bill will promote open justice in relation to those prescribed sexual offences. They bring this class of offences into line with all of the other types of criminal offences in Queensland with respect to publishing information about a person who is accused of an offence. It brings alignment and it brings consistency. The provisions that are contained within this bill will promote freedom of speech. They have the potential to greatly improve media reporting in relation to these prescribed offences.

Importantly, we should acknowledge that these amendments are putting into effect recommendation 83 of the Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce report *Hear her voice*. As the government has responded to that report, it is now getting about delivering and implementing the changes demanded of us by that landmark report. It is great to see the provisions in this bill that respond to and enact recommendation 83.

Legal Aid Queensland did submit that the Queensland government should develop a guide for the media to support the responsible reporting of sexual violence. Specifically, Legal Aid Queensland recommended the development of such a guide before these amendments occur to protect against inadvertent identification of victims and decrease the risk of trial by media, retribution in some communities, and reporting that perpetuates harmful stereotypes about sexual violence. This position was supported by the committee as part of its inquiry and forms part of the committee report recommendations. Indeed, this has been accepted by government, as indicated by the Attorney.


Turning to some other elements of the bill, the bill removes restrictions which prohibit the identification of an adult charged with a prescribed sexual offence prior to finalisation of committal proceedings. The bill proposes to better recognise the deaths of unborn children that have occurred due to criminal conduct. In these absolutely horrific and tragic circumstances, Queensland law currently does not give an unborn child recognition. It is important to recognise that our law does not give an unborn child legal status as a person. This only occurs when it has completely proceeded in a living state from its mother, a legal position known as the born-alive rule. What this means and the consequence of that is that offences such as murder and manslaughter do not apply to unborn children. Changes to the sentencing provisions require the court to treat the destruction of an unborn child as an aggravating factor for relevant serious offences including murder, manslaughter, grievous bodily harm, wounding, dangerous operation of a vehicle, assault occasioning bodily harm and careless driving.

Importantly, the bill also expands the definition of victim to include a person who would, if an unborn child had been born alive, have been a family member of the child. I join with many of the other members who have contributed to debate on this bill in paying tribute to Sarah and Peter Milosevic and their daughter Sophie Ella. I extend my personal sincere condolences and those of the Bundamba community.

Some submitters did raise concerns around the aggravating factor provisions that are contained in this bill. In response to those concerns that were raised throughout the committee process, it was made clear that the bill does not introduce a new offence and does not introduce a circumstance of aggravation in terms of the legal definition of a circumstance of aggravation. The bill introduces an aggravating factor. An aggravating factor only comes into play after a person has been convicted of an offence. After conviction, the provisions in the bill require the court to consider the fact that the offence for which the person had been convicted in relation to the pregnant person also resulted in the death of an unborn child.

The amendments in the bill relating to the Electoral Act will allow for completed postal votes that are not inside reply-paid envelopes supplied by the Electoral Commission of Queensland to be counted and expand the definition of 'special postal voter' to include electors who are patients in a hospital—which is obviously not a polling place—voters who are ill or infirm or, indeed, those who are choosing to care for them and unable to travel to a polling place. This is really practical. I think every member in this place has needed to assist constituents in their communities who face difficulties and challenges in exercising their democratic right to vote due to these circumstances.

I note that the Electoral Commission of Queensland is particularly supportive of these amendments to save postal votes that are not enclosed in ECQ envelopes. They estimated that, based on figures from the 2020 state election, up to 30 per cent of the 57,000 rejected postal votes could have been saved. The provisions in this bill are important and they will strengthen our democratic process in Queensland. I thank the minister and the committee and I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr MILLAR** (Gregory—LNP) (6.50 pm): I rise to make a brief contribution to this bill, particularly as it relates in a couple of aspects to the interests of the people of Gregory. I move first to the amendments that allow for the disclosure of the identity of adults charged with a prescribed sexual offence prior to the finalisation of committal proceedings. I realise this change will bring Queensland into line with most other jurisdictions, with the exception of the Northern Territory. I also fully appreciate that it allows for those adults accused of sexual offences such as rape to be treated the same way as those accused of other serious offences, up to and including murder.

The amendment has come out of a recommendation of the Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce's *Hear her voice* report. The intentions here cannot be questioned, but there may be unintended consequences, especially for those Queenslanders and their family residing in Queensland's many smaller towns and even Indigenous communities such as Woorabinda, in my electorate. There is no anonymity in small towns and feelings can become very heated. The person has been accused but not convicted. I urge the government to actively monitor the outcomes caused by this amendment to ensure it achieves the outcomes sought without causing negative outcomes. I accept that it is a change that has been called for by victims, but I urge the minister to amend the bill and also set a date in the legislation for the impacts and outcomes to be properly assessed by the Queensland parliament's Legal Affairs and Safety Committee.

I can imagine a person accused of such an offence may become the subject of focused vigilante action on social media and even physically, even if they are later found to be innocent. We need to monitor this. In small towns they could easily be at risk physically. Such fallout will also impact their families and businesses or employment.

For these very same reasons, but from the opposite point of view, I am also concerned that, for some victims, knowing that their case will be publicly reported in the local media with the accused being named may be a disincentive for rural women to report sexual and domestic violence. In small communities, naming the offender will also make the complainant readily identified. The potential impact on their children and themselves will be real and may create an obstacle for rural women needing protection and justice. For these reasons, a legislative requirement for the timely assessment of the real-world results of the change is crucial if we are to be sure the change is a positive one for victims.

Secondly, I am very disappointed to see that once again the government is amending laws without having completed all its homework. In recommending this change, the Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce firmly recommended that such a change should not commence until the Queensland government has developed a guide for media to support the responsible reporting of sexual violence.

In its submission to the committee inquiry, Legal Aid Queensland drew specific attention to the adjunct recommendation. It is especially important for local media in rural and remote communities such as local radio stations and publications like the excellent community papers in the Gregory electorate, including the *Barcoo Independent*, the *Longreach Leader*, *Emerald Today* and the *Northwest Star*. Having lost government advertising revenue due to the digitalisation of many legislated public notification requirements, and fighting for their life in a social media age, these excellent local news outlets are to be congratulated on not just surviving but for the important service they provide to their communities. They are the go-to source, but they do not have the financial resources of News Limited or Nine media for legal advice around their reporting. Such a major change represents a real legal challenge for the diverse media outlets. They simply do not have the resources to seek legal advice on how an amendment will change what they are allowed to report on, let alone on a case-by-case basis. In the worst case scenario, inadvertently doing the wrong thing could put them out of business. With the possible amplification of local feelings in the given community, it is vital that these local media have access to a government issued guide for reporting such a case in a way that is safe, ethical and legally secure.

I note that the department told the committee that the change will commence from the date of proclamation, which will give them time to develop a guide for media. I ask that in developing the guide they give consideration to the circumstances for women and the media in Queensland country towns and not just consider the issue from the point of view of a large media outlet. I also think it is reasonable to ask the department to give this a high priority and seek feedback on any draft guidelines from country journalists to ensure the guide is easily understood.

I now move to the amendments to the Electoral Act concerning electoral boundary redistributions. Gregory has been affected by redistributions of its boundaries in the time that I have represented it, and such redistributions are always of great interest to Gregory voters as they can impact the access they have to their local member and even the way geographically aligned local governments work together.

In my experience as an MP, the Queensland Redistribution Commission does an excellent job in an area that is fundamental to the trust that Queenslanders have in our democracy. They always take notice of stakeholder and local submissions, and even in the state's most remote parts we have felt our concerns relating to electoral boundaries are heard. In an imperfect world, where not every decision pleases everyone, they are fair and very professional in exercising their authority.

However, the amendment in this bill does raise a valid concern for political participants at all levels, even voters. It removes all reference to the 60-day time frame associated with the Queensland Redistribution Commission's finalisation of boundaries in an electoral redistribution. Instead, it applies the phrase 'as soon as practicable'. This is not to say that this will lead to untimeliness, but undeniably the change will allow a new electorate boundary being declared within 60 days of an election. Under the change in this bill there is nothing to prevent such an occurrence. There is no doubt in my mind that if there were ever such an occurrence it would disadvantage all candidates, but the disadvantage would be much greater for candidates standing as independents or candidates standing for smaller parties.

With Queensland now having fixed four-year terms such legislative vagueness is completely unjustified. Working from the fixed election dates, we can improve certainty within the electoral redistribution process by legalising the date for the finalisation of the electoral redistributions prior to the date of the next scheduled election. I imagine that would also assist the commission in scheduling its workloads and resourcing to address the task. It would also decrease any possible confusion for


voters over which electorate they should be voting in. While this is beyond the scope of the bill, it is something I urge the government and the committee to examine in the interests of fairness and certainty.

The term 'omnibus bill' is one that now carries dread because we have seen it so overused in this term of parliament. This bill amends acts on a variety of unrelated issues. Even without the government guillotining debate as a normal way of conducting the business of parliament, no MP is ever going to be able to address all changes. I know the Attorney-General will defend this bill as just concerning housekeeping and administration, but the amendments I have been able to speak to do not fall into that category.

This constant use of the omnibus bill absolutely reduces the scrutiny of the individual laws being changed. It makes it very difficult for stakeholders to be forewarned and engaged in public consultation. It makes it difficult for members to report important changes back to their constituents. Indeed, it robs millions of Queenslanders of the right to be properly represented in this House. Most of all, bills like this one speak to the total incoherence of the government's policy process and legislative agenda.

Before I finish, it is only right that I welcome the amendments which make special provisions for the recognition of a death of an unborn child resulting from a criminal act. These amendments will allow for such a death to stand as an aggravating factor in the sentencing provision for relevant serious offences. They also expand the criteria for allowing victim of crime impact statements so that in such a case the impact on the family, the siblings, the grandparents and other close relations can be recognised.


In debating this bill, all members should respect and honour Sophie Milosevic and her parents, Peter and Sarah. Peter and Sarah lost Sophie six days before Sarah's due date when a driver slammed into their car. They have worked tirelessly to see today's changes made law—Sophie's Law—and they are to be commended for the courage and the effort they have shown. These changes will be a lasting legacy for Sophie. I also honour the hard work of their local MP, the member for Lockyer—and a good mate of mine—who fought alongside Peter and Sarah to see these changes through. Today you can say, 'Job done,' and I say to you, 'Well done.'

 **Mr MADDEN** (Ipswich West—ALP) (6.59 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Justice and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023. Upon being tabled, the bill was referred to the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee, chaired by Peter Russo, the member for Toohey, for consideration. The bill is what we might call an omnibus bill in that it amends a wide range of existing legislation. Notably, the bill amends the Criminal Code, the Penalties and Sentences Act 1992, the Youth Justice Act 1992 and the Victims of Crimes Assistance Act 2009 to enhance the recognition—

Debate, on motion of Mr Madden, adjourned.

## ADJOURNMENT

### Common Ground Gold Coast

 **Mr MOLHOEK** (Southport—LNP) (7.00 pm): Last sitting week it was my honour to host 180 guests in the Premier's Hall as the chair of Common Ground Gold Coast for a special fundraising event. I particularly want to thank Mark McCrindle, our guest speaker from McCrindle Research. I especially want to acknowledge Trisha Harris and James Frizelle from the James Frizelle Charitable Foundation, who made a contribution on the night of \$2 million towards the establishment of Common Ground Gold Coast. The night raised just over \$2 million. Another \$37,000 was raised from the sale of dinner tickets and raffle tickets throughout the course of the evening.

I particularly want to acknowledge my fellow board members: Jackson Hills from Q Shelter; Sheila Ponting from The Marketing Lab; Tony Cossor from Life Connect; Barry Lee from Dark Horse Consulting; Matt Jutsum and his partner, Shannon, from Jutsum Advisory; Ryan O'Leary from QCOS; and Dianne and David Kozik from St John's Crisis Centre.


I also want to say a special thanks to the board of Common Ground Queensland who have supported the Gold Coast bid for Common Ground, especially Peter Pearce, the former chair of Common Ground Queensland and currently a director and also one of our special guest speakers on the night. Among the other directors from Common Ground, I want to acknowledge Kate Jones, Joanna Spanjaard, Michele Galagher, Justin Hogg and Mark Lightfoot, who attended on the evening.

Other special guests included: Mayor Tom Tate and Mayoress Ruth Tate; Councillor Glenn Tozer and his partner, Jude Kalman; Councillor Brooke Patterson and her husband, Roger; Councillor Darren Taylor; and Councillor Mark Hammel.

Among other guests and speakers on the night, I want to thank David Crisafulli, the Leader of the LNP, for his special contribution. I want to acknowledge the presence of Tim Mander, the shadow minister for housing, and also the member for Mundingburra, Les Walker, who purchased a ticket to join us. I particularly want to acknowledge Minister Scanlon, who could not join us on the evening but donated the purchase of her tickets and has subsequently made an announcement that I know all of us on the Gold Coast are very thankful for.

There were many other special guests on the evening. There are too many to mention. Among some of the industry representatives were: Karyn Walsh from Micah Projects; John Chesterman, the Public Advocate; Rebecca Culverhouse from Accoras; and Fiona Caniglia, Executive Director at Q Shelter. We had representatives there from the Brisbane Youth Service; Stephen Vines, the State Director of Mission Australia; Luke Lindsay from UnitingCare Queensland; Peter Gardiner, representing the Institute of Architects, who took a table; and Aaron Pimlott from the Salvation Army who also took a table. There were a large number of volunteers there from my young leaders group on the Gold Coast. I also want to add my thanks to Judith and Theo de Boer for their support in volunteering on the evening.

### **St Paul's Catholic Church, 50th Anniversary**

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment) (7.03 pm): In a letter to the Galatians, the apostle Paul urged Christians 'not to become weary in doing good: for at the proper time they would reap a harvest, if they did not give up'. That call continues to be answered at St Paul's Catholic Church, Woodridge—a Catholic community celebrating its 50th anniversary this year. On Sunday, 27 August, I was honoured to join Archbishop of Brisbane Mark Coleridge, former parish priest Father Frank O'Dea, current parish priest Father Dave Batey, other local dignitaries and many members of the parish community at a thanksgiving mass to celebrate this important milestone.

Since the establishment of the parish in 1973, the parish of St Paul's has been an important part of our community. The St Paul's story is a Logan story of young families seeking opportunity in a new area—a place for second chances, for starting up and starting again, for starting somewhere new. The St Paul's congregation also reflects the rich diversity of our Woodridge community. It includes members of the Vietnamese, Tamil, Samoan, Tongan, Burundian, Sudanese, Burmese and Syriac communities, among many others.

Originally in the care of the Montfort Fathers, St Paul's passed into the care of the archdiocese in 1989. Tonight I wish to acknowledge all those who have led or served the St Paul's Catholic Church community including former parish priests: Father Irvine LeClerc; Father Louis Catterall; Father Terry Madden; Father Frank O'Dea; Father John Conway; and especially my friend Father Dave Batey, who has been parish priest since 2002 and who will retire soon.


I also wish to acknowledge all those who have served with distinction on the parish council and in other capacities in the congregation including Peter Geidamovics, Marina Ene, Nelda Samson Ward-Naughton, Mary Ann Policios Barbour, Lorraine Crilly, Joan King, Jocelyn Leary, Blanche Pearson, Chris Veamatahau, Soane Siasau, John Molony, Martin Ram, and John and Judy Wilson.

The Sisters of St Joseph also played a very important role at St Paul's, including in the establishment and development of St Paul's primary school, now led by Acting Principal Brendan Gillespie. One of the Sisters of St Joseph's greatest and most enduring contributions to our community was the establishment of the St Paul's Brothers Junior Rugby League Football Club in 1976, now the mighty Logan Brothers Rugby League Club, of which I am proud to be club patron.

But the truest history of St Paul's is in the work of the thousands of people who over the last 50 years have made this community the parish that it is today. While many things have changed since 1973, St Paul's Woodridge remains faithful to its core values. It continues to be a place of worship, good works, service, care and community—a place where living the gospel is a daily occurrence. Congratulations, St Paul's on 50 amazing years.

*(Time expired)*

### Canungra, Water Security

 **Mr KRAUSE** (Scenic Rim—LNP) (7.06 pm): While Brisbane Lord Mayor Adrian Schrinner calls for a new water source for Brisbane and South-East Queensland—despite the grid capacity being at 76 per cent this evening—I wish to highlight the dire failure of the state since council amalgamations in 2008 to address water security for Canungra. Brisbane and the rest of South-East Queensland have no idea regarding water insecurity compared to Canungra.

Canungra's water treatment plant has had to be shut down and water has been trucked into town at least twice since 2019. It faces that prospect again unless there is good rain soon. That is because Canungra is off grid, and the state has allowed development to go ahead without planning for water. That development was as a result of court decisions, but the state could have used its powers to prevent it—and I called on them some four or five years ago to do this—but it did not.


Once again, soon Canungra residents will need to rely on dozens of trucks each day, unless it rains very soon, to get their town water. Worse, those living off the town system will be faced with either getting water via 'cubes'—holding only 1,000 litres of water—at the local Urban Utilities standpipe, or the expensive option of getting a 12,000-litre to 20,000-litre delivery that is picked up from, in all likelihood, Beaudesert or Maudsland. These commercial water carriers will not be able to access the standpipe at Canungra, adding to the time and, importantly, the cost for such a delivery.

I understand that a delivery may cost an extra—I repeat: an extra—\$100 or so more owing to the time and other costs incurred in getting water from Beaudesert to Maudsland. When we are already in a cost-of-living crisis, and when we consider that such a delivery may only last a household a month or two, that is a significant impact on household budgets. This would be an unfair imposition on Canungra area residents who rely on Urban Utilities standpipes when their tanks run dry. More people around Canungra live off the water grid than on it. I again call on Seqwater and Urban Utilities to work out a way to address this issue.

This all results from the failure of state authorities to better plan for Canungra since 2008. The old Beaudesert shire council started plans for water security in Canungra, but until a few months ago Seqwater and Urban Utilities had done literally nothing to progress this. Their answer is to truck water to Canungra when the creek dries up. One way or another, either through better water security or a better solution to get water to off-grid users when Canungra's water treatment plant shuts down, this needs addressing. In the meantime, the state should do what it can to prevent the situation from getting worse through more development. A lack of water security impacts Canungra town water users, off-grid users and landholders upstream and downstream of Canungra towards Tamborine.

*(Time expired)*

### NRL, Dolphins

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence) (7.09 pm): I rise this evening to reflect on an amazing 2023—the Dolphins' inaugural NRL season—and to put on the record my pride for what they have achieved.

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mrs D'ATH:** Very disorderly. When the Dolphins' NRL season kicked off on 5 March, many commentators were tipping them as wooden spooners. Instead, our club went on to win their first three matches against the Roosters, Raiders and Knights—what a perfect day that first game was—all clubs that ended up in the top eight. The team was captained by Jesse Bromwich and coached by Wayne Bennett. Unfortunately, a run of injuries cruelled the middle of the season, but the boys stuck it out and beat many people's expectations by finishing in 13th place—four wins outside the top eight. It was particularly gratifying to see the boys finish the season on a high, with a strong 34-10 win over the fourth place Warriors in round 27 at Suncorp Stadium. It was also fantastic to see two players earn State of Origin selection for Queensland earlier in the year: Tom Gilbert, who unfortunately ended up with an injury for the rest of the season, and Hamiso Tabuai-Fidow, whom we know as 'Hammer'.


Last Thursday evening I had the pleasure of attending the Dolphins' inaugural presentation ball held at the Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre. It was a fantastic event. To no-one's surprise, Jamayne Isaako took home four awards: best back, most consistent, players' player and the Arthur Beetson Medal for Player of the Year. Congratulations, Jamayne, on a fantastic season. I also congratulate the other awardees: Hamiso Tabuai-Fidow 'Hammer' named van-voted MVP; Euan Aitken was presented with the academic award; Mark Nicholls was named best forward; and Shane Morris was club person of the year.



To everyone at the Dolphins—the players, coaches, support staff and administration—I would like to put on record our admiration for what you have achieved. To all of the supporters—over 30,000 paid-up members—we say thank you in your first season. I would also like to give a shout-out to the Redcliffe Dolphins cup side, which had an impressive fifth place finish this season. I know that all Dolphins fans, whether they are from Redcliffe, Moreton Bay, Brisbane or beyond, are so proud of what our team has achieved this year. Whilst we did not get the opportunity to play finals football this year, the club has laid a fantastic platform for next year. I know they will all be working hard in the off-season. I also congratulate those players who came up from the QRL: Val, Trai, Jack and others. They did a wonderful job playing at the NRL level.

I was also thrilled that at the inaugural presentation night last week it was announced there will be a Redcliffe Dolphins QRL women's team for 2024, which is fantastic. I cannot wait for the women's team to progress into the NRL, which I know they will be doing in the next few years. Congratulations!


### **Callide Electorate, Maternity Services**

 **Mr HEAD** (Callide—LNP) (7.13 pm): Would you believe that in 2015 the Labor government supported an LNP motion that said mothers-to-be across Queensland should continue to have the choice to have their children delivered locally. It is great to see the government was capable of supporting LNP motions at one stage. That said, it is incredibly disappointing when you put it in the context of where we are today. Maternity services provided in Queensland continue to decline. The north Queensland town of Ingham was listed in this motion as a service that was to be reinstated that calendar year. Then health minister and current premier agitator Treasurer Dick said how important maternity services are for that community. This service had been operating for many years, but only days ago under Premier Palaszczuk's fourth Minister for Health and Minister for Women Shannon Fentiman it went on bypass. The Labor health minister in 2019 Steven Miles, the current Deputy Premier and want-to-be premier, said 'Labor are doing all they can to improve maternity services even more in Queensland', yet here we are today with less. Minister D'Ath was never as vocal as her predecessors in pushing to reinstate maternity services. Maybe that is why we had the disaster that was the Gladstone maternity bypass.

Here we are today, four health ministers later, with not a single maternity ward left in Callide. Three have closed or been placed on apparent permanent bypass under Premier Palaszczuk. Chinchilla has been on bypass for over 2,000 days. That is what I would call closed. This government is all talk when it comes to service delivery, but the facts tell a very different story. They are too busy wrapped up in their own chaos and crisis, so busy spending all of their efforts and energy on fighting for the top job of premier that they cannot deliver essential health services to Queenslanders. Today Biloela has been on bypass for 383 days. The government has moved the goalposts for the Biloela maternity ward. Originally they needed an anaesthetist, then they needed a GP obstetrician. Now apparently the surgical theatre is not compliant with standards. When a government cannot even run a maintenance schedule, how can they be trusted to continue governing Queensland?

Today I launched a petition calling for the return of full birthing services to the Biloela Hospital with utmost priority. I urge Queenslanders to support this petition, as the government clearly cannot act without being forced to do so. They have sat on their hands while our services continue to be cut. They fixed Gladstone because it became a political problem. It is time they step up and start fixing patient problems too.


### **Bundaberg Electorate, Bushfire Preparedness**

 **Mr SMITH** (Bundaberg—ALP) (7.16 pm): Two weeks ago Minister Ryan and I stood at the Bundaberg airport and announced that the large air tanker was back in Bundaberg for another fire season and, along with it for the first time, the Blackhawk water bomber. The large air tanker carries 10,000 litres of fire suppressant while the Blackhawk carries 4,000 litres. They are both vitally important in fighting fires and keeping our communities safe not just across the Bundaberg region but across the greater Queensland region as well. In the past two weeks alone within the Bundaberg region the large air tanker has had to be called on 10 times and the Blackhawk water bomber an outstanding 176 times to fight fires raging across the Bundaberg community. This demonstrates the seriousness of the fire season we are now in and the level of unpredictability we face this coming fire season. It also demonstrates the serious nature of these fires.

Yesterday fires threatened the community at Coonarr, triggering a leave immediately warning by QFES. Some 30 properties and businesses had to be evacuated for their safety. This demonstrates just how serious fires are right across the Bundaberg community. It also demonstrates the great work of QFES and the Rural Fire Service, who fought hard to ensure the fire was controlled and that the residents of Coonarr were able to return. The same afternoon they had to face a fire closer to the Bundaberg CBD at Norville, but with the help of the large air tanker and the Blackhawk water bomber again those fires were brought under control.

It was very concerning to watch the news tonight and hear local Bundaberg patrol inspector Grantley Marcus say there are suggestions or indications those fires may have been deliberately lit. He reported there were five fires that started around the same time at Coonarr, demonstrating suspicion. Community safety is a community matter, and I implore everyone across the Bundaberg region to think about the consequences of their actions. Think about the consequences—there may be an accident or it may be intentional—because it could very well risk the lives or even take the lives of people within our community. QFES and our rural firefighters will always be there for our community, but it is important that all of us make sure we respect one another, protect one another and that we are there for our firefighters. We know that the Palaszczuk Labor government will continue to invest in that front line.

### Gulf of Carpentaria, Fishing Ban


 **Mr KATTER** (Traeger—KAP) (7.19 pm): It is with regret that I rise tonight to talk about the shock announcement of the proposed net fishing ban in the Gulf of Carpentaria which will be incorporated with those net bans announced along the east coast. I do not make this statement lightly. The Queensland Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries is presiding over the protracted and politically motivated closure of Queensland's commercial fishing sector. The human cost of that is for people like David Wren, an industry giant in Karumba. He employs 35 people and it is very personal for him. He has invested a lot of money over the years, as have the Carroll Bros Fishing group which employs 10 people, the Gulf Caught Seafood retail shop which employs 13 people, Nasty's Fish N Grill which employs 25 people and Dave Wright, known as the 'Mackerel Man', who employs seven people in Cairns. I have just cherry-picked a few, but that is the human cost of people. The minister is destroying their lives and everything they have worked for for political motivation. If he were the minister for the environment that is okay, but not when he is the minister for agriculture.

The Gulf of Carpentaria fishermen were advised of the Palaszczuk government's plans to ban net fishing in the region. The repercussions are still sinking in, but essentially at least 80 per cent of the gulf commercial fishing fleet would be out of business, and it would remove the supply of sustainable and widely sought after barra and Spanish mackerel. The economic fallout would not just be for those fish shops but for all those people who contribute to the economy—the electricians, boilermakers, fuel suppliers and everyone else. Karumba is a pretty big industrial player in the context of fishing even though it is a small town. Taking 80 per cent of its main industry is a town killer for them. There is some tourism there and a couple of other things, but this is really driving a stake through the heart of that town. There are 350 fishermen currently working in the gulf.

I can go on about the facts. David Wren himself has taken out 19,000 metres of latent effort, of net fishing, over the years. They have tried to meet the government halfway. They have reduced from nine licences down to three and there is only a fraction of the boats in the water in Karumba that used to be there. This is not about science. The king threadfin is supposed to be at five per cent, but this is a ridiculous figure to throw around. They are not checking the largest threadfin catcher up there. They do not check him and his biomass. In the Northern Territory, they are talking about 90 per cent biomass and this is five per cent. They must see a stop sign between the gulf waters because it is five per cent there. It is ridiculous what they are talking about with the science around this. It is not science; it is politically motivated.

If you watch David Attenborough, of course you are going to want to shut down the fisheries all around the world. If you want to do that then fine, but be honest with people. Just say, 'We want to shut you all down. We don't want you to be there.' Do not say there is a false consultation period with John Tanzer, the head of WWF, at the head of it. The minister should stand down for this.

### Rural Fire Service; Redlands Satellite Hospital

 **Ms RICHARDS** (Redlands—ALP) (7.22 pm): I do not think there are many members who do not have a yellow ribbon on their lapel today. It is Yellow Ribbon Day and I cannot thank our rural firefighters enough. When I speak about our rural firefighters, I need to give a huge shout-out to our Russell Island

rural firefighters. They displayed an outstanding effort. They are an amazing team, like all of our rural firefighters across the state. I am lucky to have four incredible rural firefighter brigades across my island communities. To Larry, Deb, Kev, Kane and Maria and the multitude of volunteers who work tirelessly supporting our communities, I thank you very much for everything you do. Today we sincerely and deeply thank you for your services to our community.

In talking about all of those people on the front line and our heroes, I also want to thank the Minister for Health. Last Monday we were able to show our very deep appreciation for Byron Tyrer, the first paramedic on the scene of the Russell Island house fires. What he was confronted with was something that is unimaginable to all of us in here. His work, bravery and courage—along with all of those frontline responders on the day—was simply incredible. Byron had his first day back on the job this week. Can you believe that he and his partner Paul, who is the officer in charge on Russell Island, attended an incident with Ross Thompson on Russell Island. He had a heart attack but they were able to support and bring him back and they have been able to meet with Ross this week back in his home. To Byron and Paul and all of our frontline service personnel, the work you do is simply incredible and we really cannot thank you enough.

I want to talk about our satellite hospital because it has been opened for two weeks in the Redlands. It is something I am extraordinarily proud of. When we talk about legacy, that for me is an absolute cracker of a piece of health infrastructure to leave for our communities. William Lee, a resident from Cleveland, was the first patient to receive cancer therapy in the unit. He is now saving hours in travel time from the city by getting his treatment at the satellite hospital. It is fantastic for him to be able to do that.

I did not think I would be back there so soon after its opening, but my niece had her girlfriend from uni staying over. She woke up at my place on Father's Day and was really crook, so we went down to the satellite hospital and she saw doctors, nurses and the physio within an hour and a half. That was incredible. Renee Nuie was a contributor on one of our Facebook groups in the Redlands. Her daughter did her knee at dancing so they headed to the satellite hospital. She said that the staff were so friendly, kind and attentive and she was able to see someone quickly and have X-rays done straightaway. The comments that followed on this page simply speak to what an asset that is for our Redlands community.

### **Rural Fire Service; Ninderry Electorate, Crime**



**Mr PURDIE** (Ninderry—LNP) (7.25 pm): I want to endorse those comments made by the member for Redlands about the rural fire brigade and Yellow Ribbon Day. My electorate—particularly the communities of Peregrine Springs and Peregrine—saw firsthand back in 2019 the amazing work they did with the fires we had there.

While speaking about Peregrine Springs, I want to acknowledge over 50 members of that community who turned up last Wednesday night to a community forum I hosted at the Peregrine Springs State School in relation to crime. Unfortunately, Peregrine Springs, like a lot of other communities across Queensland, has seen an alarming spike not only in the perception of crime, which is concerning because we want people to feel safe in their homes and on their streets, but also with the reality of crime because crime is on the increase in Peregrine Springs and elsewhere. I have some statistics to support that. In the Coolumb police division alone since 2015 assaults are up 116 per cent and unlawful use of a motor vehicle is up 175 per cent. Sunshine Coast police have recently reported that across the whole Sunshine Coast unlawful use of a motor vehicle is up 110 per cent in the last three months alone.


A few weeks ago, I saw on our social media pages—which members can attest to have now become quasi Neighbourhood Watch pages—some concern in the area of Peregrine Springs about a spike in crime. After that some community members, particularly Vicki Cotter, came to see me and asked what I could do to help the local community and our police to combat crime. Under their suggestion, I was more than happy to find a location and facilitate a crime forum. I want to acknowledge the community that turned up and voiced their concerns. Vicki Cotter's main concern when this crime spree was happening was that she could not get through to Policelink to report information she had.

Our local police attended, including some senior police. Our Neighbourhood Watch, Crime Stoppers and community policing partners also attended and passed on some valuable information to the community. Although the police did not allude to this on the night, I am concerned that our police on the Sunshine Coast and across the state are doing more with less and with weaker laws at the moment. Ten years ago when I got transferred to the Sunshine Coast there were 24 police officers at Coolumb working out of a demountable. Now we have a new police station but the other week there were only nine police. I understand there are 10 people on the roster at Coolumb currently. In that time,

the population has increased and they are working with weaker laws. Similarly in my electorate the town of Bli Bli has doubled in population over the last 10 years. It is covered by Nambour police division. Ten years ago there were 30 police officers at Nambour station plus one OIC. Now on the roster there are 24 and they are dealing with a population that has doubled in size and weaker laws.

I want to acknowledge the police who turned up and our community policing partners who gave some great advice to the community about what the community can do to better protect their homes and their families. We need to give our police back the laws they need and more resources to do their job.

### **Skilling Queenslanders for Work**

 **Mr WHITING** (Bancroft—ALP) (7.28 pm): I rise to talk about the Skilling Queenslanders for Work program. Last month I attended another graduation in Deception Bay. The Deception Bay Neighbourhood Centre celebrated an amazing cohort of graduates from that program who did a cert III in early childhood education and individual support. I can say that 70 of that cohort of 105 already have work from that program. What the Deception Bay Neighbourhood Centre achieves through Skilling Queenslanders for Work is absolutely amazing. They have put 1,000 people into work since we brought this program back.

It was great seeing these people get the training to secure a job. They were given an opportunity that many thought at that stage had passed them by. Some of them thought they would never work again, but with this program we were able to open up the working world to them again. Their families were so proud.

It is great news to see that Skilling Queenslanders for Work will continue in Deception Bay. More programs are on the way. Younity will be running a Certificate I and II in Workplace Skills, assisting 92 people, and a Certificate I in Construction, assisting 15 people. Movement TwentyTwo will be running a Certificate II in Rail Infrastructure for 57 people, and many people from that program go on to work with Cross River Rail. It is great to see they are being employed there. The Neighbourhood Centre will be conducting a Certificate III in Individual Support for 75 more people, and two other courses will be run to assist another 50 people.

My community in Deception Bay has a truly great record in using Skilling Queenslanders for Work to produce some really great results, changing people's lives and those of their whole families with what they deliver.

With regard to Skilling Queenslanders for Work, I always think these days about the LNP saying they want rolled gold intervention programs and they want to see these programs audited. Every time I hear that I think, 'What about Skilling Queenslanders for Work?' We know that through this program 51,000 Queenslanders have employment or undertaken further training. It is the most successful employment program in Australia. It turns around the lives of people and their families and in turn their communities as well.

Let's remember that the LNP cut this program in 2012, despite Deloitte showing that for every dollar expended it generates an \$8 economic return. For every one dollar, you get \$8 back in the economy. That is a rolled gold program. Let's see that audited again. I worry that if those opposite ever get back into government again, God forbid, they would cut or gut this program. It would be not only this program but also others, which we know are rolled gold, which Queenslanders need to keep moving forward.

The House adjourned at 7.31 pm.

### **ATTENDANCE**

Andrew, Bailey, Bates, Bennett, Berkman, Bleijie, Bolton, Boothman, Boyd, Brown, Bush, Butcher, Camm, Crandon, Crawford, Crisafulli, D'Ath, de Brenni, Dick, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Frecklington, Furner, Gerber, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Hart, Head, Healy, Hinchliffe, Howard, Hunt, Janetzki, Katter, Kelly, King A, King S, Knuth, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Lauga, Leahy, Linard, Lister, Lui, MacMahon, Madden, Mander, Martin, McCallum, McDonald, McMahon, McMillan, Mellish, Mickelberg, Miles, Millar, Minnikin, Molhoek, Mullen, Nicholls, O'Connor, O'Rourke, Palaszczuk, Pease, Perrett, Pitt, Powell, Power, Pugh, Purdie, Richards, Robinson, Rowan, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Scanlon, Simpson, Skelton, Smith, Stevens, Stewart, Sullivan, Tantari, Walker, Watts, Weir, Whiting