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FIRST SESSION OF THE FIFTY-SEVENTH PARLIAMENT

Wednesday, 13 September 2023

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WEDNESDAY, 13 SEPTEMBER 2023

The Legislative Assembly met at 9.30 am.

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



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

PRIVILEGE

Correction to Record of Proceedings



Mr NICHOLLS (Clayfield—LNP) (9.31 am): On 23 May, I delivered a speech in matters of public interest about the failures at the Forensic and Scientific Services laboratory. I wish to clarify some comments. On review of the *Hansard*, it is apparent I misconstrued the Attorney-General's words by saying she had no interest in youth justice when what she said was she was not responsible for youth justice. I also incorrectly referenced the infamous Forensic and Scientific Services options paper as being provided in 2016 when in fact it was in 2018. I am happy to clarify the comment and correct the minor mistake in the dates to assist the House.

SPEAKER'S STATEMENT

School Group Tours



Mr SPEAKER: Honourable members, I wish to advise that we will be visited in the gallery this morning by students and teachers from St William's primary school, Grovely, in the electorate of Ferny Grove; Broadbeach State School in the electorate of Mermaid Beach; and Carinity Education Southside in the electorate of Toohey. Speaking of the electorate of Toohey, I understand it is Mr Peter Russo's birthday today. Happy birthday, member for Toohey.

PETITION

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

Buaraba Creek Road and Gatton-Esk Road Intersection

Mrs Frecklington, from 43 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 [\[1319\]](#).

Petition received.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Social Housing




Hon. A PALASZCZUK (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Olympic and Paralympic Games) (9.33 am): We all want more people into housing, to be safe and secure, but we know housing pressures are impacting families here in Queensland, as they are around the country—it is a national issue—and while there is no quick fix, our government is pulling every lever we can to give Queenslanders a home. One of those levers is our \$2 billion Housing Investment Fund. Today I can announce a project for Cairns with the potential to be the largest social and affordable housing precinct in Queensland with the development application lodged for 490 social and affordable homes in Woree. There is so much more.

Through the Housing Investment Fund, we expect to have 5,600 social and affordable homes delivered in construction or under contract by June 2027. With this announcement, we are powering towards that target. It demonstrates how the fund is encouraging innovative, industry-led approaches to delivering social and affordable housing in Queensland communities. Last year we announced a pipeline of up to 1,200 homes in partnership with the Brisbane Housing Company and Queensland Investment Corporation. Construction is underway for the first two sites to deliver 116 homes in Redcliffe and Chermside. The fund is also supporting the purchase of 335 ex-NRAS homes in Townsville and in the South East. The first 94 have been purchased with tenants in them.

As of earlier this month, nearly 200 Queenslanders are living in a home supported by the Housing Investment Fund. There is always more to do, but I am proud to lead a government doing all we can to give Queenslanders the safe secure home they need and deserve.

Manufacturing, Buses

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Olympic and Paralympic Games) (9.34 am): September is Queensland Manufacturing Month—there is no-one more excited than the minister for manufacturing—when we showcase and celebrate everything our manufacturers build right here, contributing more than \$20 billion into the economy each year. I want to see more—more products stamped with the words ‘made in Queensland’. We promised the people of Maryborough that we would bring back train manufacturing and we did. Now we have set our sights on buses. With an initial investment of \$134 million, our government is putting the wheels in motion to build 200 buses right here in Queensland.

Mr Crisafulli interjected.


Ms Grace interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Leader of the Opposition and member for McConnel, I ask both of you to cease your interjections.

Ms PALASZCZUK: That is 200 buses built in Queensland, by Queenslanders, for Queensland, supporting the bus manufacturing sector, backing hundreds of Queensland jobs and the future of our skilled manufacturing sector. The buses will be accessible to ensure all Queenslanders have access to public transport, including passengers in a wheelchair and those travelling with luggage or prams. They will be owned and operated by TransLink. Minister Bailey’s department is finalising arrangements for an independent procurement process. Queensland has some of the best bus builders in the country, and this investment will ensure these manufacturing jobs are secured now and into the future.

Tonight, Minister Butcher will host a manufacturing showcase on the Speaker’s Green. I encourage all members to get involved and show our home-grown manufacturers who have travelled from far and wide that we are right behind them.

Critical Minerals Queensland

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Olympic and Paralympic Games) (9.36 am): As I said yesterday, and as I will continue to tell Queenslanders, our government’s economic plan is working—delivering jobs, delivering infrastructure and vital services, and delivering them at the fastest rate in the nation. Nowhere is that as clear as in the mining industry, so crucial to our state’s economy. The latest Australian Bureau of Statistics data shows exploration expenditure in Queensland exceeded \$770 million last financial year, an increase of 4.4 per cent from the previous year. Importantly, expenditure increased 11.9 per cent year on year to \$372 million with copper up 16.7 per cent.

Our government is delivering for the resources industry and delivering for the future. Critical minerals is what the world is demanding and we will deliver. To do that we need a central point of contact for industry, investors and community. That is why we are establishing Critical Minerals Queensland, located in Townsville, steering government decisions and actions in the sector, marketing Queensland internationally and facilitating industry and government investment in research and development.

Queenslanders looking for a career in this resource sector can now apply for roles in this vital and exciting resources revolution. We want to attract the brightest and best as we look to grow this exciting industry. We will continue to support traditional commodities that have created thousands of good jobs over decades. Our government will always back the state’s resources sector, key to the state’s strong economic success.

Olympic and Paralympic Games, You for 2032



Hon. A PALASZCZUK (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Olympic and Paralympic Games) (9.38 am): One of the greatest benefits of hosting the 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games is the opportunity it offers to young Queenslanders to compete in a games on their home soil. We are making every effort to help those dreams come true. The You for 2032 program is the biggest talent search Australia has ever seen. So far, 4,516 young athletes have taken part. From Cooktown to Cunnamulla, Gympie to Goondiwindi, these young people have been assessed by the elite coaches of the Queensland Academy of Sport to identify our medal hopes in nine years time. I was pleased to see one of these programs in action on Thursday Island. Some 172 athletes are now in the QAS high-performance program. A further 505 have secured spots in the 2023 development phase. Incredibly, eight are considered a chance at the LA Games.

I am particularly proud of the program's reach into regional Queensland. Regional Queensland has supplied some of our greatest Olympians, such as Anna Meares, Cathy Freeman, Nat Cook; and Paralympians the calibre of Darren Thrupp, Dave Nicholas and Rheed McCracken have come from regional Queensland. Next week we will have our first regional Queensland meeting of the OCOG Board in Townsville to further demonstrate that all Queenslanders share the pride of hosting these games.

Some of the You for 2032 hopefuls will join us on the Speaker's Green today. We will have Jessica Borg, who has been selected for boxing; Liezel, selected for archery; Hayden for paddle; Abby for skateboarding; and William Green, chosen for BMX freestyle. It is yet another example of the excitement and inspiration our games are already providing as we head towards Brisbane, Queensland 2032.

South East Queensland Regional Plan



Hon. SJ MILES (Murrumbidgee—ALP) (Deputy Premier, Minister for State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning and Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympic and Paralympic Games Infrastructure) (9.39 am): It is no wonder so many people want to call the south-east home. We have a booming economy, record new jobs and a great lifestyle. Last month we released the draft South East Queensland Regional Plan update to guide our response to delivering more homes sooner for our growing population.

I am pleased to update the House today on how consultation on our plan is progressing. We have been engaging with communities from Noosa to the Gold Coast and out to Toowoomba. We are keen to hear from as many people across the region as possible, and I am advised that the first round of events has now been completed. Nearly 400 people attended face-to-face meetings and a further 11,000 made online contributions.

Today I am pleased to advise the House that a second round of in-person consultation is underway after councils and CoMSEQ requested them. Additional events are being held in each of the region's 12 local government areas to allow Queenslanders more opportunities to have their say. Noosa and Ipswich happened last Friday and this week consultation is taking place on the Sunshine Coast, Somerset, Toowoomba, Moreton Bay, Scenic Rim, in Brisbane, on the Gold Coast, in Logan and Redland Bay before wrapping up in the Lockyer Valley next month.

The latest modelling tells us that 2.2 million more people will call South-East Queensland home by 2046, bringing the region's population to six million. This means South-East Queensland will need almost 9,000 more homes over the next 25 years. Every part of our region is unique. That is why we will continue to work closely with the community, councils, industry and other key stakeholders between now and the finalisation of the plan by the end of the year to take on board feedback.

A key priority is creating more choice and more affordable options for Queenslanders. We want to provide more opportunities for young people to buy their first home, for workers to live close to their jobs and for older Queenslanders looking to downsize but stay within a connected community. With consultation wrapping up on 20 September, I encourage Queenslanders living in the south-east to register for an event locally and have their say if they have not done so already. This is about planning ahead for what we know Queenslanders will need and building more of the Queensland we love while protecting our environment and lifestyle.

Manufacturing, Buses



Hon. CR DICK (Woodridge—ALP) (Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment) (9.42 am): The Palaszczuk Labor government backs Queensland manufacturing jobs and we back Queensland manufacturing businesses. When the Holden and Toyota plants in Melbourne and Adelaide closed their doors there were fears it could mean the end of automotive manufacturing in this country, a sector that supports hundreds of small and medium-sized businesses.

Automotive manufacturing is alive and well today and its home is Queensland. Australia's oldest and largest truck manufacturer is Volvo at Wacol. Through our government's support, Rheinmetall is making Boxer combat reconnaissance vehicles for the Australian Army at its Military Vehicle Centre of Excellence at Redbank. Now Volgren at Eagle Farm will continue to manufacture buses in Queensland thanks to the support of our government. Sadly, just as Tony Abbott and Joe Hockey turned their back on Melbourne and Adelaide, Brisbane Lord Mayor Adrian Schrinner turned his back on Brisbane. The Lord Mayor and his LNP council chose to order the new Metro bus fleet from overseas, as LNP governments always do.

Let me say this: local bus manufacturing and the workers it supports depend on a pipeline of work from the Brisbane City Council. When the LNP Lord Mayor and LNP councillors turned their back on Brisbane and decided to build their Metro buses elsewhere, it put hundreds of local jobs at risk. That is why the Palaszczuk Labor government stepped in. Our \$134 million investment will support the manufacturing of 200 new buses. This is a public transport fleet our growing population will need, but our investment does more than that. It ensures more than 100 skilled manufacturing jobs remain here in Queensland rather than going interstate or overseas.

Automotive manufacturing is a vital part of our state's diverse economy and it is only through the policies of the Palaszczuk Labor government that we can ensure it remains so.

Satellite Hospitals



Hon. SM FENTIMAN (Waterford—ALP) (Minister for Health, Mental Health and Ambulance Services and Minister for Women) (9.44 am): From the first day I was sworn in as health minister I have been up-front about the challenge ahead. Today we have seen reporting on tier 3 alerts based on publicly available information now on the Queensland Health website that I released following my commitment to improve transparency and drive better performance. We all know our hospitals are under immense pressure. Over 2.2 million Queenslanders presented to our emergency departments in the last financial year, the highest number on record. Today I am happy to announce that thanks to the Palaszczuk government's nation-leading Satellite Hospitals Program we are starting to see early signs of improvement.

Since the Caboolture Satellite Hospital opened at the beginning of August we have seen a significant reduction in tier 3 alerts at the Caboolture Hospital. In August last year Caboolture went on tier 3 four times. In August this year, following the opening of our satellite hospital, the number of tier 3 alerts dropped to just one. Compared to last year, tier 3 alerts at the Caboolture Hospital have dropped significantly. Whilst it is—

Dr Miles: They don't want it to work.

Ms FENTIMAN: I know. Those opposite never supported our satellite hospitals and when there is good news they do not want to hear it.

Dr Miles interjected.

Ms FENTIMAN: That is a great question from the Deputy Premier. Will they sell them? Will they close them? That is what is at risk for the community.

Ms Bates interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: The member for Mudgeeraba will cease her interjections.


Ms FENTIMAN: Whilst it is early days we will continue to monitor these good trends. I am pleased to see that our satellite hospitals are doing exactly what we said they would do and that is to take pressure off our emergency departments. Since the minor injury and illness clinic opened last month, 1,800 people have walked through the door. That is 1,800 patients who would have gone to the Caboolture Hospital. In fact, more category 4 and 5 patients, those with less serious conditions, went to the satellite hospital last month than were seen at the Caboolture ED. This means that patients with less serious injuries and illnesses are going to our satellite hospital instead of our emergency department, which in turn is relieving pressure. This is working and this is what rising to the challenge looks like.

Our Big Build is Australia's largest health infrastructure investment: seven satellite hospitals, over 3,000 new hospital beds across the state including almost 500 new beds this year and over 9,400 more frontline health staff this term of government alone. There is more infrastructure, more beds and more staff. While we are talking about our frontline staff, I thank them. They are clearly going above and beyond while our hospitals are under immense pressure and we thank them for that. We are doing everything we can to attract more staff and support the wonderful staff that we have.

Dr Miles: They're not duds.

Ms FENTIMAN: I take that interjection from the Deputy Premier; they are not duds. That is how we improve hospital performance. We tackle ambulance ramping; we relieve pressure on our EDs—more infrastructure, more beds, more staff.

Local Schools, Local Jobs

 **Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for Education, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing) (9.48 am): The Palaszczuk government is helping our youngest Queenslanders get the skills they need for the jobs they want through our Local Schools Local Jobs program. This election commitment is all about supporting the significant role that schools play in linking up with local industries and ensuring students can access well-paid, secure jobs based in their own communities.


What a pleasure it was to join the member for Rockhampton and the member for Keppel at Rockhampton State High School last week to officially open the around \$5 million state-of-the-art aquaculture centre. It is so impressive. I say thank you to principal Kirsten Dwyer, aquaculture teacher Collis Holloway, school elder Wade Mann and students Shenae and Lachlan, who gave us a tour. Facilities include six 10,000 litre grow-out tanks and state-of-the-art equipment including automated oxygen control.

This is one of the largest and most technologically advanced centres in an Australian school, and five apprentices also learned their trade during the build. It will provide tremendous teaching capacity, including a pathway training for Certificate II in Aquaculture. It will not only help students to get good jobs in an emerging and expanding industry, with three local businesses already working with the school; it will also significantly contribute to the local fishing industry. Students will grow 10-centimetre fingerlings out to 25 to 30 centimetres and will release thousands of tag-size barramundi per year into the Fitzroy Tunuba River catchment. You do not have to go to Far North Queensland, member for Cook, to fish for barramundi; you can do it right there in Rocky! The school is working with the Fitzroy River Fish Stocking Association, local fishing tourism industry bodies and Mayor Tony Williams at Rockhampton Regional Council. He has been a champion for this project from the very beginning.

I am pleased to inform the House that 15 of our 26 Local Schools, Local Jobs projects have now been delivered, including: the \$4 million automotive training centre as part of the \$28 million cutting-edge STEM precinct at Mabel Park State High School in Waterford; a \$3.7 million upgrade to the Big Red Truck catering facility at Longreach State High School, which the Premier visited recently, to support students doing hospitality qualifications in the electorate of Gregory; and a \$1.7 million specialist health learning centre at Caboolture State High School in Morayfield, where more than 70 students are undertaking qualifications in a range of health services.

There is more to come as part of our \$78 million investment, including: a STEM space at Clermont State High School in Burdekin; an agricultural centre at St George State High School in Warrego; and health sciences spaces at Thuringowa State High School in Thuringowa. We want students to get the skills they need for the good jobs available locally so that they can stay in their communities. I look forward to visiting many of these schools as these vital projects come to completion.

Social Housing

 **Hon. MAJ SCANLON** (Gaven—ALP) (Minister for Housing) (9.51 am): 'Plans lodged for social housing project: biggest in state'. That is the front page of the *Cairns Post* today. I table it for the benefit of the House.

Tabled paper: Article from the *Cairns Post*, dated 13 September 2023, titled 'Plans lodged for social housing project biggest in state' [\[1320\]](#).

As the Premier just outlined, today we are pleased to announce—

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order, members!

Mr Mander interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Everton! I will remind the House again that if the member on their feet is not being provocative it is unusual to have such a high degree of interjections. I ask that those cease.

Ms SCANLON: As the Premier just outlined, today we are pleased to announce that we are well advanced in assessing an application for funding under the Housing Investment Fund—a fund that our government is very proud to deliver, in contrast to the position of those opposite, who are opposing a very similar fund at the federal level at the moment. This particular application could see 490 new social and affordable homes for Woree, between the Cairns southern corridor and inner-city suburbs—in the electorate of the Speaker and right next to the electorate of Cairns. The architecturally designed campus is being progressed with a planning application lodged today. If approved, this project will deliver social, affordable and specialist disability homes that are modern, low maintenance and energy efficient, amongst landscaped gardens. Subject to approvals, the campus will enable seniors seeking to downsize to enjoy supported community living and free up underoccupied social homes in Cairns for larger households and families.

The proposals by Community Housing Ltd and Tetris Capital have been brought to the Queensland government under the first round of our signature \$2 billion Housing Investment Fund. This proposed development has the potential to provide homes for hundreds of seniors in Cairns and will include a mix of one- and two-bedroom units located close to medical facilities, community services and shopping centres. This project is in addition to the recently progressed 71 proposals that have been shortlisted and progressed to the next stage for detailed design. Importantly, 60 per cent of these are outside of the Brisbane region.

Our Housing Investment Fund is working with community housing providers and institutional investors, like superannuation companies, to build more homes as well as purchase existing homes. That includes supporting two community housing providers to purchase up to 456 properties, most of which are homes exiting the soon-to-be-closed National Rental Affordability Scheme. As the Premier just outlined, we already have tenants in those homes. Homes secured to date are located across South-East Queensland, Gympie and Townsville, with many more on the way. I look forward to continuing to update the House on the progress of these projects supported under our Housing Investment Fund as we deliver our Big Build.

Manufacturing, Buses



Hon. MC BAILEY (Miller—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads and Minister for Digital Services) (9.55 am): We need to make more things here in Queensland. The Palaszczuk Labor government backs our manufacturing industry and its skilled workers. That is why we are backing our manufacturing industry with a \$134 million initial investment in 200 Queensland-made buses. Like our Queensland-made trains—

Mr Nicholls interjected.

Mr Minnikin interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Clayfield and member for Chatsworth.

Mr BAILEY:—these new Queensland-made buses will be built by Queenslanders for Queenslanders.

Mr Nicholls interjected.

Mr Dick interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Treasurer, your interjections are not helping. Member for Clayfield, you are warned under the standing orders. I did try to caution you.

Mr BAILEY: When we came to government, manufacturing industry support was cut and jobs and contracts were sent overseas. This Premier and this government have turned that around. The manufacturing industry is growing and now employs more than 180,000 Queenslanders. Our new Queensland-made bus procurement, announced today, will support more than 100 Queensland manufacturing jobs right here in Brisbane. We are backing workers in the bus manufacturing sector. It will also provide further benefits down the manufacturing supply chain.

It was this Palaszczuk Labor government that brought train manufacturing back to Maryborough, and it is this Labor government that is boosting bus manufacturing right here in our state. These lower emission buses will also keep our rail passengers moving while the big build on our rail network

progresses. The buses will be publicly owned to boost the rail replacement fleet, given the significant rail infrastructure works underway as part of our rail revolution. We currently rely on contracted bus services to support passengers during track and station closures for accessibility and general upgrades. Queensland-made publicly owned busses will provide additional capacity to ensure public transport users can get to where they need to go.

The new order will start with buses that meet the Euro 6 emission standard to help meet demand, with later buses transitioning to zero-emission buses. The new locally made buses using Euro 6 technology—

Mr Minnikin interjected.

Mr BAILEY: Those opposite do not support manufacturing here in our state. It is very sad.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order, members!


Mr BAILEY: They have learned nothing—absolutely nothing. The new locally made buses using Euro 6 technology can achieve—

Mr Crisafulli interjected.

Mr BAILEY: The Leader of the Opposition interjects and he sent the trains overseas to be made. That is his record. The new locally made buses, using Euro 6 technology, can achieve 83 per cent fewer emissions than the existing diesel bus fleet. Transport and Main Roads and its partners are currently developing the required infrastructure to support charging capabilities for zero-emission buses at depots across South-East Queensland. When this zero-emission supporting infrastructure is ready, this order will transition to zero-emission buses, supporting our renewable transport revolution. We will also be able to use these lower emission buses to modernise the fleet in our regions and reduce emissions, while zero-emission infrastructure continues to be developed in regional Queensland. The newer low-emission Queensland-made buses will be accessible to ensure all passengers have access to public transport, including people who use a wheelchair, people with luggage, parents with prams and, of course, our senior citizens.

We also know that the Brisbane City Council has a need for more buses in the short term. We have extended an offer to council to be part of this procurement, because we want to see more Queensland-made buses on our roads. The procurement approach for the new buses is currently being finalised by the Department of Transport and Main Roads. I look forward to seeing our bus manufacturing industry benefit from the Palaszczuk government's big bus build. Whether it is trains in Maryborough or buses in Brisbane, they are better when they are made in Queensland.

Manufacturing

 **Hon. GJ BUTCHER** (Gladstone—ALP) (Minister for Regional Development and Manufacturing and Minister for Water) (9.59 am): There is no bigger supporter of Queensland manufacturing than the Palaszczuk Labor government, and how good was that announcement we just heard from the Premier and the minister about building buses in Queensland. Manufacturing in Queensland contributes \$20 billion annually to the Queensland economy and employs over 180,000 Queenslanders in good, secure jobs in this state. Between our Made in Queensland and Manufacturing Hub Grants Program, we are also investing nearly \$130 million directly into those local businesses and supporting over 6½ thousand jobs because of those grants. That number is projected to grow to 10,000 jobs in the next five years on the back of those two grants.

Our investment is certainly helping Queensland manufacturers to grow and to increase international competitiveness, productivity and innovation in manufacturing. Thanks to the Palaszczuk government, we are making more things here in Queensland and this month is our chance to really celebrate how amazing our Queensland local manufacturing industry really is. September is Queensland and the nation's first ever Manufacturing Month: a month dedicated to showcasing how our businesses—from the tip of the cape to the Tweed River, from the coast to the outback and all points in-between—are making things here in Queensland. As part of Manufacturing Month, we are celebrating the expansion of the Inside Advanced Manufacturing program where advanced manufacturers have opened their doors for a behind-the-scenes look at how our great manufacturing industries are using Industry 4.0 technology and techniques that have grown their businesses. This means that other Queensland businesses are now learning from the best manufacturers in this state.

In this last week I have travelled throughout Brisbane, the Gold Coast, the Sunshine Coast, Maryborough and Bundaberg visiting local manufacturers in those areas. On that list was Zone RV from the Sunshine Coast which received \$1.16 million through the Made in Queensland grant program. It has purchased a 20-metre-long, five-metre-wide and two-metre-high 3D printer—in fact, it is the largest printer in the Southern Hemisphere based right here in Queensland on the Sunshine Coast—that is seeing it manufacture components for its RVs and also creating the opportunity to do that for other companies at the same time. When it received its grant last year, it told us that that equipment would help it put on an extra 90 people in its business. However, it was even better news to go and talk to Zone RV the other day and see those workers on site. It has now created an extra 99 jobs in that business because of our manufacturing grants. It told us that it could not have done this without the support of a good government in Queensland that delivers for our manufacturers.

Tonight I am hosting the manufacturing showcase event here at Parliament House. We are bringing together some of Queensland's incredible manufacturers who are going to show off their amazing products on the Speaker's Green. I encourage everyone in the House tonight to come on down and join me and see for yourself the real talent that we have in manufacturing in Queensland. The Palaszczuk government will always back Queensland manufacturing and always back Queensland jobs. Thanks to that support of the Queensland government, local businesses are making more of what we need and what the world needs right here in Queensland.

Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence



Hon. YM D'ATH (Redcliffe—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence) (10.03 am): The murder of Hannah Clarke and her three children—Aaliyah, Laianah and Trey—is a tragic reminder of the insidious nature of domestic, family and sexual violence. Friday, 8 September would have been Hannah's 35th birthday. Recently I met with Sue and Lloyd Clarke who I am sure everyone in this chamber would agree are tremendous advocates determined to end domestic and family violence. Last week Sue passed on these words to me to read here in parliament—

Hannah would be 35 today. She was a beautiful, vivacious girl, my best friend. She was going to join the police force to help women like her, she told me. Hopefully coercive control and the red flags are better understood now. My hope is Hannah and my beautiful grandchildren will never be forgotten.

We will never forget Hannah, Aaliyah, Laianah and Trey. Increasing community awareness and legislating against coercive control will be Hannah and her children's legacy. Our efforts as well as those of Hannah's family through the Small Steps 4 Hannah Foundation are crucial to raising community awareness. I thank Sue and Lloyd Clarke for their tireless efforts towards ending coercive control.

The Palaszczuk government is resolved to doing everything we can to end violence against women and their children. We have already taken foundational steps to legislate against coercive control. On 1 August 2023 the Domestic and Family Violence Protection (Combating Coercive Control) and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2023 commenced. This act amends and strengthens Queensland's existing laws to better respond to coercive control and strengthen the offence of unlawful stalking, paving the way towards a new standalone coercive control offence. Before the end of this year I intend to introduce legislation into parliament to establish the criminal offence of coercive control. I want to thank all of the stakeholders who are working with my department to get this law right. This is not just about delivering on a recommendation; it is about achieving real change and protection for victim-survivors.

The Palaszczuk government is also leading a program of work with the service providers and stakeholders so that together we can end domestic, family and sexual violence in Queensland. Work is underway to develop a communication strategy to guide trauma and culturally inform communication activities to increase community awareness and understanding of coercive control and domestic and family violence. We are in the process of implementing judicial training and police training as a precursor to our coercive control legislation. Our government is consulting with stakeholders to develop Australia's first perpetrator strategy and working to establish a peak advocacy body. In this year's budget we provided an additional \$58.3 million over four years and \$20.7 million per annum from this year's budget to ensure domestic, family and sexual violence services continue their vital work with victim-survivors. The Palaszczuk government's investment in systems, communities and first responders will increase our ability to understand, identify and respond to coercive control and hold perpetrators to account. Today we remember Hannah and her family.

Housing Supply



Hon. MC de BRENNI (Springwood—ALP) (Minister for Energy, Renewables and Hydrogen and Minister for Public Works and Procurement) (10.06 am): The Palaszczuk government is building the infrastructure this growing state needs. It is all part of our Big Build—Labor's largest investment in delivering infrastructure to secure our state's prosperity for generations to come. One of the most important investments is the record \$5.5 billion in social, affordable and frontline worker housing. It is the largest housing investment in our state's history as we deliver over 13½ thousand homes—one that stretches right across the state to every corner and benefits not just everyday Queenslanders and their families but helps deliver better frontline services for hundreds of communities in Queensland.

I am pleased to update the House on some significant progress. Our first QBuild Rapid Accommodation and Apprenticeship Centre in Eagle Farm is helping to slash up to 40 weeks off the construction time for homes in remote Queensland. Not only has that factory completed its first prototypes, ready to be installed in their new homes, but our designs are now being used by more than a dozen industry partners to build another 118 homes this year. Just as importantly, we are supporting skills development for the next crop of Queensland's QBuilders, with 14 apprentices on site currently. It has been such a success that today I can announce we have closed tenders for another 86 new homes for our frontline health workers across the state. I can inform the House that that includes 15 homes in Hope Vale and Laura for the member for Cook, 22 homes in Barcaldine, Blackall and Longreach and another 15 homes in Winton in the electorate of Gregory. It includes 15 homes in Normanton and Camooweal and seven homes in Charters Towers in the electorate of Traeger and another 12 units on Palm Island for the member for Townsville. These are not just new, quality homes, but they mean better services and downward pressure on rents. Labor is delivering more homes more quickly.

Wall to Wall Ride for Remembrance; SES Week



Hon. MT RYAN (Morayfield—ALP) (Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services) (10.08 am): This morning I joined with former and current Queensland Police Service officers outside of parliament who are setting off on their way to Canberra for the annual Wall to Wall Ride for Remembrance in honour of officers who have fallen in the line of duty. They will carry a baton—a handcrafted, wooden style classical police accoutrement—engraved with the wording 'we will remember them' which houses a scroll bearing the names of serving police officers who have died in the line of duty.

This year the names of Queensland officers, Constable Matthew Arnold and Constable Rachel McCrow, will be placed in the baton and then immortalised in Canberra at the National Police Memorial. We will never forget the sacrifice of Matt and Rachel at Wieambilla as they acted to protect our community.

Today marks the midway point for SES Week, a statewide celebration to recognise and thank our SES volunteers. It celebrates these brave men and women who continually go above and beyond for their communities, keeping Queenslanders safe. Our SES volunteers respond to a range of disasters and emergencies, including cyclones, storms, floods, forensic searches, cliff rescues, landslides and missing persons searches. Last financial year they spent over 90,000 hours performing operations and an impressive 330,000 hours preparing and training. The good that our SES volunteers do for our community is immeasurable. They put the needs of their community ahead of themselves and we owe them our thanks.

This week SES volunteers have been recognised for their contributions at regional award ceremonies across the state and a state award ceremony will be held this weekend. The Palaszczuk government is backing the State Emergency Service with record investment through our emergency services reform program. This year, the record \$57 million State Emergency Service budget is a 32 per cent increase on last year's already record budget. It is investing in additional staff and resources for volunteers.

Today I can announce that from this record budget, over \$1 million will be allocated for replacement flood boats and over \$4 million will be allocated for support vehicles, trailers and light and medium storm vehicles. Funding has also been allocated for enhanced equipment, including stretchers, battery-operated lighting kits, trauma training and resuscitation kits, CPR manikins, training defibrillators and mobile phone boosters to increase safety and capability. The uplift is an investment that

strengthens the State Emergency Service as our government works closely with all stakeholders, and mostly our stakeholders who are SES volunteers, to ensure we build a strong and sustainable State Emergency Service for both today and tomorrow.

Olympic and Paralympic Games, You for 2032



Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE (Sandgate—ALP) (Minister for Tourism, Innovation and Sport and Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympics and Paralympics Sport and Engagement) (10.12 am): It is no secret that Queenslanders always punch above their weight—by any measure. At the Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games Queensland athletes won more than 40 per cent of Australia's total medal haul. It is an impressive record and we want to continue to win the lion's share.

As the Premier has noted, that is why this government introduced the Youfor2032 program. Over the past 18 months, the Queensland Academy of Sport has scoured the state, from the Torres Strait to the South-West and the South-East. Its mission is to get as many Queenslanders as possible on podiums at the Brisbane 2032 games. The state's aspiring Olympians and Paralympians have responded to the call. More than 4,500 young athletes, aged from 13 to 30 years, have taken part in trials across Queensland. Selected athletes get access to elite coaching, facilities and support teams at QAS to assist their development. Importantly, parents and guardians can also access resources to support their athlete's journey.

As the Premier said this morning, 172 young athletes from the 2022 testing period are now in QAS-supported high-performance programs. I am pleased to advise the House that eight of those have been fast-tracked into the new QAS Talent Support Program designed to develop athletes considered genuine medal prospects as early as the 2028 Los Angeles games. As the Premier announced this month, another 505 athletes who trialled this year have been invited into the program. This incredible initiative has been made possible by the Palaszczuk government doubling its funding to the QAS as part of our green and gold pathway to 2032.

Members of the Youfor2032 team will be on the lawn at lunchtime today and I encourage all MPs to take the opportunity to come and meet some of our aspiring Olympic and Paralympic athletes and the team who have been behind identifying them and supporting them. You will also get the chance to try out the vertical jump and speed sprint tests for yourselves—because it is never too late to dare to dream.

Mr SPEAKER: It is for me, Minister.

NOTICE OF MOTION

Hospitals, Performance



Ms BATES (10.14 am): I give notice that I will move—

This House condemns the current health minister for releasing less information than the former health minister on code yellows in Queensland hospitals, and

1. notes between April and June 2023:
 - Queensland hospitals were on tier 3 for around 7,000 hours
 - Rockhampton Base Hospital was escalated 15 times
 - Mackay Base Hospital was escalated 14 times
 - Townsville University and Caboolture hospitals were escalated 13 times
 - Gold Coast University and Robina hospitals were escalated 11 times
 - Hervey Bay Hospital was escalated seven times
 - Bundaberg Hospital was escalated six times; and
2. notes comments of the United Workers Union ambulance organiser that demand has not increased in any significant way and that time lost at hospitals waiting to transfer the care of patients has the greatest impact; and
3. calls on the government to:
 - release real-time health data in line with LNP policy
 - release the duration of each tier 3 escalation at each hospital as previously provided
 - release the number of days each hospital spends at tier 0, tier 1, tier 2 and tier 3 escalation
 - release and provide details on the number of part 9 investigations since 2015.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

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

Redlands, Youth Crime



Mr CRISAFULLI (10.16 am): My question is to the Premier. Given the comments from the member for Capalaba describing youth crime as a media beat up, what advice does the Premier give to the residents of the Redlands who have been victims of the youth crime crisis?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the Leader of the Opposition for the question. I have made it very clear here that we do respect the voice of victims. We understand that there have been men and women and families who have been subjected to various forms of crime in this state and we stand with them. That is the reason why we are setting up the select committee with the independent member for Noosa to chair it. We look forward to seeing the representatives from the opposition—and that is what we should be doing: taking the politics out of this because these are very, very complex issues. They have been complex issues from day 1 and successive governments have actually been looking at all of these issues on several different levels and they are complex. I really welcome the fact that we are going to be setting up this select committee, as well as the independent advisory committee that the Attorney-General is putting a lot of work into, as I know the Minister for Youth Justice and the Minister for Police is as well.

Let me also say that we will continue to meet with the victims of crime, and members will do that in their local electorates. I also saw this morning on the morning shows that crime is not unique to Queensland. In fact, there have been—

Opposition members interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: No, wait—there have been fatal shootings and violent crime in Melbourne and in Sydney. Let us be very clear that it is not just Queensland. It is happening in New South Wales and it is happening in Victoria.

Ms McMillan interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Comments will be directed through the chair.

Ms PALASZCZUK: We know the member for Kawana set up boot camps and they failed.

Opposition members interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: They tried and they failed. They cut youth justice conferencing—that has proven to work—where young offenders sit down in front of the people who have been subjected to that crime. Youth justice conferencing does work. No other government has put more into youth justice than this government and we will continue to roll out programs such as the youth justice co-responder model which is rolling out stronger communities—

(Time expired)

Redlands, Youth Crime

Mr CRISAFULLI: My question is to the Premier. Multiple residents from the Redlands have experienced break-ins, attempted break-ins, cars being canvassed for stealing, wilful property damage and intimidation by youth criminals. Will the Premier admit these experiences are proof that there is a youth crime crisis?

Ms PALASZCZUK: We have acknowledged that there are issues with youth crime.

Mr Crisafulli interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Leader of the Opposition, that is not helpful. You have asked a question, the Premier has had less than eight seconds to form a response and you continue to interject. I ask you to cease.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I understand that this has a personal impact on families no matter where they live, whether they live in the Redlands, whether they live in your electorate or the electorate of the member for Kawana.

Mr Bleijie: Because it's happening everywhere, all across Queensland.

Ms PALASZCZUK: The member for Kawana will always bring it down to the lowest common denominator. I look forward to this select committee. I hope they pick some good people to be on it because then members will realise the complex issues that are associated with—

Mrs Frecklington interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The member for Nanango will cease her interjections.

Ms PALASZCZUK: As we know, the police recruitment campaign is working. One of the best things we can do is to recruit—

Mr Bleijie interjected.

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

Dr Miles interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I take the Deputy Premier's interjection. There would be far fewer police if they had been elected at the last election. They cut senior police officer numbers.

Mrs Gerber interjected.

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

Ms PALASZCZUK: When the member for Currumbin was not here, they cut senior police numbers.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Premier, there is a point of order and I ask you to resume your seat.

Mr POWELL: My point of order is on relevance. The question was very specific: is it a crisis?

Mr SPEAKER: In many respects, the question could be seen to be asking for an opinion, if I wish to be very direct about responding to the point of order. The Premier is responding to the issues that have been raised in the question. There have been several interjections that she has also responded to. Premier, you have one minute and 19 seconds remaining.

Ms PALASZCZUK: We have appointed the Victims' Commissioner. We have also committed \$9 million to support victims of crime, which includes \$3 million to boost counselling capacity. That is really important because people have told me that it has a long-term impact on the way in which they lead their lives. We are allowing people to get the counselling that they need. We are expanding the scheme to support victims of crime. We are providing \$132 million to assist Queenslanders with crime prevention and provide support for victims. We have a program for improving home security that will be rolled out to seniors as part of our \$30 million trial in Townsville, Mount Isa and Cairns. We are looking at all of those measures and we are also recruiting more police. We will give the police the resources that they need.

Opposition members interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I will wait. I am being responsive, I am answering the question and those opposite are constantly interjecting.

(Time expired)

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Ninderry, member for Theodore and member for Toowoomba North, you are warned under the standing orders for continuous interjections.

Tropical North Queensland

Mr HEALY: My question is of the Premier and Minister for the Olympic and Paralympic Games. Will the Premier please update the House on how the Palaszczuk government is delivering for tropical North Queensland and is the Premier aware of any other approaches?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the member for Cairns. He is a passionate member for the local Cairns community and the people he represents. When you walk down the street of Cairns there is no-one that this man does not know.

As we announced today, there will be 490 more social and affordable homes in Cairns. That is absolutely critical. I know how important that is to your electorate as well, Mr Speaker.

Mr Mander interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: We will give the member for Everton a personal copy of today's *Cairns Post* to show that, yes, it is happening. We will give that to him today. Later this month we will be officially opening the expansion to the Cairns Convention Centre. That is a proud investment, built by Labor and expanded by Labor. I understand that many conventions are already booked, which will bring so much money into the Cairns community

Mr Mander interjected.

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

Ms PALASZCZUK: Also delivered by Labor—our government—is the Cairns port upgrade. We have invested \$127 million to widen and deepen the shipping inlets and to support the cruise industry. Because of our investment, this year in Cairns 34 cruise ships are expected to dock. Of course, we are looking to the future and more jobs. The Cairns Marine Precinct will benefit from \$350 million in joint funding with the federal government to support new industries.

We want to attract more flights. I understand the member for Cairns recently joined a delegation to Hong Kong in an attempt to secure Cathay Pacific flights. Why is this important? It is not just about the tourists who come here; the underbelly of those planes carry for export all the good local produce from Cairns, the Atherton Tableland and the whole tropical Far North region, which means jobs for Queenslanders. The unemployment rate in Cairns is now 3.2 per cent, which is down from 7.9 per cent under the LNP. They do not want to talk about jobs and the economy because this state is powering and the strength is in our regions. Our regions will continue to boom under our government because we care about them and we care about the people who live in them.

There has been \$310 million worth of upgrades to schools. I will say that again: \$310 million to upgrade schools in the far north. That is a proud achievement for every child going to those schools—

(Time expired)

Redlands, Youth Crime

Mr LAST: My question is to the Premier. Just last week, six youths allegedly broke into the Lewis family home in Capalaba and walked through their children's bedrooms while they slept. We are advised that none of them have been caught or charged. They stole house keys and a car, leaving the family thousands of dollars out of pocket and unable to sleep at night. Does the Premier agree that the Lewis family's experience is proof that there is a youth crime crisis or just a media beat-up?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I addressed this earlier and, as I said, these are serious issues. I have said that. It is why we have appointed the Victims' Commissioner. I am more than happy for the Victims' Commissioner to travel around the state and meet personally with people, to hear their stories.

Mr Janetzki interjected.

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

Ms PALASZCZUK: I have said very clearly that we give the police the resources that they need to do their job. We have a great recruitment program happening at the moment. More people are coming through the police academy and more people are being deployed to regional—

Mr Brown interjected.

Mrs Frecklington interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Member for Capalaba and member for Nanango, you will cease your interjections.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Finally, as I have said in this House before, the most damage that was done to our Police Service was when, from memory, over 100 senior officers were sacked under the LNP. That is what happens. That is their attitude towards the police in this state.

If the member wants to provide me details of that family, I am happy to privately pass those on to the Victims' Commissioner.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Pause the clock. Member for Nanango, you are warned under the standing orders. Member for Chatsworth, you are also warned. The Premier is being responsive to the question as asked. I would like to hear the answer.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I stand corrected: it was not 100; it was 110 senior police officers and 300 more police personnel. There we are: 110 senior police officers and 300 more police personnel.

Mrs Gerber: Rubbish.

Ms PALASZCZUK: The member for Currumbin might want to have a history lesson, because these are facts.

Mrs Gerber interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Currumbin!

Ms PALASZCZUK: We stand by with the police. We are expanding the number of police recruits—

Mr Powell: Do you stand by the member for Capalaba?

Ms PALASZCZUK: You are so rude.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Premier, I appreciate the provocation, but comments will be directed through the chair. The member for Glass House will cease his interjections.

Ms PALASZCZUK: We are more than happy to provide the Victims' Commissioner—

Ms Simpson interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Maroochydhore!

North Queensland, Infrastructure

Mr WALKER: My question is of the Premier and Minister for the Olympic and Paralympic Games. Can the Premier update the House on how the Big Build is delivering for North Queensland, and is the Premier aware of any alternatives?

Ms PALASZCZUK: As I said earlier, the strength of Queensland's economy is powered by our regions. I thank the member for Mundingburra for that question, because in perhaps three to four weeks we will be opening stage 5 of the Townsville Ring Road. This means more jobs for the north part of our state, which is absolutely deserving. It will mean that people will be able to get places a lot faster. It is a great investment by this government, working with the federal government. I look forward to joining the minister and local members in Townsville for that great day when we open another proud Labor investment in Townsville.

We are also increasing storage at Burdekin Dam. Contracts have been awarded. These works will support 80 jobs, 50 of which will be in the local region. We are very proud of the fact that CopperString 2032 is powering away, with the office open. Today I announced the opening of the Critical Minerals Office in Townsville. What signal does that send to the north of our state? We are prepared to say, 'Here is an office in Townsville. If you want to work in that office, you will move to Townsville and live there.' It also means that people can get jobs locally. Children can go to school there and people can get an apprenticeship there. There will be thousands of jobs in the north of our state. That is the commitment of our government—jobs, jobs and more jobs. That is what we are proud of.

Townsville's unemployment rate is now 2.4 per cent, down from 8.5 per cent under the LNP. More than that, when Clive Palmer shut that nickel industry—I am happy to talk about this every single day—Townsville's unemployment rate went to over 13 per cent. Everyone was concerned about where people were going to get jobs. There are so many jobs in Townsville now, it is incredible. This regional centre is a growth centre. That is why I have opened an office there. I look forward to meeting more people when I go up there next week.

We will continue with our Big Build because the Big Build means big jobs for Queenslanders. We have awarded the \$530 million expansion for the Townsville University Hospital that will deliver 143 new beds and 1,200 construction jobs. What would those opposite do with all of this investment in Townsville? We know that they would cut, sack and sell. They have the hit list. They tried to sell off the Townsville port and the Townsville-Mount Isa line. They closed Stuart State School and they sold off—

(Time expired)

Redlands, Youth Crime

Dr ROBINSON: My question is to the Premier. Residents of the Redlands impacted by the youth crime crisis have come to parliament after hearing the comments of the member for Capalaba. Can the Premier tell the Fields and the Beasleys, who have called for his sacking, what action she has taken against her Chief Government Whip for his view that the youth crime crisis is just a 'media beat-up'?

Ms PALASZCZUK: The Deputy Premier made comments in relation to this. The member for Capalaba has also apologised for those comments.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order, members!

Mrs Gerber interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: The member for Currumbin will cease her interjections.

Ms PALASZCZUK: As I said, we know that there are victims of youth crime across our state. We have announced all of the measures that we are putting in place. I have met with the Beasleys personally.

Ms Bates interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Mudgeeraba!

Ms PALASZCZUK: Can you stop being so rude? Member for Mudgeeraba—

Mr SPEAKER: Premier! Member for Mudgeeraba, you will cease your interjections.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I say to people that they should be proud that we put in place so quickly—I asked the Attorney-General to do it very quickly—

Dr Robinson interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Oodgeroo, you have asked the question. You will cease your interjections or you will be put on a warning.

Ms PALASZCZUK: That is why I asked the Attorney-General to move quickly to put in place the Victims' Commissioner. That is exactly what we have done.

Dr Robinson interjected.

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

Ms PALASZCZUK: There is now an opportunity for people to meet personally with Jon Rouse, who has had a highly distinguished career, who will actually—

Mr Crisafulli interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Leader of the Opposition, commentary is what I am hearing from you—not even interjections. You are warned under the standing orders.

Ms PALASZCZUK: We will continue to respond. People in the gallery should also know that we have set up a select committee to look at the challenging and complex issues of youth crime. The committee will be chaired by an independent member of this House and it will work very hard. If I know the member for Noosa, this committee will be the hardest working committee there has ever been in this House. I know the character of the member for Noosa and I know that she will ensure the work is done. We are continuing to invest in Youth Justice, to make sure that the programs are being rolled out across the state.

Mrs Gerber interjected.

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

Ms PALASZCZUK: Crime is not confined to one section of our state. That is why—

Opposition members interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Correctly. As I said this morning, you only have to watch the morning TV shows to see that there have been shootings in Sydney and shootings and violent crime in Melbourne. We also passed the toughest laws in this nation, and those opposite supported them. We will do everything we can to tackle those complex causes of youth crime.

(Time expired)

North Queensland, Infrastructure

Mr HARPER: My question is for the Deputy Premier. Could the Deputy Premier advise the House how the Palaszczuk government is delivering the infrastructure our growing North Queensland needs, and is the Deputy Premier aware of any other approaches?

Dr MILES: I thank the member for Thuringowa for his question. It was great to be in Townsville last week with the resources minister and the member for Mundingburra to see just how our \$89 billion Big Build is delivering infrastructure for the people of Townsville. While I was there I discovered something new. Members of this House might not be aware, but the member for Thuringowa used to be a paramedic!

Government members interjected.

Dr MILES: I know, right? It was particularly good to visit with the member for Thuringowa and the member for Townsville the site of the new Burdell Ambulance Station. The workers there had just poured the first slab. The ambulance station is not just a new ambulance station for that growing part of Townsville; it will also be a new northern regional office for the Queensland Ambulance Service and a new Townsville clinical education unit, delivering for our hardworking ambos in Townsville in terms of better facilities and better training for them. So much of the Big Build is delivering in Townsville. In addition to Burdell Ambulance Station, there is also the \$530 million expansion of the Townsville University Hospital that the health minister is delivering. There are so many new facilities and so much new infrastructure for Townsville.

On this side of the House we back our health services. On this side of the House we do not think our health workers are duds; we think they should have great new facilities. On this side of the House we do not think our health workers should get their pay cut like the member for Burnett does. We do not think that the Burdell Ambulance Station should be cut like the member for Broadwater does. The Burdell Ambulance Station is on his list of \$10 billion worth of cuts. He announced they would cut \$4 million—pruning—from the new Burdell Ambulance Station. We will not cut the projects that Townsville needs. We will deliver the projects that Townsville needs. That is what our Big Build is all about.

It will be great to be back in Townsville again next week to see how we are progressing with our Big Build and to remind the Townsville community that the member for Broadwater and the LNP want to cut their hospital projects, cut their ambulance projects, cut their road projects—cut important projects that are delivering for Townsville and North Queensland, one of most important parts of our state.

Youth Crime

Mr BLEIJIE: My question is to the Premier. Given serious repeat offenders have jumped from 10 to 20 per cent, there are 202 fewer police than a year ago and the Australian Bureau of Statistics data shows people are more likely to have their car stolen in Queensland than across the border, will the Premier admit the current youth crime problem facing all Queenslanders is a real crisis?

Ms PALASZCZUK: Of course, we have said it is real. No-one is denying that. That is why we are setting up a select committee of this House. I have absolutely said it is real. That is why in this House we have passed the toughest laws in the nation and are targeting serious repeat youth offenders, tackling the complex causes of youth crime and investing in community safety. We are also committed to supporting the victims of crime. That is why—and I will repeat this because the member for Kawana obviously was not listening the first time—we have appointed Mr Jon Rouse APM as Queensland's interim Victims' Commissioner, ahead of a permanent appointment in 2024. If anyone who has been a victim of crime would like to meet with the Victims' Commissioner, that is the appropriate course of action.

Resources Industries

Mr O'ROURKE: My question is of the Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment. Will the Treasurer update the House on the status of the resources industry and the benefits to Queensland under the Palaszczuk Labor government, and is the Treasurer aware of any alternative approaches to the resources industry?

Mr DICK: I thank the member for Rockhampton for his question. He is a great supporter of the resources industry in Queensland. I am very pleased to report to the member for Rockhampton and all members of this House that the resources industry in Queensland has never been stronger than it has been under the Palaszczuk Labor government.

I am pleased to report to the House that on Monday the Queensland Mines Inspectorate published new quarterly jobs data. That report showed that on 30 June this year the number of workers in the Queensland coal industry reached 43,972, which is an all-time record. There has never been more work in the coal industry. There have never been more jobs in the coal industry—exactly one year after we introduced new progressive coal royalties.

Notwithstanding a false and misleading \$40 million campaign by Ian Macfarlane, the Queensland Resources Council and their fellow travellers in the LNP, these progressive coal royalties have had no impact on jobs, investment and Queensland's reputation. That was confirmed by the CEO of BHP—the biggest mining in the world—Mike Henry, who promised to invest a billion dollars a year into Queensland mines because he regards them as attractive assets, thanks to our government.

While everyone else is on board for royalties, not so the Leader of the Opposition. When he was asked about progressive coal royalties, the LNP leader said he wanted to cut taxes. The member for Burdekin said that in government he would sit down with Ian Macfarlane. The member for Burdekin voted to destroy the town of Glenden, in his own electorate, on the instructions of the mining lobby. That stain will follow the member for Burdekin all the way through to election day and beyond—for the rest of his career.

If people want to know why the LNP is behaving this way, follow the money—look at the donations. There are thousands of dollars in donations from the Minerals Council of Australia. There are thousands of dollars in donations from QCoal and its owner, Chris Wallin—the very person who said miners would rather quit their jobs than live in Glenden. Did we hear the LNP member for Burdekin defend his constituents from those attacks? No, there was not one word.

When it comes to the Leader of the Opposition and the member for Burdekin, there is nothing they will not do for the mining lobby. When they get into government their paymasters will expect a return. Some \$7 billion in cuts will rain down on Queenslanders. There will be the signature intergenerational equity report—Peter Costello's commission of audit 2.0. They will cut billions of dollars from our infrastructure big spend. The secret debt strategy promised by the Leader of the Opposition will be the pretext to sell our state down the river. Only the Palaszczuk Labor government will protect progressive coal royalties and stop LNP cuts raining down on Queensland.

Crime and Corruption Commission, Reports

Mr Saunders interjected.

Mr NICHOLLS: I've got your number boy.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Maryborough, I will ask you to cease your interjections. This question will be heard in silence.

Mr NICHOLLS: My question is to the Premier. Given the outcome of the Carne High Court matter this morning, will the Premier now listen to the CCC and legislate to ensure the CCC reports into Labor mates Peter Carne and Jackie Trad can be released to the public and not covered up?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I understand that a ruling has just come down from the High Court and the government will look at that ruling.

Wide Bay-Burnett, Health Services

Mr SMITH: My question is of the Minister for Health, Mental Health and Ambulance Services and Minister for Women. Can the minister please update the House on the Palaszczuk government's record investment in health care across Bundaberg and the Wide Bay-Burnett region, and is the minister aware of any alternative approaches?

Ms FENTIMAN: I thank the member for Bundaberg for his question. He is a terrific advocate for improving healthcare services in his community. How wonderful it was recently to join the member for Bundaberg and the Premier to announce the brand new \$1.2 billion Bundaberg Hospital that will deliver more than 121 beds. Through our \$764 million Putting Patients First plan, we are absolutely committed to making sure that we have more frontline health workers looking after Queenslanders right across the state.

On this side of the House we back our health workers. But sadly, not everyone in this place shares that view. Late on Monday night the member for Burnett was very busy on his Facebook page—never a good thing for a member of parliament, I would say—attacking and undermining the Bundaberg Hospital. In response to a local grandmother in the community he made comment on his Facebook page. The local grandmother said to Mr Bennett—

Hang on my granddaughter works there. No crisis? Why the fuss Stephen? Is it because that small man told you to target Health? The member for Burnett did not like that one bit. In response he said—

... you are part of the problem—

This is to a grandmother in his community. It gets worse. He said—

... time we broke the back of unrealistic employee entitlements ...

I table that for the benefit of the House.

Tabled paper: Extract, undated, from a social media account, displaying comments relating to Bundaberg Hospital [1321].

Government members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order, members to my right! I could not hear the minister.

Ms FENTIMAN: ‘Unrealistic employee entitlements’—hang on a minute? You mean the pay and conditions for our hardworking frontline health staff—our nurses, our midwives, our doctors? I want to read this again: ‘It’s time we broke the back of unrealistic employee entitlements.’

Government members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Member for Bancroft, we do not hear much of you, but unfortunately you were a little bit too loud then. You are warned under the standing orders. The member for Pine Rivers may well be joining him.

Ms FENTIMAN: Somebody in the LNP must have got on to the member and said, ‘Quick! Quick! Stephen, delete that. We don’t want them to know our secret plan to cut the pay of healthcare workers.’ Maybe it was the member for Mudgeeraba. Maybe it was the Leader of the Opposition. He quickly deleted those posts so that no-one would see the LNP’s plan to cut the pay and conditions of our health workers. That is their secret plan for health. Shame on the LNP. The Leader of the Opposition must rule out cutting the pay and conditions today.

(Time expired)

Palaszczuk Labor Government, Ministry

Mr JANETZKI: My question is to the Premier. After months of saying she would not, the Premier delivered a so-called reset by moving the same ministers into different chairs. After weeks of internal leadership rumblings, with one minister reportedly saying, ‘The status quo will kill us,’ will the Premier rule out another reshuffle prior to the next election?

Mr SPEAKER: I will allow the question as it does relate to the overseeing of executive government. However, the Premier may answer this question as she sees fit.

Ms PALASZCZUK: That is a very hypothetical question. I do not know—someone might get sick; someone might leave. That is a hypothetical question.

Mr Dick: But we won’t cut the pay and conditions of healthcare workers.

Ms PALASZCZUK: That is right. I tell you what: there definitely needs to be a reshuffle over there, Mr Speaker. For goodness sake!

Mr Dick: The member for Burnett needs to be reshuffled out.

Ms PALASZCZUK: That is right. The member for Burnett needs to go.

Government members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order, members to my right!

Ms PALASZCZUK: Now we know their secret plan, revealed today by the health minister, about pay and entitlements—

Mr Power interjected.

Mr Perrett interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Sorry, Premier. Member for Logan and member for Gympie, you will cease your chatter across the chamber. You are both warned under the standing orders.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Whilst those opposite still have the member for Kawana and the member for Clayfield in their shadow ministry, it will be a constant reminder of Campbell Newman and all of the damage that was done. As we know, they always use the same playbook. Members are out there now telling Queenslanders what is really going to happen.

This attack on workers’ entitlements in the health system is absolutely atrocious. It is disgraceful and it is distressing. I think every health professional in Queensland should be concerned that the first act of a Crisafulli government will be to axe their pay and conditions and to sack. We know that that is their modus operandi. Why do we know that? We know that because the architect, the member for Clayfield, is still on their front bench.

Mr Mickelberg interjected.

Mr Langbroek interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Member for Surfers Paradise and member for Buderim, members’ correct titles will be used in this chamber. Premier, you have the call.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I did not realise there was more time on the clock. Let me also say who else should be shuffled out of there: the member for Mudgeeraba, who calls regional health workers 'duds'.

Mr Powell interjected.

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

Ms PALASZCZUK: Can you imagine this woman becoming a minister when that is her attitude towards frontline men and women in the health system!

Ms Bates interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: That is her attitude. Her attitude is to call them 'duds'. That is absolutely disgraceful.

Ms Bates interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Mudgeeraba!

Ms PALASZCZUK: The member for Mudgeeraba should move back there, and they should get the member for Moggill in there and get some decency into health. They should have a health professional who actually respects the health profession, not this fake member of a union over here—the member for Mudgeeraba.

Mr Dick: A fake member of a fake union.

Ms PALASZCZUK: That is right.

Ms Bates interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Mudgeeraba!

Ms PALASZCZUK: The member for Mudgeeraba would rather play dress-ups at a hospital than go and talk to—

Ms Bates interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Speaking of dress-ups, the member for Kawana—talk about rats—wore a fake rat on his shoulder!

Mr Harper interjected.

Ms Bates interjected.

(Time expired)

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Mudgeeraba, I appreciate that there was some provocation, but you did not cease interjecting for I think almost the entire response. You are warned under the standing orders. Member for Thuringowa, you will direct your comments through the chair and you will cease your interjections. You are warned under the standing orders.

Regional Queensland, Racing

Mr HUNT: My question is to the Minister for Education, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing. Can the minister update the House on how the Palaszczuk government is supporting regional racing and is the minister aware of any alternative approaches?

Ms GRACE: I thank the member for the question. He knows that the Sunshine Coast Turf Club at Caloundra is ploughing ahead. We have invested well over \$16 million already. There are new tie-up stalls, where an additional 128 horses are now being accommodated. This is another industry, due to the Palaszczuk Labor government, that is absolutely thriving and ploughing ahead. There is an all-weather synthetic track at the Sunshine Coast Turf Club, and there are many other infrastructure projects happening right throughout Queensland.

On the Gold Coast—I have spoken to the member for Mermaid Beach: I know he is a keen race goer—we are investing tens of millions of dollars. The Gold Coast Turf Club will be a completely different facility by the time we are finished. What a great weekend the member for Cairns and I had in Cairns attending the Cairns Amateurs Carnival. It has come out of COVID and it is growing. It was fantastic to see. We were in a new building—a \$2.5 million investment. There is additional money for tie-up stalls and swab boxes.

We have \$3.6 million for projects right throughout Queensland—from Charleville, where we have a brand new track, to Bundaberg with their brand new track. It took a little while I know, member for Warrego, but we delivered the best track outback! It is No. 1, and Mayor Zorro cannot wait to open it in October and I cannot wait to be there with him. I invite you, member for Warrego, to come out to Charleville—

Mr SPEAKER: Direct your comments through the chair.

Ms GRACE:—and we will have a good time together, no problems at all, because that track looks fantastic.

We have turned this industry around. When we were elected Racing Queensland had to be underwritten by \$30 million and there was an integrity crisis. The LNP fought tooth and nail against everything we have done, yet it is thriving. We now have a \$2.2 billion industry. It has nearly doubled in every single code in the state. It has gone from strength to strength, employing thousands of people because of my efforts and those of the previous minister and the Palaszczuk Labor government in supporting racing in this state.

It is an absolute pleasure working with the industry. They recognise what we have done. There are two threats: those opposite if they get back in and the Greens who now want to turn the Eagle Farm racetrack into a huge metropolis. They want us to sell it. It has been there since 1865. They say, 'Don't worry about its history. We'll sell it—and guess what?—we'll give you \$30 million for it.' It is a joke and it would be destroyed.

(Time expired)

Dr MacMahon interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: The member for South Brisbane will cease her interjections.

Police Service, Recruitment

Mr KNUTH: My question without notice is to the Minister for Police. The minister is now sourcing 2,500 new police recruits from overseas, while stating that the pandemic has thrown challenges at the police and their recruitment. Will the minister explain why, in the face of recruitment difficulties, is the QPS continuing to stand down experienced police officers for choosing not to be COVID vaccinated long after the pandemic has ended?

Mr RYAN: There are a number of issues to touch on, but I will start with the matter of disciplinary action in respect of employees of the Queensland Police Service who did not follow a lawful direction of the Commissioner, and that is important to highlight. As a uniformed, structured hierarchical organisation the Commissioner can issue lawful directions and it is the responsibility of the employee to follow those lawful directions. A number of personnel in the Queensland Police Service have commenced action in the Supreme Court. Those matters are still before the court so I will not comment on those. There are a number of matters where personnel are subject to disciplinary proceedings for allegedly refusing to comply with a lawful direction of the Commissioner, and I will not comment on those because they are matters that are currently under consideration. The compulsory vaccination direction was revoked by the Commissioner in December last year. In relation to those who previously allegedly chose to not comply with the lawful direction of the Commissioner, there are proper processes around following disciplinary processes in respect of that.

The member also asked about recruitment. I am pleased to say that our recruitment efforts are delivering very good results for the Queensland Police Service. I can provide current updated numbers for the interest of members. There are currently 500 recruits at the academy. Next week an additional 60 will join the academy at Townsville. Next month approximately 170 start at the Brisbane academy. I am advised that by the end of October we are expecting a record number of recruits—there has never been this number at the academies in the history of the Queensland Police Service—approximately 600 at the Queensland police academies. In addition, there are over 1,300 applicants in the recruit pipeline.

Last week we launched the Queensland Police Service recruit advertising campaign. The Queensland Police Union recruit advertising campaign starts this week. In addition, almost \$90 million worth of incentives funded by this government are generating both national and interstate interest. In fact, I am advised that over 100 New Zealand police officers have expressed interest in joining the Queensland Police Service. There are already 66 applications lodged with the Queensland Police Service and another 35 are interested in joining the Queensland Police Service. We have interest from across the nation. We take recruitment at the Queensland Police Service very seriously because it is a record investment delivering more police for Queensland.

Mr SPEAKER: Before calling the next question I wish to advise members that we have the former member for Lockyer Ian Rickuss in the public gallery today.

Honourable members: Hear, hear!

Housing Investment Fund

Ms BUSH: My question is to the Minister for Housing. Can the minister update the House on the Housing Investment Fund or similar funds and alternative approaches?

Ms SCANLON: I was very pleased this morning to share the good news that today plans have been lodged for up to 490 social and affordable homes to be delivered in Cairns. This has the potential to be the largest project to deliver social and affordable housing in Queensland and it is going through our Housing Investment Fund. In just one project we are looking to support 490 new homes. That is in stark contrast to those opposite. When the member for Everton was the housing minister and the Leader of the Opposition was a cabinet minister they saw social housing go backwards by 428 homes. While we are looking to support 490 new homes in one project, 428 homes were cut under those opposite.

We know they have a secret plan to cut again, but no doubt Warren Entsch will come out and oppose this project. Right now in the federal parliament the Queensland LNP is gearing up to block the Housing Australia Future Fund. We have heard crickets from the Leader of the Opposition. If he had an ounce of integrity he would be up-front with Queenslanders about whether he supports his colleagues blocking 30,000 homes in the federal parliament. They say no to social housing, and right now they are also saying no to the constitutional recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

A letter was circulated to Gold Coasters this week railing against the Voice. LNP members like Bert van Manen and Cameron Caldwell sent out a letter, missing the fact that a voice could deliver better housing outcomes but at the same time saying that we should prioritise housing. They have a funny way of showing it, given that right now they are blocking housing in the federal parliament. Who could forget that it was also this northern Gold Coast MP who said, 'If we add a huge number of new homes to the current situation that problem is only going to get worse.' That is what he said only recently about the Housing Australia Future Fund.

Not only is every Queensland LNP member blocking more homes from being built through the Housing Australia Future Fund; they are also blocking \$200 million for repairs, maintenance and improvements to housing in remote Indigenous communities. That is what the Housing Australia Future Fund—which they are blocking—would deliver. They have a track record of letting down remote communities. They are the party that walked away from the National Partnership Agreement for Remote Indigenous Housing, which is a disgrace. They discontinued the National Rental Affordability Scheme. During the pandemic, when they could have invested in social housing, they instead gave people with money more money to upgrade their homes. Meanwhile, our government has been investing. While those opposite say no and block, we say yes and build.

Children in Watch Houses

Mr BERKMAN: My question is to the Minister for Youth Justice. The government's youth justice amendments that were rushed through last sitting week will see more children remanded in police watch houses and potentially even adult prisons. Will the minister commit to publicly releasing real-time daily data on where children are being remanded in watch houses or adult prisons, how long these children are being held in remand, and other details like their age, gender and Indigenous status?

Mrs D'ATH: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I believe the member should have to authenticate his preamble to that question. He makes definitive statements that I believe are incorrect and hypothetical.

Mr SPEAKER: I believe the question has more challenges in its complexity in terms of the information being sought. I certainly would invite the minister to respond to the question. Equally, if there is too much detail in that question I would allow you to go through that.

Ms FARMER: Because the member's statement was extremely misleading, as was the previous occasion on which he asked a question about the amendments that went through in the last sitting, can I just clarify. These were amendments that nobody wanted to have to do. If we had not put these amendments in place, based on advice from the Solicitor-General there was a high risk that young offenders would be immediately taken from the watch house to youth detention centres, placing young people and staff at the detention centres at serious risk.

The custom and practice that has been in place in relation to transferring young people from the custody of the Police Commissioner to the chief executive of youth justice, which has been undertaken for over 30 years, was being challenged. Custom and practice allowed the chief executive of youth justice to make decisions about which young people he was able to take from police custody safely into

style. They cut, they sack and they sell. They will be trying to hide that from Queenslanders every day until the election. What we want is a bit of honesty. They have said they will cut billions. The member for Chatsworth said that. What will they be?

(Time expired)

Fire Ants

Mr PERRETT: My question is to the Premier. With fire ants now on Stradbroke Island and the southern Gold Coast and now on the march to the Sunshine Coast, does the Premier agree with her agricultural minister that the government has them surrounded?

Mrs D'ATH: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I believe that question is seeking an opinion as to whether the Premier agrees with another minister's comments and I ask that it be ruled out of order.

Mr SPEAKER: I will allow the question on the basis that the Premier is the chief minister and certainly will have a point of view. I call the Premier.

Ms PALASZCZUK: My understanding from Minister Furner's briefing about this is that it is run through the federal government.

Mr Furner: It is a national program

Ms PALASZCZUK: It is a national program.

Mr Millar: It's managed out of the state department.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Gregory!

Ms PALASZCZUK: It is actually called the National Fire Ant Eradication Program.

Mr Head: It's managed out of the biosecurity department.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Member for Callide!

Ms PALASZCZUK: I am happy to get back to the member with some further detail about that, but I did hear reports that there was some expansion of fire ant nests on North Stradbroke Island.

Mr Lister: You should be across this. It's a major issue.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Member for Southern Downs, you will direct your comments through the chair. You are warned under the standing orders. Member for Callide, you are skating on thin ice.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I am happy to get the minister to provide further information about it. I do acknowledge the importance of the issue. I acknowledge it is a national eradication program. In relation to the specifics of the question that have been raised today, I will ask the minister to get back to the member.


Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence

Mr KELLY: My question is to the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence. Can the Attorney-General advise the House of the great work being undertaken by frontline domestic, family and sexual violence services, and is the Attorney aware of any further approaches?

Mr SPEAKER: The period for question time has expired.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (COUNCILLOR CONDUCT) AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Message from Governor

 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Murrumbidgee—ALP) (Deputy Premier, Minister for State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning and Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympic and Paralympic Games Infrastructure) (11.16 am): I present a message from Her Excellency the Governor.

Mr SPEAKER: The message from Her Excellency the Governor recommends the Local Government (Councillor Conduct) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. The contents of the message will be incorporated in the *Record of Proceedings*. I table the message for the information of members.

MESSAGE

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (COUNCILLOR CONDUCT) AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL 2023

Constitution of Queensland 2001, section 68

I, DR JEANNETTE ROSITA YOUNG AC PSM, Governor, recommend to the Legislative Assembly a Bill intituled—

A Bill for an Act to amend the City of Brisbane Act 2010, the City of Brisbane Regulation 2012, the Local Government Act 2009, the Local Government Regulation 2012, the Local Government Electoral Act 2011, the Queen's Wharf Brisbane Act 2016 and the legislation mentioned in schedule 1 for particular purposes

GOVERNOR

Date: 13 September 2023

Tabled paper: Message, dated 13 September 2023, from Her Excellency the Governor recommending the Local Government (Councillor Conduct) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023 [\[1325\]](#).

Introduction

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) (11.16 am): I present a bill for an act to amend the City of Brisbane Act 2010, the City of Brisbane Regulation 2012, the Local Government Act 2009, the Local Government Regulation 2012, the Local Government Electoral Act 2011, the Queen's Wharf Brisbane Act 2016 and the legislation mentioned in schedule 1 for particular purposes. I table the bill, the explanatory notes and a statement of compatibility with human rights. I nominate the State Development and Regional Industries Committee to consider the bill.

Tabled paper: Local Government (Councillor Conduct) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023 [\[1322\]](#).

Tabled paper: Local Government (Councillor Conduct) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023, explanatory notes [\[1323\]](#).

Tabled paper: Local Government (Councillor Conduct) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023, statement of compatibility with human rights [\[1324\]](#).

I am very pleased to introduce the Local Government (Councillor Conduct) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023. This bill is the culmination of an extensive consultation process with the local government sector—and the broader community—to address concerns about the operation of the councillor conduct complaints system. In addition to a wideranging parliamentary committee inquiry, engagement with the sector has included consultation with key stakeholders on a draft bill in recent weeks, including the Office of the Independent Assessor, the President of the Councillor Conduct Tribunal, the Local Government Association of Queensland and the Local Government Managers Association.

Some members will be aware that a framework for dealing with councillor conduct commenced in December 2018, applying to all local governments in Queensland other than Brisbane City Council. In March 2020, the framework was extended to Brisbane. A key component of the new system was the establishment of the position of the Independent Assessor and the Office of the Independent Assessor, whose role it is to investigate complaints and information about councillor conduct, before deciding how the conduct should be dealt with.

I would like to take a moment now to thank Kathleen Florian for her hard work as the inaugural Independent Assessor. I would like to also acknowledge June Anstee for her hard work as the Councillor Complaints Tribunal President.

In October 2021, I wrote to the Chair of the State Development and Regional Industries Committee to request that the committee review the Independent Assessor's functions and how effectively those functions are being performed. The committee resolved to conduct an inquiry and to report to the parliament on its findings. The inquiry's terms of reference included whether the Independent Assessor's performance of their functions was consistent with the intent of the local government complaints system, whether the powers and resources of the Independent Assessor were being applied in accordance with the public interest, and any amendments to the Local Government Act 2009 that would make the Independent Assessor more effective. The report into that inquiry was tabled on 14 October 2022. I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the comprehensive and professional work undertaken by the committee in conducting its inquiry. Fourteen hearings across nine towns and cities heard from 47 witnesses and received 59 submissions.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank all those who participated in the inquiry. Your feedback will help ensure that the OIA and the CCT operate as intended and our local governments can focus on delivering for Queenslanders.

The committee report reaffirmed the need for an independent councillor conduct complaints system. The committee found that the current system is broadly sound, but that improvement is needed. Specifically, it was found that the system needs to more closely and efficiently align with the intent of the legislation and the public interest. The committee report made 40 recommendations for changes to the complaints system. In January this year, the government tabled its response, supporting, or supporting in principle, all 40 recommendations.

This bill seeks to recalibrate the councillor conduct framework to make it more effective and more efficient and to ensure that only matters of substance and in the public interest proceed to the CCT for determination. We owe it to Queenslanders to make sure all our processes are fair and reasonable, especially when it comes to elected officials.

The proposed amendments in this bill address 19 of the recommendations made by the committee which require legislative amendments to implement. It is the intention of the government that all 40 recommendations will be implemented before the local government elections in March.

I would like to now outline some additional changes this legislation update seeks to make. The local government department has worked with councils and peak bodies to develop amendments which clarify and enhance the councillor conflict of interest framework. The local government legislation has also been reviewed with the aim of modernising all remaining print advertising requirements where appropriate. For example, local governments will no longer have to use print media to notify communities where newspapers no longer exist. They will be able to publish these notifications online or on social media. The bill reflects these changes, in addition to minor amendments to provisions about local government election costs.

This bill also includes consequential amendments to a range of acts to reflect the recent reclassification change of Moreton Bay council to officially become Moreton Bay City Council. Moreton Bay has grown up and it is time for us to take our place on the local government stage as a city in our own right. Finally, the bill also makes amendments to the Queen's Wharf Brisbane Act 2016 to address technical anomalies in relation to tenures. I will provide more details about these amendments shortly.

I return now to the detail of the committee's recommendations in relation to the councillor conduct complaints system. Recommendation 1 of the committee report included target time frames to be applied to the complaints framework by the Office of the Independent Assessor and the Councillor Conduct Tribunal. While this part of the recommendation has not been prescribed in legislation, the recommendation also includes adoption of a statute of limitation to accept complaints unless they involve matters to be referred to the Crime and Corruption Commission. The government supported this proposal in principle. The delay in assessing and investigating councillor conduct was a key concern raised by local governments and other stakeholders during the committee's inquiry. Stakeholders called for the Office of the Independent Assessor to use its powers more judiciously and dismiss trivial matters quickly in line with the public interest.

A key new initiative reflected in the bill is introduction of a preliminary assessment process, ahead of any investigation. This will be applied to complaints, notices and information about councillor conduct, including statutory time limitations for receipt of these. The new assessment process aims to increase the overall efficiency of the system and allow the Independent Assessor to focus on substantive conduct matters. As such, this bill will widen the scope for insubstantial conduct matters to be closed out as early as possible, and refining the jurisdiction of the system. The key features of the new process include that chapter 5A of the Local Government Act 2009, which sets out the councillor conduct requirements, will no longer apply to former councillors unless the person has engaged in conduct that is suspected to be corrupt. This will focus the councillor conduct framework on councillors still in office, except in the most serious of cases.

The bill also prescribes a number of circumstances where the Independent Assessor must dismiss a complaint or take no further action at the preliminary assessment stage. Simply put, the Independent Assessor must dismiss a complaint or decide not to take further action if the assessor is satisfied that dealing with it would not be in the public interest. The Independent Assessor must also dismiss a complaint or decide not to take any further action if the complaint was not made within certain time periods, unless the conduct is suspected corrupt conduct or there are other exceptional circumstances. Under the changes, complaints, notices or information about the conduct of a councillor must be made or given to the assessor either within one year after the conduct occurred or within six

months after the conduct comes to the knowledge of the complainant. That must be within two years of the incident occurring. The Independent Assessor must dismiss a complaint or decide not to take any further action if satisfied that the councillor was complying with a guideline made by the department. The same obligation to dismiss a complaint applies if the conduct relates solely to behaviour engaged in by the councillor in a personal capacity unless the conduct is suspected corrupt conduct or misconduct.

Our intention is that councillors should be free to have the same rights as other members of the community in their personal lives, not have particular matters be the subject of complaints about their conduct as a councillor. A complaint must also be dismissed if the councillor's office becomes vacant, unless the conduct is suspected corrupt conduct.

Finally, the assessor must dismiss a complaint where the person making it has been declared a vexatious complainant. Recommendations 28 and 29 of the report addressed concerns from several stakeholders, particularly the Local Government Association of Queensland, that the complaints system has been used improperly by some complainants to inflict personal or political harm. The bill provides that the assessor may declare a person as a vexatious complainant for up to four years where they have repeatedly made complaints under chapter 5A of the Local Government Act 2009.

To meet the threshold, at least three of the complaints must have been dismissed by the assessor as having been frivolous or vexatious complaints or have been made in anything other than good faith. The assessor may publish a notice stating that the named person has been declared a vexatious complainant. While these powers are significant, they are considered necessary to address the increasing problems presented by persons making unnecessary complaints which use up the time and resources of the Independent Assessor that could be better applied in the public interest.

The bill also provides a discretion for the assessor to dismiss a complaint or to decide to not take further action in a number of other scenarios, including if the conduct is being dealt with by another entity, if investigation would involve an unjustifiable use of resources, or if there is insufficient information to properly investigate. In addition, the assessor may decide to take other action, such as giving a warning or recommending the councillor undertake training, counselling or mediation if it is considered more appropriate in the circumstances.

In relation to the conduct of councillors running again for office, I acknowledge the concerns of the Local Government Association of Queensland that there should be a level playing field for all election candidates, whether sitting councillors or new candidates, during election campaigns. The government's view is that the conduct of a councillor wholly in their capacity as a candidate is personal conduct. This determination means complaints will be dismissed at the assessment stage, as I have just outlined. While some stakeholders have proposed a code of conduct for candidates, the government considers that the view of the electorate as expressed at the ballot box should be a sufficient deterrent for unacceptable conduct by all candidates. We trust Queenslanders to make good decisions when it comes to who represents them.

I also acknowledge the issues raised by the Local Government Association of Queensland about the challenges faced by First Nations Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander elected representatives who have traditional family and cultural obligations and the impact of these obligations in connection with the conflict of interest requirements.

The bill provides that the assessor may have regard to a range of matters in making a preliminary assessment. This includes taking into account the steps taken by the councillor to mitigate or remedy the effects of the conduct and the consequences, whether financial or non-financial, resulting from the conduct; and, for Indigenous councillors, any relevant Aboriginal traditions or island customs of the councillor or a person affected by the conduct. The government's view is that the Independent Assessor may, therefore, consider the additional complexities of conflict-of-interest issues for First Nations councillors as part of the preliminary assessment.

Other key elements of the new assessment process include a preliminary assessment based on the assessor's own initiative and re-enlivening complaints where a councillor has vacated office but is elected or appointed again within 12 months. This is intended to deal with the rare but not impossible scenario where a councillor who is subject to an investigation stands down, resulting in an investigation into their conduct being discontinued, only to stand and be re-elected within a 12-month period.

In its recommendations, the committee also noted concerns from councillors about potentially being dismissed from office for relatively minor matters. I can confirm that the suspension or dismissal of councillors is only intended to be used in the most serious cases of misconduct or where a councillor has repeatedly engaged in misconduct.

As I have mentioned, the committee broadened the scope of the inquiry to consider issues about the operation of the Councillor Conduct Tribunal. The committee noted that the tribunal's current resourcing and work structure do not reflect the increased number of complaints being referred for determination and, as a result, a backlog has developed. The committee commented that structural amendments to the tribunal's resourcing model are required for it to operate effectively and set a strong framework in place to support the determination of misconduct allegations in the future.

Recommendation 4 of the report is that the president of the tribunal be appointed on a full-time basis to drive performance. Additionally, it was recommended that a deputy president be appointed on a part-time basis to support this work. The government supported the recommendation and, as such, the bill provides for these changes. The basis on which the president or deputy president is to be appointed, full-time or part-time, will be considered by the Governor in Council.

In relation to structural changes, recommendation 8 of the report was to allow one tribunal member to hear and determine matters such as uncontested or expedited matters. For more serious or complex cases, a panel of three members will be present at the hearing. The government supported the recommendation in principle and the bill provides for this. Determining whether a matter is complex, serious or contested will be dealt with administratively by the president of the tribunal.

Recommendation 10 by the committee also supported proposals for the publication of full tribunal decisions rather than summaries. This is in the interests of transparency and capacity building for councillors but also to provide additional insight into how the legislation is being interpreted and whether further adjustments to the framework are necessary or justified. The bill reflects the government's support for that recommendation.

Further improvements to the tribunal processes implement the government's policy in relation to recommendations 12, 13 and 14. These permit the Independent Assessor to withdraw an application to the tribunal if it is in the public interest, provide for notification of tribunal hearing details by the tribunal and not also by the Office of the Independent Assessor, and remove the ability for the tribunal to undertake investigation services for councillors for conduct breaches matters. Other amendments in the bill will streamline current council processes including changes to the requirements for councillor conduct registers.

Councils must keep an up-to-date register about certain councillor conduct matters and publish the register on their websites. Recommendation 30 included removing the requirement to record matters that have been dismissed or deemed to require no further action by the Office of the Independent Assessor. The bill reflects the government's support for this recommendation.

I turn now to inappropriate conduct, which the bill has renamed a 'conduct breach' under the complaints system. The renaming is to reflect stakeholder concern that breaches of the code of conduct being referred to as inappropriate conduct was being misinterpreted as more serious. While a number of issues were canvassed about this, the committee believed the framework is sound although not well utilised by the local government sector and that such 'conduct breach' complaints should remain with councils to resolve. The committee commented that steps should be taken to increase the transparency of the process including by ensuring local communities are aware of how their councils are processing inappropriate conduct matters. The committee made several recommendations in this regard.

Recommendation 15 of the report is for amendments to require local governments to publish in their annual reports the number of inappropriate conduct matters referred by the Office of the Independent Assessor, the number of referrals that have been addressed and the average time taken to resolve the matter. The bill makes a range of amendments to the Local Government Regulation 2012 and the City of Brisbane Regulation 2012 to implement the government's in-principle support for this recommendation. The bill also provides councils with a discretion to discontinue or not start an investigation about councillor conduct in certain circumstances, for example, if the matter is withdrawn by the complainant or the complainant refuses to comply with a request for further information.

To increase the transparency of the inappropriate conduct or conduct breach process, recommendation 16 of the report is that the Independent Assessor also publish information on the number of matters referred to local governments for resolution, the number reported back to the assessor by the council as being resolved and the number of matters currently unresolved or not reported. The government supported this recommendation in principle. To implement the government's policy in relation to recommendation 16, the bill requires the assessor's annual report to include the number of matters referred to councils for resolution. It also requires a council to inform the assessor about the status of conduct breach matters, previously referred back to the local government for investigation, and for the Office of the Independent Assessor to report this information in its annual report.

The current system requires the assessor to undertake a natural justice process before deciding whether to refer suspected inappropriate conduct to a local government. Under the current legislation, once conduct has been referred to a local government, it must undertake additional natural justice processes during its investigation. While the committee strongly supported natural justice processes occurring, it expressed that it was unnecessary to conduct this process twice for what is essentially a lower level conduct matter. To implement the government's in-principle support for recommendation 17, the bill removes the requirement for the assessor to undertake a natural justice process prior to referring a councillor's suspected inappropriate conduct to a council to deal with. In parallel, the bill strengthens the natural justice requirements on councils when investigating suspected inappropriate conduct matters.

To increase the transparency of the inappropriate conduct process, the bill implements the government's in-principle support for recommendation 19. The update will mean that reports of external investigators appointed by councils to consider inappropriate conduct matters must be published by the local government, obviously with appropriate redactions. The bill requires publication of a summary of an investigation report prior to the council's consideration of the matter and publication of the full investigation report, with appropriate redactions, after the council has reached a decision. The bill also allows for local government meetings to be closed to consider an investigation report.

I turn now to matters of misconduct. The legislation currently provides that a councillor may ask a local government employee to provide advice or information to assist the councillor to carry out their official responsibilities, provided the request complies with the relevant local government's acceptable requests guidelines. A request from a councillor that breaches the guidelines is currently included in the definition of misconduct. Recommendation 23 of the committee report supported the assessor's suggestion that a breach of the council's guidelines should no longer be a category of misconduct except in serious circumstances. The bill reflects the government's in-principle support for this recommendation by amending the definition of misconduct. Other changes to the definition of misconduct include an unlawful direction by a mayor to the council CEO and certain conduct in relation to declarable conflicts of interest.

I turn now to the ongoing issue of councillor training. The committee emphasised that an enhanced training regime is vitally important. The legislation currently provides that a function of the assessor includes providing training. In a similar vein, recommendation 27 was for the department to make training and professional development on the councillor conduct system, including conflicts of interest, compulsory for all local government councillors, mayors and senior council managers. The government supported this recommendation in principle.

The bill establishes a mandatory training scheme for councillors with a regulation to prescribe the period for completion. Consequences for noncompliance include suspension without remuneration or dismissal, at the discretion of the minister. The committee considered the department to be best placed to assume a central role in the provision of training and that the Office of the Independent Assessor should concentrate on its core functions of assessment, investigation and prosecution of complaints. The bill reflects the government's support for recommendation 36, that responsibility for the delivery of training be removed from the functions of the Independent Assessor to enable the reallocation of resources to core activities.

Finally, the bill amends the Queen's Wharf Brisbane Act 2016 to enable the state to grant the necessary tenure to meet its obligations under the various development agreements for Queen's Wharf Brisbane so that the state can continue to facilitate delivery of this transformative project. Despite many events impacting construction over the last several years, progress on Queen's Wharf Brisbane is well advanced, with many elements of the development nearing completion. The delivery and opening of Queen's Wharf Brisbane are dependent on many complex tenure matters agreed between the state and the relevant developers. These include declarations under the Queen's Wharf Brisbane Act, the revocation and creation of new reserves, multiple easements and the granting of long-term leases. The amendments to the Queen's Wharf Brisbane Act provide a new, transparent process for creating freehold lots within the Queen's Wharf Brisbane precinct, which identifies all specific parcels of land and continuing interests and dealings.

The amendments will also ensure the state can comply with its obligations under the Integrated Resort Development Agreement and the Treasury Casino hotel agreement and provide tenure within the original contractual time frames. The amendments are machinery in nature and address technical anomalies within the act. The amendments do not give any additional rights or benefits to any of the developers of Queen's Wharf Brisbane, including the casino operator.

As I emphasised earlier, this bill delivers significant reforms to further improve our councillor complaints system and delivers the government's response to the comprehensive inquiry by the parliamentary committee. The bill will commence on assent. Again, I thank stakeholders for their valuable contributions to these reforms, in particular the Local Government Association of Queensland, the Local Government Managers Australia Queensland, the Office of the Independent Assessor, the president of the Councillor Conduct Tribunal, the Crime and Corruption Commission and the Queensland Law Society. I again place on record my thanks to the parliamentary committee and its chair, the member for Bancroft. I commend the bill to the House.

First Reading

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) (11.45 am): I move—

That the bill be now read a first time.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

Referral to State Development and Regional Industries Committee

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Bush): In accordance with standing order 131, the bill is now referred to the State Development and Regional Industries Committee.


JUSTICE AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Resumed from 12 September (see p. 2580), on motion of Mrs D'Ath—

That the bill be now read a second time.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Bush): Before I call the next speaker, I will go through the list of members who are now on a warning. They are the members for Clayfield, Kawana, Ninderry, Theodore, Toowoomba North, Everton, Toowoomba South, Nanango, Chatsworth, Oodgeroo, Broadwater, Currumbin, Bancroft, Logan, Gympie, Glass House, Thuringowa, Mudgeeraba, McConnel and Southern Downs.

 **Mr MADDEN** (Ipswich West—ALP) (11.46 am), continuing: I rise to speak in support of the Justice and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023. Upon tabling, the bill was referred to the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee, chaired by Peter Russo, the member for Toohey, for consideration. The bill is an omnibus bill that 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 Crime Assistance Act 2009 to enhance the recognition of the death of an unborn child as a result of criminal offending in relation to a pregnant person.

The bill amends the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences) Act 1978 to remove restrictions that prohibit the identification of an adult defendant charged with a prescribed sexual offence prior to the finalisation of the committal proceedings. Other acts that are amended pursuant to the provisions of the bill include the Appeal Costs Fund Act 1973, the Cremations Act 2003, the Criminal Code, the Electoral Act 1992 and the Justices of the Peace and Commissioners for Declarations Act 1991, the Legal Profession Act 2007, the Oaths Act 1867 and the Public Guardian Act 2014.

In its report, tabled in July 2023, the committee made a number of recommendations—firstly, that the bill be passed. The committee also recommended that the Queensland government prioritise the development of a guide for the media to support reasonable reporting of sexual violence, in accordance with recommendation 84 of the *Hear her voice* report 2. The committee also recommended that the Queensland government monitor whether the naming of offenders unintentionally creates barriers for women to report sexual offences. It also recommended that the proposed reforms introduced by the bill relating to victims are accompanied with trauma-informing training for those interacting with victims of the criminal justice system, including legal services, victim services and investigation and prosecution bodies.

The committee recommended that the Queensland government consider the service and resourcing impacts that these reports will have on the victim support and community legal service sectors. It recommended that the Queensland government consider changing 'woman' to 'pregnant person' in proposed section 319A to better reflect the diversity and modern community expectations of Queensland. Finally, the committee recommended that the Queensland government continue to undertake work in relation to improving the safety of victims of domestic and family violence, noting the prevalence of systems abuse.

I will focus my contribution in support of the bill on the issue of destruction of clients' files by law practices and community legal centres as well as cost disclosure obligations for practitioners and law firms. The bill, if passed to become an act, will allow a law practice to destroy or dispose of routine client documents in certain circumstances and increase the costs disclosure threshold for section 311 of the Legal Profession Act 2007 to \$3,000. The bill amends the Legal Profession Act to allow a law practice, including a community legal centre, to destroy any client documents held by the law practice if 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, having regard to the nature and content of the documents, to destroy the document or documents. The amendments also extend to receivership files held by the Queensland Law Society as if it were a law practice. Safeguards provided for in the amendments mitigate the risk that the amendments could be interpreted as authorising the destruction of such documents to the detriment of the client and others by providing disciplinary consequences for a breach of the provision. The amendments address the increasing risk to client privacy and confidentiality arising from the prolonged retention of clients' documents, both physically and electronically, that are no longer of legal utility and recognise the substantial storage costs for law practices and the Queensland Law Society in relation to the retention of these documents.


Regarding the destruction of clients' files and other documents, I note that the Queensland Law Society supported the amendments to provide enhanced legal certainty as to when a law practice may destroy clients' documents. However, the Queensland Law Society recommended that the bill be amended to expressly state that clients have the right to instruct their solicitor to return or destroy their documents at seven years or earlier, if the client wishes; the obligation for a law practice to retain clients' documents does not apply if the documents have already been returned to the client; and, finally, law practices may, in some circumstances, lawfully retain copies of clients' documents for their own purposes such as managing future law claims. The Australian Lawyers Alliance submitted that the seven-year time frame proposed by the amendment is a reasonable length of time and offers a good balance between the regulatory burden and protecting clients' privacy. The submission by the Department of Justice and Attorney-General stated that the government is committed to permitting law practices to dispose of routine clients' documents seven years after the end of the client's matter if the practice is unable to obtain instructions from the client about disposal of the file.

The bill also amends costs disclosure obligations of a law practice under the Legal Profession Act, including increasing the current costs disclosure threshold under section 311 from \$1,500 to \$3,000. Further amendments provide that an abbreviated costs disclosure obligation will apply if the total legal costs in the matter, excluding disbursements, are likely to exceed \$3,000 and no cost disclosure is required if the total legal cost of the matter, excluding disbursements, is not likely to exceed \$750. In summary, the bill proposes to increase the prescribed amount under section 311 of the legal practitioner act which triggers costs disclosure obligations from \$1,500 to \$3,000; provides that an abbreviated costs disclosure obligation will apply if the legal costs in the matter, excluding disbursements, are not likely to exceed \$3,000; and provides that no costs disclosure obligations will apply if the total legal costs of the matter, excluding disbursements, are not likely to exceed \$750.

In its submission the Queensland Law Society broadly supported the proposal to amend the legal practitioner act to increase the detailed disclosure threshold from \$1,500 to \$3,000, but it did raise three issues for consideration. Firstly, with regard to the abbreviated costs disclosure for matters below \$1,500, the Queensland Law Society expressed concern that the amendments will result in practices needing to provide abbreviated costs disclosure for legal costs between \$750 and \$1,500, something that is currently not required. The Queensland Law Society is of the view that this is contrary to the legislative intention to reduce the regulatory burden for law practices. The Queensland Law Society also recommended the \$1,500 should be maintained as the disclosure threshold amount so that small fee matters can be accepted without abbreviated disclosure obligations. The Queensland Law Society stated that this more appropriately facilitates access to justice, particularly for pro bono and smaller

matters. The Queensland Law Society recommended a regular review of the prescribed amount to account for inflation and to ensure that thresholds are set at an amount consistent with intended purposes.

The second issue raised by the Queensland Law Society is that the Review of the Costs Disclosure Thresholds in Uniform Law, otherwise known as the uniform law review, be the single framework to be followed by the government with regard to disclosure obligations. I thank the committee for its hard work on this matter, particularly its chair, Peter Russo.

 **Mr McDONALD** (Lockyer—LNP) (11.56 am): On 29 August 2014 Peter and Sarah Milosevic were involved in a tragic crash in which their 39-week gestation baby, Sophie, was killed. Since that time, Sarah and Peter—once broken, still very damaged—have fought to see a legacy for Sophie. I have been honoured to be able to help them along that way and for that fight. I recognise Sarah and Peter here in the gallery together with Sophie, who is here in her ashes bear. I also recognise the former member for Lockyer Ian Rickuss. It has been a wonderful journey to help this once-broken and sad couple. After suffering a broken neck, a broken back and many internal injuries, they recovered to be able to harness their energy towards creating this legacy.

I first met Sarah and Peter in 2016 when I was the officer in charge of police at Laidley and a forensic crash investigator, and I knew the law well. Ian Rickuss assisted us to get some petitions together, but Sarah and Peter conducted a petition through Change.org which saw 136 petitioners sign to see the law changed and to see justice done for unborn children. In 2017 we took this to the LNP state conference and it was unanimously supported in that a future state LNP government would put laws in place to see justice done.

Since 2016, 15 families have suffered the same or similar tragedy to Sarah and Peter where their unborn children have been taken at the hands of criminals. Each time one of those babies died, Sarah would reach out to support those families and she has provided comfort to many. In 2021 when the tragic loss of Matt Field and Kate Leadbetter and their baby, Miles, occurred, Sarah again reached out to support and on this occasion on 17 February I was able to lead a delegation with Sarah, Peter and the Fields and Leadbetter families to see the former attorney-general. Fortunately, the former attorney-general listened to our pleas when somebody commits a crime like this. In Sarah and Peter's case, a drugged, speeding and drunk driver was fined \$950 and their licence suspended. Justice was not done.

We pleaded with the former attorney-general, Minister Fentiman, to see changes put in place. I thank her for listening to the solutions that we put forward. It took some time for these solutions to come before the House, but not before time they are here. The former AG gave us an undertaking that she would work on the changes and she did keep me up to date. She included myself and Sarah and Peter in the consultation and I am sure that that bipartisan approach has resulted in better laws, laws that will be the envy of the nation and other countries and laws that will be replicated—Sophie's Law—across the world.

The bill was introduced on 25 May this year. I was pleased to see many of our suggestions included in the bill. At the committee hearing Sarah described how the tragedy of losing her baby Sophie just before her due date broke her. Sarah described how she was so badly injured her child was dislodged from her womb and was no longer moving. Sophie, who was about to be delivered and welcomed into a loving family with a nursery all set up, was not moving. Sophie was soon to return home as a lovely little baby with her parents and delivered safely into their family's crib. Sophie was dead. The lovely but sad photos of those moments are a haunting reminder of the tragedy at that time that should have been one of joy. Sarah and Peter, as I said, were recovering from their own injuries of a broken back, broken neck and severe internal injuries, but after they recovered they got to work to create a legacy.

This year would have been Sophie's ninth birthday. Every year Sarah and Peter Milosevic celebrate her birthday in a way to help them cope and to make sure that Sophie is always remembered. Every year they bake a special cake. This year Sarah and Peter travelled to Bondi Beach and placed a long-stemmed rose in the ocean. The family blew out the candles in Sophie's absence. Sarah and Peter have found a lot of different ways to remember Sophie and to help cope with their loss. Sophie has a white arbour pergola made of iron with a chandelier in a rose garden. Sophie has another scented rose garden. There is a beautiful little girl statue sitting in a prominent place on a park bench. I have visited their place many times. Sarah and Peter have a lovely kept home where there are touching memorials around. Sarah and Peter's home is regularly filled with laughter as Sarah is a family day care mum for many other families' children. These are some of the things that Sarah and Peter have done to help cope and to remember their lovely little girl.

As I said before, every time a tragedy occurs they reach out. Fortunately they have harnessed that energy and turned it towards finding justice and today we bring about the biggest sign of hope for them. This legislation will not help them, but it will help other families who lose an unborn child at the hands of a criminal. When this bill was introduced I was pleased that it included many of the recommendations we made so a family and their unborn child see justice when somebody is charged with that criminal act. Importantly, the bill includes changes so that, if the family wishes, their unborn child's name can be included on the indictment before a court. It also includes Victims of Crime Assistance Act changes so that funeral expenses can be met. Imagine at one stage believing you were going to welcome home a young baby and the next moment you are having to find the money for funeral expenses. Hope is lost. The changes also include an opportunity for families of the unborn child to put statements to the court to see sentences improved. I thank my former colleague Ian Rickuss. I will table an email that Ian has provided to us. I will read a few words—

I would like to congratulate the Milosevics for their persistence and fortitude after losing Sophie in a reckless car crash that was no fault of their own, to pursue this matter for almost a decade to have appropriate legislation finally brought before the House in relation to the death of the Long Term Unborn Child. Lockyer Member Jim McDonald who has also worked hard to have this matter brought to a resolution.

Tabled paper: Email, dated 12 September 2023, from Mr Ian Rickuss, to the Lockyer Electorate Office, regarding the Milosevic family [1326].

Finally, I will finish this contribution by reading Sarah's words—

I would like to thank all of those involved in making this happen. Firstly my Husband Peter Milosevic for always being there by my side and supporting me through more tears than any could know. To Ian Rickuss who was the first to truly listen. Then Jim McDonald for all the hours of work that went on behind the scenes fighting for our babies rights.

And of course MP Shannon Fentiman who is truly a supporter of woman's rights and the protection of human life for believing there was a way to write a safe law that protects our unborn babies. I thank you all for everything that has been done. Thank you to Yvett Dath the proceeding Attorney General for seeing it through the final stages.

The loss of Sophie broke me and broke my family there truly is not a day that we don't speak her name because she mattered. Because Sophie mattered and along with all the other babies before Sophie and after Sophie that died due to a person breaking the law this is for all the babies gone to soon.

This is her legacy and it's finally done. Sophie turned 9 on the 30th of August just passed. 9 years for fighting for the rights of unborn children. This is for Sophie for the legacy she could not leave herself.

For all the heart ache and pain for the love for our child. This law reform has brought peace to myself, my husband and our children. Peace in knowing the loss of her life wasn't for nothing that she counted, that Sophie mattered and that all babies matter.



Hon. DE FARMER (Bulimba—ALP) (Minister for Employment and Small Business, Minister for Training and Skills Development and Minister for Youth Justice) (12.06 pm): I acknowledge the member for Lockyer for his beautiful and heartfelt speech and for the work that he has done to bring this legislation into this place. I did not know that the member for Lockyer was also the police officer investigating the matter. I pay tribute to him and also to the former member for Lockyer. I also pay tribute to Peter and Sarah Milosevic who are in the gallery today. I do not know how strong I would be going through the experience that the Milosevics have gone through. For all of us, it is an honour to stand up in this chamber and to be part of passing legislation that can make a difference. I cannot thank the Milosevics enough for their bravery in the face of what must be unfathomable grief; to keep on with this over such a period of time and to have faith that it would happen if they just kept on going. I thank them for that. What amazing human beings they are for reaching out to other people who have suffered in the same circumstances.

A number of members have read out some of Sarah's words to the committee. I would like to read those out again because I believe that people in my community would like to know the context of these particular amendments. I want to read two statements that Sarah made to the committee. This amendment is about the death of an unborn child as an aggravating factor. Sarah and Peter said in their submission—

The court at the time acknowledged that he caused the Death of Sophie Ella. But there was no law that he could be charged under.

...

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. 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 counted as a death on the road toll, the only place she wasn't counted was in a court,

Sarah 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 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 thank Sarah for so clearly articulating that. I acknowledge the former and current attorneys-general for their work in making sure that this bill is now before the House.

The bill deals with a range of different issues and I do not wish to speak to each of them. I will speak to the change that removes the restrictions that prohibit 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, attempted rape, assault with intent to rape and sexual assault have their identity protected before committal. As we know, in this country Queensland is only one of two jurisdictions to offer that protection. Even alleged murderers and others accused of serious crimes can be identified before committal. Of course, that does not make sense to any of us.


As the former minister for the prevention of domestic and family violence, I am pleased to be able to speak to this bill and to be a part of its passing through this House. It implements a recommendation of report 2 of the Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce. We hear that those previous protections for rapists were based in part on the false assumption that women maliciously make up complaints to damage reputations. Even though some have not had the experiences that others of us have had from many interactions with people who have been raped or sexually assaulted, as human beings we can all see the senselessness of that and would support the recommendation.

Having gone through periods when I was meeting hundreds and hundreds of women who talked about their experiences, I know of their grief. I know that for many years many of them have not been able to speak aloud of their experiences. For many, their experience in the criminal justice system caused even more grief than the experience itself. To know that was quite confronting and I am so pleased to see that the recommendations of the Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce have brought that to light. There is much work to be done. We are steadfastly working through those recommendations to make sure that those women, in particular, are treated right, that they are respected, that they are able to speak of what happened and that justice is done. This is part of that process.

I note some of the concerns that were raised by stakeholders. For example, DVConnect talked about identifying defendants and supporting other victim-survivors in coming forward to report sexual offences. The amendment can only be effective if the identity of the victim-survivor remains protected unless that person chooses to be identified. The use of a sexual violence media guide was raised by a number of stakeholders. It comes from recommendation 84 in the Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce *Hear her voice* report 2. This is really critical in the process of ensuring safe and effective reporting about sexual violence matters.

These are very significant amendments that are being made. I congratulate the committee for the excellent work that they did to reflect the feedback of stakeholders. This is where the committee system is so critical because we do not want to inadvertently create other problems. I congratulate them for so effectively canvassing all of those issues.

I want to mention justices of the peace and I do so to acknowledge the really amazing work that they do. I particularly congratulate the justices of the peace who work in the community. We have all seen those people operating in our local shopping centres and other community centres such as libraries. They make a selfless contribution to the community. Sometimes they shepherd people through the most significant and impactful periods of their lives. I know how proud my local JPs are of the work that they do. They have a real sense of responsibility to do the right thing. They support the idea that we always uphold their role as being of the highest quality and the greatest integrity. This amendment will assist us to maintain that integrity. It will send a strong message to the community that their role is serious and will always be performed to the greatest standards, and I acknowledge that. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr WEIR** (Condamine—LNP) (12.16 pm): I rise to speak to the Justice and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023. Overall, the bill amends 30 acts and four regulations, and repeals the Court Funds Act 1973. The bill will also enable recognition of the deaths of unborn children as a result of criminal conduct.

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 the finalisation of committal proceedings. Under the CL(SO) Act, prescribed sexual offences are defined as rape, attempt to commit rape, assault with intent to commit rape and sexual assault. Other than the Northern Territory, Queensland is the only state or territory that currently maintains a defendant's anonymity in those cases. Under the proposed amendment, applicants are required to give three business days notice of a non-publication order. The court must consider several factors when hearing the application, including the primacy of the principle of open justice, public interest, special vulnerabilities of the complainant or defendant, cultural considerations and the effect of publication in a rural or remote community.

The amendments are made in response to the government's commitment to implementing recommendation 83 of the Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce report, *Hear her voice* report 2. Given the experiences of women and girls across the criminal justice system, the taskforce concluded that there was no justification for the law to treat defendants who are charged with a prescribing sexual offence differently to those who are charged with any other criminal offence. DVConnect stated that they believe that this amendment would help identify defendants and support other victim-survivors in coming forward to report sexual violence. We would hope that that is the case.

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 the *Hear her voice* report 2. This is important as, unfortunately, we have seen high-profile cases fall victim to trial by media, with less than satisfactory outcomes for both the victim and the defendant.

The bill proposes to better recognise the deaths of unborn children that have occurred due to criminal conduct. Queensland law does not give an unborn child legal status as a person. The bill proposes amendments to the Criminal Code Act 1899, the Penalties and Sentences Act 1992, the Youth Justice Act 1992 and the Victims of Crime Assistance Act 2009 to better recognise the destruction of the life of an unborn child as a result of offences committed in relation to a pregnant person.

These amendments include: 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, unless the court considers it is not reasonable because of exceptional circumstances, for relevant serious offences such as murder, manslaughter, grievous bodily harm, wounding, assault occasioning bodily harm and careless driving; providing that a person is eligible for funeral expense assistance of up to \$8,000 for the cost of the funeral of an unborn child who dies as a result of an act of violence; and 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 an unborn child.

Sarah and Peter Milosevic support the recognition of an unborn child who has been killed due to criminal conduct, stating in their submission—

... the court at the time acknowledged that ... caused the Death of Sophie Ella. But there was no law that he could be charged under.

...

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 ...

Sarah said at the hearing—

... 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.

The bill introduces an aggravating factor. An aggravating factor only comes into play after the person has been convicted of the offence. After conviction, the bill will require the court to consider the fact that the offence for which the person has been convicted in relation to the pregnant person also resulted in the death of an unborn child. I would like to take the opportunity to acknowledge the work of

the member for Lockyer, Jim McDonald, in his support of the Milosevic family in bringing about this amendment. The member for Lockyer just made his contribution to this House. Every now and then we hear a contribution in this House that touches everybody. That was such a moment.


The bill also proposes to allow a law practice, QLS and community legal centres to destroy or dispose of any client documents if seven years have passed since the completion of the matter and the law practice has been unable to obtain instructions for a client despite making reasonable efforts to do so. That is a good amendment.

The bill proposes to: increase the prescribed amount under section 311 of the LP Act which triggers cost disclosure obligations for a law practice from \$1,500 to \$3,000; provide that an abbreviated cost disclosure obligation will apply if the total legal costs in a matter, excluding disbursements, are not likely to exceed \$3,000; and provide that no cost disclosure obligations will apply if the total legal costs in a matter, excluding disbursements, are not likely to exceed \$750.

The QLS broadly welcomed the proposal to amend the LP Act to increase the detailed disclosure threshold from \$1,500 to 3,000, however expressed concern that the amendments will result in practices needing to provide abbreviated cost disclosure for legal costs between \$750 and \$1,500, something not currently required. The QLS recommended that the Queensland government impose a \$5,000 upper threshold for the use of abbreviated cost disclosure. Such excessive regulatory burden results in solicitors having to spend more of their time on attending to cost disclosure requirements, and this is ultimately against the interests of the clients. DJAG noted stakeholders' concerns and stated that it would give further consideration to suggestions regarding the cost disclosure thresholds.

The bill also proposes to amend the Oaths Act 1867 to: change what information witnesses are required to provide in affidavits and statutory declarations, including removing the requirement for justices of the peace and commissioners for declarations to include their places of employment; and better reflect the relevant offences in the Criminal Code that apply to knowingly making a false affidavit or statutory declaration. Disclosing a witness's place of unemployment could inadvertently disclose the location of a domestic and family violence victim and could pose a safety risk to the victim, children and other affected persons as well as the witness and other employees at the witness's place of employment.

The amendments to the Electoral Act 1992 include: allowing completed postal votes that are not inside the reply-paid envelopes supplied by the Electoral Commission of Queensland to be counted; and expanding the definition of 'special postal voter' to include electors who are patients in a hospital that is not a polling place or who are ill or infirm and unable to travel to a polling place. The Electoral Commission of Queensland stated that it is particularly supportive of the amendments to save postal votes that are not enclosed in ECQ supplied envelopes. ECQ estimates 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 under this provision. ECQ submitted that the amendment would bring Queensland into alignment with other jurisdictions around postal votes. We would support that amendment. What a difference that may have made in the seat of Bundaberg!

 **Ms PUGH** (Mount Ommaney—ALP) (12.26 pm): I rise to speak to the Justice and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. I will start with the provision of the continuous monitoring of JPs by the Queensland Police Service. This year I have had an awful lot to do with my JP community in the electorate of Mount Ommaney. I was privileged to be able to host three morning teas and personal development sessions for the JPs who reside in or serve the Mount Ommaney community. We were able to have an information session where they once again updated their skills through the training provided by JPs in the Community. It is a fantastic service that I am sure all members are familiar with. We had a couple of hundred JPs attend that event. I know that from time to time we all give out certificates in our community to our JPs, but I was really blown away by the number of years of service by JPs in my electorate of Mount Ommaney, which is just one out of 93 electorates in Queensland. I suspect members would not be able to guess—I certainly could not—the number of years of service. It was not 100 years of service. It was not 500 years of service. This year the JPs of Mount Ommaney were collectively awarded over 1,000 years of service to the community.

Mrs Gilbert: Overachievers!

Ms PUGH: We are indeed overachievers. I take that interjection from the member for Mackay. I have over 1,000 JPs in the Mount Ommaney community, many of whom are very active. As the member for Bulimba outlined, they often give up their time on weekends or late nights. At the Mount Ommaney Shopping Centre they are led by Noelene. That is 1,000 people out in the community holding a very high position of trust. The government has signed off on the role they perform and said, 'This is a

trustworthy person to whom you, member of the Queensland public, can entrust your private information and who will respect your privacy and give you the due care that you deserve.' I know that every single one of the wonderful JPs in my community is deserving of that trust.

I think these provisions, to ensure continual update is received, are very important. Generally speaking, we know that people who are JPs or who apply to be JPs are very law-abiding people. By their very nature, they are applying for a volunteer role that is process driven and rules driven. That is why they attend those community update information sessions even though the work that they do is volunteer work. They are doing that work pro bono, as it were. I have an anecdote that is not scientific at all. Earlier this year my JP morning tea was attended by 100 people. I must admit that I was a little concerned about everybody being quiet so that we could do the information update presentation. Although there were 100 people all having a good chat, as I approached the microphone it was about as quiet as this chamber. People were incredibly well behaved. A hush came over the room and for the next 45 minutes they listened in absolute silence because, as I said, JPs are generally a law-abiding group.

The continuous monitoring process for JPs that is part of these legislative changes is appropriate and fair recognition of the responsibility that JPs have within our community. They are signing sensitive documents each and every day. This is an appropriate measure due to the high degree of trust that the community place in them. It is important to note that JPs are often alone with people. JPs can be invited into a person's home to help them with their paperwork. Sometimes people attend the home of a justice of the peace to have their paperwork signed.

A practice that I have undertaken since I was first elected is that when somebody volunteers to become a JP and signs up I call them and thank them for volunteering and ask them why they have signed up to be a JP. I have made the following observations. In my relatively brief time as a local member, I have found that JPs in our community are getting younger. It is a professional service but it is done by volunteers.

I have been finding that many JPs are signing up now for professional reasons. They are doing it in conjunction with the work they do and while they are fully engaged in the workforce. When I was first elected, I found it was very much something people did to give back to the community as they were closer to retirement age. I have said repeatedly—and I will keep saying it—it is a professional service but it is provided by volunteers.

I take this opportunity, as I have done in my community, to thank the more than 1,000 volunteers who serve my community. Whether they answer the call late on a Friday night from someone desperate to get paperwork done or like Brian Tovey answer a knock on the door in the middle of the night from the police because that is his posting, they do an outstanding job. They have served Queensland collectively for over 100 years and they have provided Queenslanders with a trusted service that we can all rely on. This legislation ensures that they continue to be held in the high esteem they deserve. Trust for the community is reinforced with the legislation.

In the time that I have left, I will touch on the amendments to the Criminal Code to allow for an indictment for an offence committed in relation to a pregnant person, which allegedly results in the loss of a pregnancy, list the name of the baby. It is important to note that this inclusion is determined on a case-by-case basis, with factors including the wishes of the parents. This is important because it allows every family to make that decision depending on their particular circumstances. It is very much in keeping with the idea of trauma centred care and listening to the voice of women.


I commend the bipartisan way that members of parliament have worked on this important and very sensitive piece of legislation, including the current and former members for Lockyer and the current and former attorneys-general. It allows the court to consider the loss of that pregnancy as an aggravating factor in specific circumstances.

I was reflecting on the preparations that I made for my babies the week before they were each born. On my laptop I have a copy of the letter I wrote a week before my daughter Elyse was born. She had a name many months before she was born. I have a copy of the letter I wrote to the midwives and doctors who helped deliver her. Her name is in that letter. She was in every way that week and in the many weeks before my daughter. I know that if were in similar circumstances to Sarah and Peter that I would have wanted to have the option to have her name included.

I say to Sarah and Peter, who join us in the gallery today and who lost their baby girl Sophie in such horrible and unimaginable circumstances, that we are so sorry. I and all members in this parliament are very sorry for your loss. I cannot imagine your ongoing grief. It is very special and always blows me away when people like Sarah and Peter are able to turn their grief and their loss, which would

be enough to break many of us, into something positive and make our community a better place by advocating for change. Sarah and Peter have been able to do exactly that. I know that every member of this House would join me in commending them for their bravery and persistence over many long years. I thank them for joining us in the gallery today.

In the very brief time I have left, I point out how pleased I am to see that there can be financial provision made for the funeral costs of such losses of an unborn child. This places victims at the centre of these changes. It is about trauma-based, trauma informed legislation. I think that is why this legislation is strongly supported by all members of the House. That is why these changes are so important. I certainly commend this bill to the House.

 **Ms SIMPSON** (Maroochydore—LNP) (12.35 pm): I also strongly support Sophie's Law which gives recognition to an unborn baby who was well loved and about to be welcomed into a family but for a criminal act that ripped that young life away from this family. I honour and acknowledge the Milosevics and the journey they have been on to see recognition that this was a baby that they wanted and recognition that there are many others who have suffered from terrible criminal offences that have resulted in the premature and cruel death of their unborn children. It is certainly a story where we wish there were no other examples. We know that unfortunately that has not been the case.

The amendments in the Justice and Other Legislation Amendment Bill will provide the opportunity for families, should they wish, to have recognition of the unborn child and to state the name of or have a description of the unborn child. As has been outlined, there are provisions for appropriate aggravating circumstances to be considered by the courts when dealing with such offences. I refer to something that I think we should not lose sight of. It has been an incredibly long struggle for this family and others to see this recognition. There is bipartisan support for this legislation that will do that.

I want to remember another brave young woman—Tracy Wooding. She raised the issue of the tragic killing of her unborn baby by her violent partner. He attacked her when she was pregnant with the intention of killing her unborn child. Tracy was eight months pregnant at the time. Her violent ex-partner succeeded. Her baby boy, Zach, was born dead. If it were not for this attack, at eight months gestation he could have been born alive in a hospital. The law did not recognise this child's death.

This resulted in a campaign by another very brave woman to see the law changed. While the change in the law would not have brought back her baby, the Criminal Code was amended in 1997 under then attorney-general Denver Beanland. We were able to insert provisions into the Criminal Code to recognise that this attack on a pregnant woman causing the death or injury of her unborn needed a penalty in the law. That should have been common sense, but, unfortunately as we found, there was a lot of opposition. Eventually, we had bipartisan support for amending the Criminal Code, but not for all babies. Unfortunately, the then Labor Party opposition drew a line as to which babies were to be included and which ones were not.

That was the story. I want to recognise Tracy Wooding because it has been a tough battle for brave women and brave couples to raise these issues. Too many times people say, 'This is an abortion issue,' or 'We don't want to trigger an abortion issue.' I know that there are very strong views around abortion. I understand that. Unfortunately, for many unborn children, even where they are wanted by their family, they have been left in a situation without the protection of law. The law was changed back in 1997 in relation to section 313. Today we see the law extended in respect of this aspect of a criminal offence that was not captured under that circumstance of an assault of a woman—in this case in regard to other criminal offences more generally. This is a step forward.

Let's not forget that these babies—some families desperately want them—deserve to be recognised and their families deserve all the support they can get. If I reflect back on section 313 in the Criminal Code, there are a lot of pregnant women who suffer domestic violence. The figures showed then, as they do today, that unfortunately these laws have to be in place. We hope that they would be a deterrent, but there should be justice for those who find themselves in circumstances where they are attacked or, with regard to this legislation before the House, where a criminal offence causes the death of their unborn baby.

I want to address an ongoing creep in regard to the move to erase women and the definition of 'woman' from the statute books. As I understand the Criminal Code, the definition of 'woman' still stands in regard to the legislation where it refers to 'woman means a female person of any age'. I do not believe that has been deleted from section 319A. There has been a progressive creep in regard to other areas of law to remove the definition of 'woman' from our statute books.

I want to reference this because I am really concerned that biological women are finding that they are being erased from the statute books and in many regards are unable to defend themselves as to why they should not have their recognition as biological women erased. Women should not be erased. We have fought hard enough to be recognised with equal rights and opportunities. We should not be denying our biology but celebrating it. A move to increasingly remove or erase women from the statute books is, I think, far more profound and does not provide comfort to those who have fought long and hard for the recognition of women.

There are many other provisions being amended by this legislation. There are some 30 acts being amended. I want to reference the fact that there are a number of amendments to the Electoral Act. The statement of reservation from my colleagues in the LNP has noted some concerns around the fact that there has to be greater clarity and also certainty as to when redistributions are finalised. We do not want to see a situation where redistributions with new boundaries are finalised close to elections. There are time frames defined 'as soon as practicable'. That is pretty open-ended. The reality is that what is practical perhaps for an Electoral Commission may not be very practical for others who need certainty around when boundaries are changed because it does have a huge impact.

As I said, 30 acts are being amended by the legislation before the parliament and there are many other issues worth addressing. I wish to particularly say that changes to the Electoral Act are not light matters. We must ensure that there is not only fairness in the way these matters are handled but an understanding about the practicality of what they may mean on the ground.

I know that my colleague the member for Warrego has been very active in respect of raising issues about postal votes and the impact in regard to some of these matters perhaps not being dealt with as transparently as they should have been. I want to commend her and her efforts to raise these issues around postal votes to ensure that we have greater fairness and transparency.

Postal voting is one means of providing people with an opportunity to vote. As I understand, there is acknowledgement that just because somebody has not put a ballot into the certified envelope that should not negate it being considered a valid ballot. I know that the representations made by the member for Warrego on this issue have resulted in recognition that this needed to be addressed. Where people's intention of how they wish to vote is clear, they should not be denied the opportunity of exercising their democratic right by that ballot not being legitimately handled. We also need to address the fact going forward of postal votes taking longer to reach people. We do not want people having their right to vote removed by delays in the postal system.

(Time expired)



Ms RICHARDS (Redlands—ALP) (12.45 pm): I rise to support the Justice and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023. The bill seeks to clarify, strengthen and modernise legislation concerning the administration of justice. There are amendments to over 30 acts, as we have heard; four regulations; and the repealing of the Court Funds Act.

The bill contains specific amendments to: the Appeal Costs Fund Act 1973 which seek to modernise Appeal Costs Fund and improve its current fee and administrative arrangements; the Civil Proceedings Act 2011 which seek to clarify the operation of a provision of the Civil Proceedings Act with respect to payment of interest on a money order debt; to replace the Court Funds Act 1973 with a new and modernised legislative framework; the Cremations Act 2003 to recognise interstate cremation permits issued by coroners in other jurisdictions under the Cremations Act; the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences) Act 1978—and I will touch on that in more detail; the Criminal Code to clarify the scope of the offence of assisting in the performance of a termination of pregnancy—and I will touch on that further; the District Court of Queensland Act 1967 and the Magistrates Courts Act 1921 to allow the courts to make preliminary disclosure orders; the Electoral Act 1992, as we have just heard from the member for Maroochydore and the importance of that; the Human Rights Act 2019; the Justices of the Peace and Commissioners for Declarations Act 1991—and we heard from the member for Mount Ommaney on this. What a great job our justices of the peace do. I had the opportunity last week to present 40 years of service to one of our JPs on Macleay Island. Our JPs do an absolutely fantastic job. I will touch a little more on that further.

The bill also seeks to amend: the Oaths Act 1867—and obviously that is an important piece of legislation for our justices of the peace; the Legal Profession Act 2007; the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal Act 2009; the Supreme Court of Queensland Act 1991; and the Trust Accounts Act 1973. There is a fair bit in there. The committee consulted widely on all of those pieces of legislation.


In terms of publishing the identity of defendants in sexual proceedings, the bill will remove restrictions in the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences) Act which prohibit identification of an adult defendant charged with a prescribed sexual offence prior to finalisation of committal proceedings. We know this will create a much more open and transparent process. I think we are the only state outside of the Northern Territory that does not have that in place. Importantly, as the Attorney-General noted, the media guidelines are ahead of schedule, looking to be completed by October this year. This is an important piece of legislation that will provide much more transparency to sexual offenders.

Stakeholder views were noted. DVConnect, Women's Legal Service Queensland, Legal Aid and the QLS raised some concerns. The department responded by noting that the amendments do not interfere with other protections around the identification of a complainant of a sexual offence. Concerns were also raised in regard to the three-day time frame. I think that is a pretty sensible approach—that a three-day time frame is needed to get clarity and certainty quickly when it relates to the non-publication of a person's details.

Like many others here who spoke about the death of an unborn child being an aggravating factor, I want to thank Sarah and Peter for their contribution to this legislation, their written participation and Sarah's participation in the public hearing. I cannot imagine their loss. Out our way we similarly had the loss of Matt, Kate and baby Miles. This is a really important piece of legislation. The bill proposes to better recognise the deaths of unborn children that have occurred due to criminal conduct. In reading Sarah and Peter's submission it is hard to imagine the loss of their baby Sophie and that the driver of that vehicle lost his license for five months and received a \$950 fine. That is just unimaginable. Thank you very much for your contribution to this piece of legislation. It is extremely important. I do not think there is much that can give you comfort, but hopefully that goes some way to providing justice for people in the future.

In terms of assisting the termination of pregnancy, I think that is an important piece of this legislation to ensure that anybody providing assistance, whether it be a friend, family member or an organisation that is providing welfare assistance, is not in a position where they might be subject to charges under the Criminal Code, so it is very important to have that included in there as well.

I will return to justices of the peace again, because, as I said, they do a terrific job in our community. This bill will provide even greater support to them and strengthen the process of becoming a justice of the peace and what that looks like in delivering the amazing services they do. I think everybody sees the JPs in their local shopping centres who serve people in our communities very well. They were on call throughout COVID. They did a fantastic job in continuing to provide that invaluable service. To all of our justices of the peace out there, whether you have done five, 10 or 40 years, thank you for the service that you provide. We are very fortunate to have volunteers in our community. If anybody has had a go at doing the justice of the peace course—I see the member for Ipswich nodding—you know what a process they go through to become a justice of the peace or a commissioner for declarations, so thank you for all that you do. I commend this bill to the House.

 **Ms LEAHY** (Warrego—LNP) (12.52 pm): I rise to contribute to the debate on the Justice and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. The bill amends the Justice of the Peace and Commissioners for Declarations Act 1991. I wish to advise the House that I am a qualified justice of the peace. I want to thank all of the justices of the peace and commissioners for declarations in my electorate, especially those who put forward and developed a community signing centre in Roma. They voluntarily provide a fabulous service to that community, and I want to thank all justices of the peace and commissioners for declarations for their service, which many have done for a very long time.

One of the principal objectives of the bill is to clarify, strengthen and update legislation concerning the administration of justice. This includes legislation relating to the operation of courts and tribunals, the regulation of the legal profession, and the conduct of civil proceedings and electoral matters. Again we have an omnibus bill with some 30 acts amended. In this one bill there are a wide range of amendments and objectives. It does not really allow for the freedom of all members to fully debate each change to the extent to which some may wish.

One of the very important amendments outlined in this bill is that which proposes to better recognise the deaths of unborn children which have occurred due to criminal conduct. This amendment has been brought about through the advocacy of Peter and Sarah Milosevic, their local LNP member Jim McDonald and the former member for Lockyer, Ian Rickuss. Six days before she was due to be born, Sophie Milosevic lost her life even before it began when a drugged-up driver slammed into her parents' car. Sophie's death on that fateful day, 29 August 2014, was not recognised as murder or manslaughter or in any charge that ended in occasioning death. Instead, she was listed as one of the

many massive injuries that Sarah suffered. The man responsible for the crash did not see a prison sentence because Queensland law could not hold him responsible for the death of Sophie. He received a \$950 fine and a five-month suspension of his driver's license. It is right that we all pay respect to Sophie Milosevic and her family. Peter and Sarah Milosevic have spent many years fighting for the changes that we see today and to acknowledge the loss and life of an unborn child due to criminal conduct. Sophie's Law will forever be the legacy that she leaves behind. Sophie's Law should be a separate bill and appropriately named after Sophie, but I want to place on record my thanks to Peter and Sarah for their fight for this change and also the member for Lockyer, who stood with them throughout this time. Peter and Sarah, thank you for never giving up. I am disappointed that this took so long to become a reality for your family and Sophie.

I also want to bring to the attention of the House the path of some of the amendments to the Electoral Act. Following the 2020 election I raised in the parliament concerns about the number of postal ballots that were rejected at the 2020 state election. Across Queensland there were some 57,000 postal ballots rejected at this election. We see in the ECQ's submission that approximately 30 per cent of these votes could be saved. Some 17,000 people who cast their ballots, which could have been saved, had those ballots rejected. Those people thought they were voting for the candidate of their choice. Approximately 30 per cent of those with valid votes were never to know that their ballot was rejected because it was not in the declaration envelope even though it was in the reply paid envelope. Under the current legislation the ballot paper must be accepted for counting if the ballot is in the declaration envelope received by post. One word: in. I saw some postal votes that were rejected for the seal not being torn off the declaration envelope even though the ballot was in the declaration envelope and the secrecy of the ballot could be maintained.

In my electorate of Warrego there were 566 postal ballots rejected. In fact, there were more rejected postal ballots in Warrego than there were informal ballots. That told me something was not right with our system. In Bundaberg there were 436 ballots rejected. In that seat the margin is just nine votes. It should be noted that the LNP candidate, David Batt, outpolled the member for Bundaberg on postal declaration votes. These amendments may not be of assistance to the electoral future of the member for Bundaberg. I thank the ECQ for their clarification in relation to the reporting of issued postal ballots and postal ballots returned and accepted; however this information is still not easy to locate on the ECQ website. It needs to be clearly and easily accessed. Democracy is enhanced by transparency and public reporting. Both are needed to ensure that problems with design can be addressed and education campaigns benchmarked to help reduce the number of rejected postal ballots. I note that in their correspondence the ECQ agreed with my observation regarding the importance of ensuring that trends and benchmarks can be identified and publicly reported, including postal votes not admitted to the count.

The amendments in the bill to the Electoral Act will provide that a ballot paper secured in the replied paid envelope supplied by the Electoral Commission of Queensland which also contains the completed declaration on the declaration envelope may be counted regardless of whether the postal vote is actually inside the declaration envelope. If I had not raised this issue in the House on behalf of those 57,000 people whose votes were rejected and the 17,000 the ECQ indicated were valid, I do wonder whether we would have seen the amendments before us today.

I acknowledge the amendments to expand the definition of a 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 to a polling place or those caring for the ill or infirm. It is difficult for the ECQ to find staff and attend to all of the hospitals and multipurpose health and aged care facilities in regional and more metropolitan areas because there just are not people sitting around waiting to go and do that job.

There are also people in these institutions who find it confusing because they are able to have a postal vote for a federal election but not for a state election. They find that inconsistency extremely confusing. The aligning of state and federal legislation will enable these frail and often ill people to participate in democracy rather than confusing them at a difficult time of their lives. Further, the bill removes the reference to the 60-day time frame associated with the Queensland Redistribution Commission's finalisation of electoral redistribution and instead inserts 'as soon as practicable'. This could eventuate in a new electoral boundary being declared within 60 days of an election. This would not be acceptable for Queenslanders or prospective candidates for election. There are already numerous time frames defined as 'as soon as practicable' within the redistribution process, meaning that overall time frames are uncertain for participants in the political process. Queenslanders deserve certainty about the redistribution process, not more uncertainty.

Sitting suspended from 1.00 pm to 2.00 pm.



Mr MARTIN (Stretton—ALP) (2.00 pm): I rise to support the Justice and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023 which encompasses a range of crucial reforms aimed at enhancing Queensland's justice system. The bill proposes a wide range of amendments to over 30 pieces of legislation across various areas. The primary objective of the bill is to provide legal clarity and modernise existing legislation pertaining to the administration of justice. This encompasses statutes related to the functioning of courts and tribunals, the regulation of the legal profession, the conduct of civil proceedings and electoral matters. Additionally, the bill incorporates numerous initiatives aimed at advancing the cause of justice. I would like to address some of the most noteworthy amendments contained within the bill.

Firstly, 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 mother. In Queensland, the born-alive rule, which is a common law legal principle, is the legal standard that determines the recognition of individuals. It means that an unborn child does not hold legal personhood until birth. Consequently, offences such as murder and manslaughter do not apply in relation to an unborn child. However, the proposed bill seeks to address this by better acknowledging the deaths of unborn children resulting from offences committed in relation to expectant mothers. As echoed by other members of this House, 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 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 the pregnant mother and others. I want to acknowledge, along with other members of this place, the contribution of Sarah and Peter Milosevic to this legislation. As we have heard, they support the recognition of an unborn child who has been killed due to criminal conduct. I acknowledge their submission, reflecting on the devastating loss of their daughter, Sophie. I also want to acknowledge the earlier contribution from the member for Lockyer. I was unaware of his role in this. The Milosevics 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.

Addressing concerns expressed by various stakeholders about the potential implication of establishing a legal status for unborn children, the department has offered the following guidance. The bill does not introduce a new offence or create a circumstance of aggravation. Instead, it introduces an aggravating factor which only becomes relevant after an individual has been convicted of the offence. This amendment enables the recognition of the unborn child on an indictment at the discretion of the parents. This recognition, as we know, can play a valuable role in the healing process for numerous parents and families.

The amendments in the bill strike the right balance by recognising and implementing changes that better acknowledge the death of an unborn child as a result of criminal conduct without abrogating the born-alive rule or conflicting with the rights of the pregnant woman. I am proud to be part of a Palaszczuk government that is committed to improving the way the justice system supports victims, and these amendments progress an important aspect of this work.

Secondly, the bill also amends the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences) Act 1978 to remove restrictions which prohibit the identification of an adult defendant charged with a prescribed sexual offence prior to finalisation of committal proceedings. The bill also includes amendments to the Criminal Code which remove the prohibition on the identification of an adult defendant. 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 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 another 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 prescribed sexual offences and other offences. The amendments mean that a defendant charged with rape, attempted rape, assault with intent to rape or sexual assault will be able to be identified before committal and complainants treated with the same dignity as complainants for other offences. It is also worth noting that, other than the Northern Territory, Queensland is the only state or territory that currently


maintains a defendant's anonymity in these cases. I also note that a media guide is to be developed and distributed to media organisations and journalists prior to the commencement date of 3 October to assist their reporting on relevant matters before the courts.

Thirdly, the bill amends the Electoral Act 1992 to improve voter enfranchisement and administrative efficiency ahead of the 2024 state election. The proposed amendments in the bill respond to requests from the ECQ and aim to streamline the electoral process. Firstly, it allows for the counting of ballot papers sent in a reply paid envelope to the ECQ, even if the postal vote is not inside the declaration envelope. This change aligns with federal legislation and it safeguards votes while also maintaining electoral integrity.

To reduce voter confusion and align with federal election practices, the bill broadens the definition of a 'special postal voter' to include hospital patients, individuals who are unable to travel to a polling place due to illness or infirmity and those caring for the ill or infirm. These electors will receive mail-in ballot papers, although they can still choose alternative voting methods.

The bill also revises the requirement for an audit of the electronically assisted voting system—the telephone voting system—which is now necessary only in cases of significant information technology changes. Additionally, it replaces the 60-day time frame for the Queensland Redistribution Commission's electoral redistribution finalisation with a more flexible 'as soon as practicable' approach.

Finally, the bill establishes a 6 pm cut-off time for the close of electoral rolls on a specific day, providing clarity for both voters and the ECQ and allowing the ECQ more time to update the electoral roll. These changes all support voter enfranchisement. I note the submissions from the ECQ which estimate that the amendment to the postal voting rules will save up to 30 per cent of the 57,000 rejected postal votes which are deemed invalid. That is over 17,000 Queenslanders whose vote will now be counted. That is certainly something we all support. Postal voting in elections is crucial as it enables citizens who are unable to visit polling stations in person to exercise their democratic right. It is great that we could change this in this bill.

 **Mr MICKELBERG** (Buderim—LNP) (2.09 pm): I rise to address the Justice and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023. At the outset, I want to focus on the other part of this bill—another omnibus bill that amends 30 acts, four regulations and repeals another act. It has become par for the course for this Labor state government to roll difficult or politically contentious issues in with unrelated routine matters. That is not the practice of a government that is committed to transparency or to openness or to good government. It looks a lot like a government that is focused on the interests of their own rather than those of Queenslanders, and of the Labor Party's political objectives rather than on governing for all Queenslanders. We saw it last sitting when the government, with no notice, sought to bring in amendments to a bill dealing with the monitoring of sex offenders that would have probably had the support of all members, but with no consultation and no oversight, we see the government bringing in multiple amendments to a bill that should have been dealt with through an appropriate committee process and in a bill probably of its own standing. No doubt we will be back in here fixing the errors of those incompetent Labor ministers who have presided over that, as a consequence. It is just another sign of the rolling chaos and crisis on display by this Palaszczuk Labor government. I want to start by indicating my support for the measures contained in this bill—

Government members interjected.

Ms Boyd: Straight face.

Mr MICKELBERG: I have to work on my poker face, sorry. Returning to the bill, I want to start by indicating my support for the measures contained in this bill to make the death of an unborn child an aggravating factor for certain prescribed offences like murder, dangerous operation of a motor vehicle causing death, and assault occasioning actual bodily harm, among others. The trauma that Peter and Sarah Milosevic have endured after their unborn daughter, Sophie, was killed as a result of the actions of a drug-affected driver have been immense, but I am sure that I speak for parents right across Queensland in saying thank you to Peter and Sarah for never giving up the fight to ensure that should others find themselves in the same situation in the future—and, unfortunately, no doubt someone will—that those offenders who do the wrong thing will be correctly held to account for the pain and for the loss that they inflict. I can only imagine how difficult the years since Sophie was taken have been, but Sophie's legacy will be a safer Queensland where those who inflict harm on an unborn child will be sentenced accordingly.

I congratulate the government for listening to the Milosevics' calls, albeit slowly, but I appreciate the government have brought it in. On that note, I also want to pay tribute to my colleague, the member for Lockyer, Jim McDonald, who stood alongside Peter and Sarah during their long fight to have this

sensible change implemented. I acknowledge the member for Stretton's comments, commending the member for Lockyer for his contribution. I want to stand alongside the member for Stretton's comments and also associate myself with the contribution of the member for Lockyer earlier today. I know that without Peter and Sarah's unstinting advocacy, supported by the member for Lockyer, this important and sensible change would not have been implemented. On behalf of my community of Buderim, I want to say thank you.

The bill also makes changes to the circumstances in which an adult defendant charged with a prescribed sexual offence can be identified. As we have heard, these changes bring Queensland into line with other states with the exception of the Northern Territory. Despite some of the contributions in submissions to the committee and some of the rhetoric that has been around this issue, there have been very few issues arising in other states that have already implemented this change, and the fact that people already openly flaunt the requirement as it exists in Queensland and, in many cases, are unfortunately not held to account for doing so, talks to the fact that community expectations have changed over the years and the legislation should move with that.

The change also helps to improve public confidence in the administration of justice in Queensland, and I think it balances the needs to protect the rights of victims with a desire for greater transparency where adults have been charged with a prescribed sexual offence. The issue with respect to identifying minors is a whole other issue again.

As we have heard, this was an outcome of the *Hear her voice* report, and it is important that those changes are implemented in a timely and efficient manner. My LNP colleagues and I have supported the timely rollout of the *Hear her voice* recommendations. I want to place on the record that it is disappointing that there is still considerable progress to be made in that regard.

I also want to talk to the changes in relation to the Electoral Act. That boundaries are needed to only be finalised 60 days before an election just creates more uncertainty. I acknowledge we now have a fixed date for state elections—that is a good thing—but I do not think moving the boundaries around 60 days out from an election helps anyone. I experienced this myself in 2017 when I was a candidate in Buderim and the proposed boundaries that the ECQ initially set down actually saw me taking the top half of the member for Kawana's current electorate, as it was in Buderim, and some—

Mr Whiting: They would have appreciated that.

Mr MICKELBERG: No comment. The changes saw some 7,000 to 8,000 people move. When you are trying to campaign and trying to introduce yourself, it is probably not such an issue if you are an incumbent member, but for those who are seeking election for the first time, moving those boundaries 60 days out from an election is a significant detriment for those who are trying to get to know the issues in individual suburbs, get out and speak to people in those communities, only for those boundaries to move. I think that is a bad thing, and I think it creates uncertainty. I would like to see a greater requirement for the ECQ to finalise those boundaries in a timely way.

I want to address the issue with respect to postal votes which the member for Warrego spoke about in detail. I acknowledge her advocacy in relation to this issue since the 2020 election. That 57,000 postal votes were rejected at the 2020 election should be a concern. That 30 per cent of those could have been saved had they not taken a course of action that this legislation will seek to address, but minor things like the fact that the postal vote was not in a sealed envelope but was in the outer envelope, are just ridiculous, in my view. There are plenty of seats in this House where the outcome was decided by thin margins. The member for Bundaberg is going to speak after me, by the look of it. Nine votes in Bundaberg and 84 in Nicklin—I was there for the recount for both of them. We nearly got back 11 in Bundy, but only managed to get back two. However, the point is that in both of those seats, the postal votes flowed to the LNP over Labor, and they were decided by very narrow margins. If I look at Bundaberg, 836 postal votes were rejected—836. Of those, 30 per cent could have been saved, according to the Electoral Commission, and that would have been the difference in Bundaberg, and we would have had a good local member advocating for issues in Bundaberg rather than a Labor hack, as we do right now.

In Nicklin, I pay tribute to the former member for Nicklin and the future member for Nicklin, Marty Hunt, a tireless advocate for his community, a man who served his community. He was a PCYC rep for 17 years and then when he lost the last election, he went back to serving his community as a school-based police officer at Nambour State College. That talks to his dedication for his community of Nicklin.

Mr Saunders interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Krause): Pause the clock, please. Member for Maryborough, you are not in your seat. If you want to interject, go back, or be quiet.

Mr MICKELBERG: The rejected postal ballots in the seat of Nicklin, which Labor holds with a margin of 84 votes was 654. If 30 per cent of those were not rejected, as they should not have been, and those preferences predominantly flowed to the LNP, which they did, we may very well have a good local member for Nicklin here in the form of Marty Hunt rather than a head nodder and someone who hopefully will be washed out to sea in 14 months—metaphorically washed out to sea in 14 months.

Mr BUTCHER: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order under standing order 118(b). Can I get him back to the long title of the bill and relevance? This is so not on what we are talking about today.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you for your point of order. Member for Buderim, I understand you are talking about postal voting and the changes that are being made in the bill, but I do ask, please, perhaps if you could move onto your next topic as well.

Mr MICKELBERG: Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker, I appreciate your guidance and I will move onto the next point. The point is that Queenslanders need confidence in the electoral system and they do not have that right now in Queensland. They do not have that because they have seen a progressive whittling down of these provisions from the Palaszczuk Labor government. We saw it when they changed the voting system from optional preferential to compulsory preferential to suit their political outcomes. We have seen it time and time again, and Queenslanders do not have confidence. That is a very unfortunate thing because it is important that Queenslanders do have confidence. I call on the Electoral Commission to do a better job of administering elections in Queensland. I think it is unacceptable the manner in which some of these approaches have been taken.

It is very clear that had a different approach been taken prior to the last election, some of these members would not be here now. That is not the will of their community I would suggest. I look forward to there being a more transparent process, a more certain process and a more sensible process with respect to dealing with postal votes at the next election in 2024.



Mr SMITH (Bundaberg—ALP) (2.19 pm): It is wonderful to follow the former 'president' of the United States! It is absolutely wonderful to hear his concerns about the electoral system in Queensland and that maybe there are members here who should not be. I was going to say nice things about the member for Buderim. I was going to say, 'Thank goodness it is not Steve Dickson', but now I am unsure. I am not quite sure. Imagine coming into Bundaberg to do the recount and not even offer the new member for Bundaberg a beer. I will say one thing. I reckon the seat of Burnett might be a bit closer than it is currently, especially with what was revealed today about the secret plans to cut the wages and entitlements of nurses, but I will move on.

I will do what I was going to do before the former 'president' rose to his feet—I am talking about the member for Buderim; he is not a bad bloke—which is to very genuinely pay tribute to the member for Lockyer across the aisle. I do want to do this in the proper way. This parliament is the most important institution in Queensland. It is absolutely the most important institution in Queensland because it reflects the views of the community. The members here represent the individuals within that community and those individuals are able to go to their members of parliament who then go to the parliament and the executive to create new laws that are reflective of the community's views and attitudes.

I acknowledge the role of the committees and their importance, particularly the work of the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee. I want to acknowledge my fellow committee member Jim McDonald, the member for Lockyer, for engaging with his constituents. He listened to them, spoke to them and went to the government and respected the government. Likewise, the government respected him and his constituents in his electorate and, thus, all of Queensland. That is why we see before us the important legislation we are debating today. I acknowledge my state development committee colleague. I acknowledge that this House plays an important role when it comes to legislation and representing the important institution it is. That brings me back to the importance of our electoral system because it is the electoral system that guarantees the strength of the institution.

One of the important features of our electoral system is that those who are legally entitled to vote have a right for their vote to count. That is what we are seeing in clause 73 with the insertion of new section 125A, Saving of ballot papers not in declaration envelope. That deals with the issue of ballot papers not counted because they are not in the correct envelope but are in another envelope. I think it is quite reasonable that we do everything so that people who are eligible to vote and have rightly voted are not excluded simply because of an error of judgement in rendering their intention regarding a

correctly completed ballot that has been submitted to the ECQ. The ECQ do a fantastic job. I am sure that, as the AEC made comments about Peter Dutton, the ECQ may wish to read the speech of the member for Buderim and perhaps put forward some reflections on it.

One of the important reasons we need to ensure these ballot papers are not excluded is because we are a wideranging community. There are people right across Queensland and also Australia who have different levels of literacy. Literacy is not just about reading, writing and spelling; it is also about comprehension. We need to ensure that people who have had a challenge in comprehending the procedure regarding the two envelopes are not excluded because of that. This is about including everyone and if they have made their intention clear, their voice should be heard. Also with regard to mail literacy—and I am not talking about M-A-L-E but M-A-I-L—there are plenty of people out there who do not engage with mail and the post anymore and we need to consider their understanding of how the system works.

Mr Martin: Young Labor voters.

Mr SMITH: I will not take that interjection from the member for Stretton. He has to remember his base.

Then there is English as a second language. Our communities are growing multicultural communities and ESL—English as a second language—could have been one of the determining factors in whether or not these ballots were included or excluded at the last election. Then there are customs and cultures as well as knowledge of the system.

When I was a teacher I would teach civics in year 9. Because I was a bit of a political nerd I got to write the entire syllabus on our electoral system. I still remember bringing my year 9 class here, and they met the member for Maryborough. I would like to say things went up from there. They did. Of course they did. In fact, that class is about to graduate and they are going to go and build trains in Maryborough. That is what they are going to do.

Mr Saunders: And vote for us.

Mr SMITH: Probably. I do not want to speak for them. There is quite a large number of people who do not necessarily have the grasp of the electoral system that we do. It is important that we do everything we can to ensure their vote counts. We cannot be critical of people when we talk about optional preferential voting and mandatory preferential voting. They might see what happens in the United States and get confused by their system of voting. Then there is first past the post in the UK. People can be confused. In fact, I remember when I was elected to the seat of Bundaberg people said to me, 'So whose office do you move into now?' I said, 'I move into the electorate office.' They said, 'Where does the other bloke go?' I said, 'I don't know. That's up to him.' He might be having a beer with the member for Buderim!

The ECQ have made it quite clear, especially coming out of the pandemic, that the more that postal voting is becoming an option for people, a channel for people, the more we are seeing postal votes being excluded. That is partly due to this reason that people are not putting their ballot paper in two envelopes. Instead they put it into one. We have seen the numbers. About 30 per cent of the 57,000 rejected postal votes could potentially have been saved under the provision we are now bringing in. It is important because it goes to voter suppression.

We have seen attempts by the right-wing parties in America, especially the Republicans, to bring in voter suppression around postal ballots. There is clearly a reason why the far right in America are trying to do that. In fact, in Texas in 2022 the mail ballot rejection rate in their March primaries was one in eight, which represented 12.4 per cent. Compare that to two years previous in the general US election where the mail rejection rate was 0.8 per cent.

Those opposite talk about how great this change is—and it absolutely is great—but I think they have misread what is potentially going to occur when we empower people to vote. When people are empowered to vote and know their vote will count, they are going to pay more attention. If they paid attention today, they would know that the nurses are going to be marched out the door under the LNP. What we will do is make sure we are protecting people. We are going to make sure that every vote counts so that the vote of those people who have English as a second language will count and the vote of those people who are not always across the electoral system will count as well. What we have seen in the US is there is a reason why the Democrats are trying to make it easier for people to vote. Meanwhile, the Republicans are trying to make it harder for people to vote. I was not going to bring this up, but the member for Condamine—and I quite like him—

Ms Bush: That is generous!

Mr SMITH: It is generous, but he is not a bad bloke. He threw out a little barb during his speech. In the true fashion of the member for Condamine, no-one actually heard it; no-one actually laughed or responded. I looked around and I saw that he was smiling at me so I figured he must have said something about Bundaberg. With this new legislation we are bringing in where we will ensure that every vote that was eligible and intended will count, it is clear: vote out Weir. It is clear for the people of Condamine: vote out Weir. I could not think of something that rhymed with Mickelberg. I still cannot, which I am upset about because I am an English teacher. The member for Warrego had a go at me as well, so 'Warrego has to go'.

Interruption.

DISTINGUISHED VISITOR



Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Krause): I would like to acknowledge in the gallery this afternoon Ms Silvina Aguirre, Consul-General of Argentina, who is visiting the parliament. Welcome to Queensland parliament and thank you for visiting.

JUSTICE AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Resumed.



Mr LISTER (Southern Downs—LNP) (2.29 pm): I rise to make a contribution on the Justice and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023. Moments ago I had the privilege of introducing myself to the Milosevics in the gallery. I do not think I can offer anything in addition to what many others have said about the value of Sophie's Law and the enormity of this advance in our legal system to help those who will unfortunately face the same situation as the Milosevics did with their unborn daughter Sophie. As have many others, I would like to sincerely recognise the contribution by my honourable friend the member for Lockyer Jim McDonald, and recognise that this is an innovation that has come about through the participation of many, including the past two attorneys-general. I echo the sentiments that were expressed by the member for Condamine in saying that this is one of those moments when we can say that we have been present and part of something that is good. That might be a vanity, but it is a very human vanity that we can all share in this particular case. I am very proud to be a supporter of the bill for that reason, if for no other.

I would like to mention the amendments to the Electoral Act. I associate myself with, echo and reflect the comments made earlier by my honourable friend the member for Warrego. Like I do, she has an electorate where there are many postal voters. Impediments to recognising the genuine will of the elector in choosing a candidate to represent them in an election are very important. It was irrational and contrary to the interests of democracy to have a system where a postal vote could be ruled out of order simply because it was not enclosed in the correct envelope. This will be an important innovation, particularly for people like me who have large electorates with a lot of postal voters.

The bill will amend the Electoral Act to expand 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 to a polling place or those caring for the ill or infirm. Members in this House will know that some years ago I took some time off for my mental health. I actually was an inpatient at a mental health hospital to get myself together. Before that, in my time in the Australian Defence Force, I was an inpatient at the Keith Payne Unit, which is the veterans psychiatric unit at Greenslopes Hospital. It is an unfortunate fact of history that while I was an inpatient there there was a federal election. I want to be clear this is not an attack on the Electoral Commission of Queensland, but it is a warning nevertheless. While I was there, although I had already voted in the election, those who were visiting the hospital as a declared institution went to every square centimetre of that hospital and collected every single vote—except for the veterans in the Keith Payne Unit. Many of those with whom I was sharing digs for that time that I was a patient there were unable to vote. I believe that was an oversight by the hospital, because I had anticipated that that may happen. I had raised it with hospital management and urged them to take pre-emptive steps to not prevent the visitors from the Electoral Commission from going to the Keith Payne Unit, but it seems my advice fell on stony ground. Of all people in our society, those who have put their lives on the line for their country ought to be at least equal, if not first in the line to be able to cast their votes. Whilst this applies particularly to hospitals and so forth, which are not a declared institution, I provide a cautionary warning to the community that that is unacceptable.

I urge the Electoral Commission of Queensland to ensure that in any similar situations they do not miss people because they are out of sight and out of mind. That was a very unforgiveable oversight in our democracy. I say that not only as a veteran myself but also as the shadow assistant minister for veterans and also as a representative of veterans in my electorate. I acknowledge the presence in the gallery of Phillip and Carol Clark, who are very dear friends of mine. Phillip is a Navy veteran and, like many, he has suffered some physical and mental consequences due to his service. He is a great guy—and so is Carol, who has been a supportive partner to him through life. I am proud to have you both here. When we mention these sorts of things about veterans, we are talking about Phillip Clark here—not just a name.


I would like to add my concerns to those already expressed about this being an omnibus bill. It is a mark of disregard for this House. It is, I believe, a discourtesy to this House for the government to introduce so many omnibus bills. One could forgive the use of omnibus bills for something like the COVID emergency perhaps, but it seems to be the default position that the executive here pull together all of the legislative amendments they want at a cabinet meeting and they get dumped into one single bill. The advantage for the government is twofold, and both of those advantages are at the cost of the public interest. There is less scrutiny in an omnibus bill than there might otherwise be. It is a natural effect of there being so many acts proposed to be amended. It complicates the committee process as well. It means that the bill cannot be seen in isolation, which is the way it ought to be.

Mr Power interjected.

Mr LISTER: I have an interjection from the great mandarin from Logan! He is a great specialist in this, of course.

A government member interjected.

Mr LISTER: I would say that the member for Logan, being a member of the Labor Party and a supporter of the government, is not in a very good position to offer an opinion on this. I think the government uses this as a smokescreen to avoid scrutiny and to avoid exposing to the community what it is trying to do. Another disadvantage, of course—others have mentioned it before—is that this bill ought more properly to be called ‘Sophie’s Law’. If the amendments which were necessary for Sophie’s Law were contained in a single bill, it could be called Sophie’s Law. This would be an enduring reference to Sophie, who I understand would be nine years old now, and to her family and the difficulties they have faced. Other than that, I will be supporting the bill.

 **Mr POWER** (Logan—ALP) (2.37 pm): Mr Deputy Speaker Krause, I do not have to tell you, or perhaps anyone in this place, that sometimes speeches do not really stir our emotions or are not even that interesting. This is not a reflection on the member for Southern Downs! On 30 August last year I heard a speech in this place from the member for Lockyer that had an electrifying start—

Today would have been Sophie Milosevic’s eighth birthday. Today Sarah and Peter Milosevic have baked a chocolate mud cake and Sophie’s family will blow out the candles in her absence.

I could not help but be moved. I read more about the case. I spoke with the member for Lockyer and I passed on my condolences in passing to Sarah and Peter on that day. I could not help but admire their quiet dignity and determination to bring from this tragedy meaning and justice for others. As humans, one of the most important things we do is remember the fragility and beauty of human existence. The Milosevics have, through their tenacity, reminded us of how their love remembers Sophie. I did not know until today when I met him upstairs, but Ian Rickuss first took information from the Milosevics on their case and took it to Jim. I especially recognise the member for Lockyer, who has worked with successive attorneys-general to see this legislation put forward. In his speech he also said—

I am heartened to hear the Premier’s answer today ... that, ‘We will listen and we will work to solutions,’ and I understand the Attorney-General has signed off a brief to go to cabinet.

I understand that for some in opposition it can be a tough road and that politics and conflict contrived for the cameras can sometimes overshadow genuine answers for people in need, but this is an example of where we saw an MP and ministers—from opposite sides of the House—moved by circumstances and legal failures, work to find solutions rather than to accentuate division or create conflict. Sophie deserved no less. In recognising the member for Lockyer, Jim McDonald, I also recognise the Premier and the attorneys-general—the member for Redcliffe and the member for Waterford—who worked together collectively and constructively.

We recognise that no new law should, through unintended consequences, undermine other laws or the intent of this House, and there were some submissions that had concerns about that. It is the intent of this amendment to recognise that the loss of an unborn baby through a criminal act makes that

criminal act so much more profound than the already profound damage that might have occurred to the mother. Legal principles and precedents only recognise the legal existence of the baby when the baby has 'completely proceeded to a living state from its mother', a legal position known as born alive. Even restating these cold, legal words shows how the law can fail to capture the profound nature of trauma suffered. It fails to understand that the expectant couple have dreams, expectations and even love of their unborn child.

That is why we recognise the work of the department, the committee and the minister to see this law put in place that attempts to right this hole in our legislation without unintended consequences that affect other laws. That is why the structure here is that there will be an amendment to the Penalties and Sentences Act and the Youth Justice Act to make sure that the profound loss that the mother and couple suffer with the death of their baby is recognised by the court after conviction in sentencing. This shall apply when there is a conviction for murder, manslaughter, grievous bodily harm, wounding, dangerous operation of a vehicle, assault occasioning bodily harm and careless driving.

Again, even with this important change, we recognise that nothing brings back the lost baby to the grieving family. However, as we heard in Sarah and Peter Milosevic's submission, the law's failure as it stands adds another layer of grief and that while this law reform does not bring your baby back at least you know that your baby counted. Importantly, there are also changes to the Criminal Code to clarify and enable the name, if one is chosen, of the unborn child or a description of the unborn child to be stated on the indictment for an offence that is alleged that has resulted in the death of an unborn child. Through this we recognise that, especially for the expectant couple, this child counted, it was loved and it was part of our community. To not do so is to profoundly disrespect the enormous pain suffered by couples such as the Milosevics and puts legalese above real justice—is wilfully blind to the real pain and suffering caused by those criminal actions—and well above the damage physically caused to the mother.

I read the submissions of the LAQ and the WLSQ and find them somewhat heartless in the face of such pain, but I also cannot see the reality of their legal claims. The Department of Justice and Attorney-General clearly refutes these assertions and the committee does well to document these carefully. These organisations should do more to recognise that our legal process is to find justice. For couples such as the Milosevics, there was a gap in our law that failed to recognise the enormous pain, suffering and loss that they suffered.

The Queensland Law Society in its submission is effectively attacking the judiciary when it states that, when considering this aggravating factor of a crime of violence by individuals, judges would then—and it has to be the judges because it is on sentencing—cause individual injustice. I reject that judges, when required to consider an aggravating factor on sentencing, would be, as the QLS goes on to allege, either arbitrary or unjust in their consideration of the circumstances of those aggravating factors. The logic of the QLS submission implies that judges would either be both arbitrary and unjust in consideration, and it is a disservice for the QLS to suggest this to the parliamentary committee.

There are a number of other important parts to this bill, but in my speech I want to emphasise my reflections on the changes to enhance justice for those where a violent act caused the death of an unborn child. It reflects some of the best in this House: an injustice shown to us by a tenacious and powerful couple—the Milosevics—and two local MPs, as I found out today, who wanted to see justice rather than political advantage and a ministerial team and Premier who were prepared to overcome complex legal challenges to enhance justice in Queensland. Some might see that as a criticism—that is, if ideas come from someone else or somewhere else to not take them on board—but I see it as a strength of this parliamentary team that we can do that.

I want to reflect on a Brecht poem where the refrain of a complex tragedy is described as 'For all that lives needs help from all the rest'. Brecht could well have said, 'All that lives needs love from all the rest'. Sarah and Peter truly loved their unborn child, Sophie. Their tenacity in seeing through this legal change here today is an expression of that love. As Sarah and Peter said, this law reform does not bring back our child, but at least we know our baby counted. I say to them: Sophie is counted and I hope that this piece of justice brings you a little peace and healing over the trauma you have suffered. I commend the bill to the House.



Ms CAMM (Whitsunday—LNP) (2.45 pm): I, too, rise to contribute to the Justice and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023 and I want to speak particularly on the clauses of the bill relating to the identification of sexual offence defendants prior to committal. This change brings us into line with other states and makes progress in destigmatising sexual offence complaints, and I think for victims of

sexual violence it is long overdue and welcomed. There are no similar provisions to offences such as murder. However, sexual offences have long held a different place, with people concerned for the reputational harm for the defendant. Why is it that we hold this so differently to other criminal offences?

In some cases there will be valid reasons for non-publication orders, particularly where the identity of the offender will identify a victim, and there are provisions for that—and we certainly agree and support the fact that there will be times that that is required—but we should not keep treating sexual violence as an outlier in the criminal justice system. In fact, it should be at the forefront of our minds with the under-reporting that we see across our community. Just as with other offences, we need open justice when it comes to sexual offences. While they are uncomfortable and confronting to think about—and if you have met, like I have and I am sure many members of this House have, survivors of sexual offences and sexual crime—this change is critical and is important.


While we are in favour of this change, it is also important that we monitor the enactment of this legislation. Firstly, we need the media guide produced as promised by the government. I think that that is particularly important. I certainly know after speaking with community members and those who work in the sector, as well as victims, how confronting it is when we see heinous crimes reported in the media and how across our community it is slowly starting to desensitise us as a community. We never want to see crimes such as sexual violence or domestic and family violence in particular when they are serious in nature get to the point that they no longer resonate or people can no longer stand what they are reading.

Secondly, given the views of stakeholders and concerns raised, there must be monitoring of the impact this has on reporting. If concerns are realised with regard to reporting figures, if they are dropping the government must quickly find the best way forward to protect victims and ensure offenders are held to account. I certainly encourage the government, as I will be doing, to engage with stakeholders as these changes are implemented. Women in particular, men and all victims of sexual violence need to feel that they will be fairly heard, that they will be protected from retribution and that they will not be somehow pigeonholed to being a forever victim because they speak out and speak up. We need to hear them. We need a system that is responsive, that is trauma informed, that is fair and that is open.

Sexual violence has no place in Queensland. It has no place in our community. We must take measures to ensure that when someone is violated through sexual violence they feel free and able to come forward, that they will be heard, that they will be believed and that they are able to report this to police. The opposition certainly welcomes these changes, and I note the submission in particular made by DVConnect. I have engaged with broader parts of the sector myself and I know that it also welcomes these changes. I also want to acknowledge my colleague the member for Lockyer and the former member for Lockyer, who was in the gallery earlier. I also acknowledge Sarah and Peter Milosevic, who are in the gallery today.


What we have witnessed in this chamber—and over the last nine years—is what good legislators do, no matter from which side of the political divide they come. We have also witnessed what good parliamentarians deliver for their community and for the broader state of Queensland. I thank Jim McDonald for his service, not only to that incredible, beautiful family, but also to the families before this tragic circumstance and the families who we know will be impacted into the future.

The naming of an unborn child, as outlined in the amendments to the Criminal Code, in particular around the aggravating factor, have already been expanded on by many in this House. The complexity points to the time frame that it has taken. We know that change to legislation takes time. I hope Sarah and Peter can take a level of comfort in knowing that the loss of their beautiful Sophie was not in vain and that they have, through the loss of her life, given a great gift to many mothers and fathers who may experience the same loss. I acknowledge the respectful debate that has occurred and take this opportunity to say to members that this is, in fact, what Queenslanders expect of us as we come into this House.

 **Mr BROWN** (Capalaba—ALP) (2.51 pm): I rise in support of the Justice and Other Legislation Amendment Bill and to give a short contribution in relation to the aggravating factor of an unborn child. I acknowledge the presence of Sarah and Peter in the gallery today and all the work they have done with their local member, the member for Lockyer and the previous member for Lockyer, and also the work that the member for Lockyer has done in regard to the Field family and bringing them on board. They were involved in the tragedy at Alexandra Hills that caused the death of their unborn child Miles. Miles was always acknowledged, always reported on, always spoken of as someone who should be acknowledged by our law. I talked with the previous Attorney-General about these law changes and I

am glad that we are now at the second reading debate bringing them in. I believe that there should be an aggravating factor for the Milosevics and other families who are affected by these acts and I am glad to see it in this amendment, and also to see that Sophie and Miles continue to be acknowledged.

I am also appreciative that the legislation provides compensation around the funeral costs of these unborn children. It is that extra little step that can mean a whole lot for a family who do not want to be thinking about the cost of a funeral. I am glad that good, local advocacy across both sides of the chamber has led to the position that we are in now where we are bringing forward these laws. I cannot wait to see these laws brought in. Hopefully they are never used in the future, but I suspect they will be. The next family that goes through the heartache of suffering a criminal act that results in the death of an unborn child now have supports within our legal system in which their child is acknowledged first and foremost, that there is an aggravating factor tied to that criminal act and also support around funeral costs. I commend the bill to the House.


 **Mr HEAD** (Callide—LNP) (2.54 pm): We welcome the adoption of Sophie's Law with the passage of this bill to recognise unborn children who die due to criminal offences. We acknowledge the tireless campaigning of Sarah and Peter Milosevic who determined the tragic loss of Sophie nine years ago should not be forgotten but should lead to changes in legislation to recognise her. Their work included a petition calling for Sophie's Law that has been signed by over 135,000 people. They have met with ministers and MPs, including the good member for Lockyer, Jim McDonald, who championed their call for change and direct advocacy.

While it has been a long journey for Sarah and Peter in getting the government to introduce Sophie's Law, it is one we recognise as a tribute to Sophie and to see justice for other unborn babies who might meet a similar fate in the future. The bill does propose to better recognise the deaths of unborn children that have occurred due to criminal conduct. This amendment has been discussed in detail by the good member for Lockyer. I want to comment on his work in fighting for his community. We all come to this parliament to make change and fight for our communities and to see better outcomes for the state. It is great to see a member so passionate for his community, a member who has fought for something for so long who is finally seeing this day come along. For those who want to understand more about this story I recommend you listen to the speech of the member for Lockyer earlier today.

Also in the bill are some changes to postal voting. In the last state election 30 per cent of the 57,000 rejected votes could have been counted, which is about 17,000 votes. That is a huge number of votes that were essentially thrown out; that is people who were participating in our democratic process who missed the opportunity to have their say in their electorates. This is a change that we certainly welcome. We know how tight some elections can be and this could very well change the fate of governments into the future.

I note my disappointment in the language being used in regard to a birthing parent. They are mothers or mothers-to-be. Women have fought hard for their rights in this country and in this state and they are currently getting treated like second-class citizens in the electorate of Callide by the government because to date we still have no maternity services across 14 hospitals. If we want to look after women in Queensland, let us not change the definition of them, let us look after women all the way through.


This bill is an omnibus bill so there are 30 acts amended in the one bill. This limits the opportunity for feedback from stakeholders. There is a lot that we could have spoken about across the board on other aspects of the bill. I want to say just how powerful it would have been if Sophie's Law could have been a standalone bill. A lot more members in this House could have spoken about stories that are as powerful. There could have been more opportunity for it to be discussed and for it to see the light in the media et cetera. That said, I thank everyone for a very healthy debate, one that is genuine with a bipartisan approach. We commend the bill to the House.

 **Mrs GILBERT** (Mackay—ALP) (2.58 pm): The Justice and Other Legislation Amendment Bill, as other speakers have alluded to, has a wide range of miscellaneous amendments that strengthen and clarify our administration of justice. One key measure that this bill is delivering on is the Palaszczyk government's commitment to consider reforms to better recognise the deaths of unborn children as a result of criminal conduct. We know that the loss of an unborn child is devastating. I would like to put on record my acknowledgement of the work that the current and the former member for Lockyer have done. My heart goes out to those who have been touched in such a cruel way of losing a child to a criminal act, especially to Sarah and Peter who have been here today.

To lose an unborn child as the result of another person's criminal actions is profoundly distressing to the parents, the family and the whole community. The amendments within this bill will strengthen and recognise the loss of the unborn child and improve the support available to families, which is so important. The amendments do not displace the recognition of harm caused to the expectant mother as the primary victim of the criminal conduct, but they ensure independent recognition of the unique harm that is caused when the life of an unborn child is ended as a result of criminal conduct.

Importantly, the amendments do not affect the women's ability to obtain a lawful termination of pregnancy and do not displace the born-alive rule that deems legal personhood to apply when a child is born in a living state, independent of its mother. The amendments in this bill will 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 a criminal act. I support the bill.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Martin): 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 Attorney-General to reply to the second reading debate.

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence) (3.01 pm), in reply: At the outset I thank all members who have contributed to the debate of the Justice and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023. As indicated previously, this bill removes the restrictions that prohibit the identification of an adult defendant charged with a prescribed sexual offence prior to the finalisation of committal proceedings; enables better recognition of the deaths of unborn children as a result of criminal conduct; and clarifies, strengthens and updates 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.

Further, as foreshadowed during my second reading speech, I intend to introduce amendments during consideration in detail to fix a commencement date for part 9 of the bill, which amends the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences) Act 1978. This will ensure that the amendments commence in a timely way. I also intend to introduce amendments during consideration in detail of the bill relating to the Legal Profession Act 2007 to increase the abbreviated cost disclosure threshold in the bill from more than \$750 to more than \$1,500 and to clarify the meaning of 'client documents' under the new provision, allowing for the destruction of client files by law practices and its application to the Queensland Law Society.

Contrary to the rhetoric from the members for Clayfield, Currumbin and Scenic Rim, these amendments are not a backflip by the government. I remind those opposite, particularly the member for Scenic Rim, that it was not a single advocate who raised the issue of the abbreviated cost disclosure threshold, although they got lots of mention today. During the committee process, concerns were also expressed by the Queensland Law Society that the abbreviated disclosure requirement for legal costs of more than \$750 requires disclosure where none is currently required. In its response to submissions, the Department of Justice and Attorney-General indicated that the amendments would be further considered. As indicated in my second reading speech, in the intervening period my department consulted with the Legal Services Commission, which advised that the absence of a disclosure regime for matters under the current full disclosure threshold has not been an issue in practice. Accordingly, it is proposed to increase the abbreviated cost disclosure threshold to more than \$1,500, in line with these submissions.

I will now address some of the matters raised by honourable members during the course of the debate. This bill enables better recognition of the death of unborn children as a result of criminal conduct. I take this opportunity, as many have in this chamber, to acknowledge Sarah and Peter Milosevic, who are in the gallery today. Let us be clear: this bill will enact Sophie's Law. That is what this does. Because of Sarah's and Peter's advocacy, the amendments to the Criminal Code, the Penalties and Sentences Act 1992, the Youth Justice Act 1992 and the Victims of Crime Assistance Act 2009 will mean other families who experience the unimaginable tragedy of losing their unborn child because of criminal conduct can get justice. This is a bill for Sarah and Peter and, importantly, for Sophie Milosevic.

I want to thank the former member for Lockyer, Ian Rickuss; the current member for Lockyer, Jim McDonald; and the former attorney-general, Minister Fentiman, for their contributions to the bill. In particular, I acknowledge the work of the former attorney-general. I do thank her for finding a way

forward on this important issue. We are all grateful that we are here today finding a way forward and finding balance in what is quite a complex issue.

I reiterate Sarah's own words and will read them into the record a second time. She said—

The loss of Sophie broke me and broke my family there truly is not a day that we don't speak her name because she mattered. Because Sophie mattered and along with all the other babies before Sophie and after Sophie that died due to a person breaking the law this is for all the babies gone to soon.

This is her legacy and it's finally done. Sophie turned 9 on the 30th of August just passed. 9 years for fighting for the rights of unborn children. This is for Sophie for the legacy she could not leave herself.

For all the heart ache and pain for the love of our child. This law reform has brought peace to myself, my husband and our children. Peace in knowing the loss of her life wasn't for nothing that she counted, that Sophie mattered and that all babies matter.

Sophie counts and Sophie matters. I acknowledge the support of honourable members for these legislative reforms and the respectful debate that we have had on this issue.

I note during the debate that the member for Maiwar highlighted concerns raised by some stakeholders during the committee inquiry regarding terminology in the amendments, specifically the use of the term 'unborn child'. I note that there were divergent views from stakeholders, with some preferring the term 'fetus' and others the term 'unborn child'. I acknowledge that these events are highly emotive and that language is important. The use of the term 'unborn child' is used in this bill as it is the existing term in the Criminal Code. 'Fetus' is not currently used in the code. The use of the term 'unborn child' promotes a consistent interpretation of the legislation. Understanding the interpretation of the Criminal Code in applying these new provisions will be important.

I also note the concern of the honourable member that the statutory aggravating factor diminishes the discretion of the court. It is important to recognise that the sentencing court may currently consider the death of an unborn child as a result of criminal conduct in its consideration of the nature and seriousness of the offence and harm caused and, in all likelihood, currently treats the death of an unborn child as a result of criminal conduct as an aggravating factor in sentencing. The bill, however, enhances the consistency and transparency of this consideration for relevant serious offences while preserving the court's discretion to weigh all relevant factors and to not treat the death of an unborn child as an aggravating factor in exceptional circumstances and, importantly, extends the recognition of the unborn child in other areas, including statements by families, when it comes to sentencing.

The reforms to better recognise the death of an unborn child as a result of criminal conduct strikes the right balance between a range of competing elements in the criminal justice system. I want to be clear: simply because these amendments sit within a broader bill does not make it any less important or any less significant. This is a moment in time that we will remember and that Sophie's parents will remember. This is when we bring in Sophie's Law.

This bill is also for every woman and man who has experienced the horrors of sexual assault. The amendments to the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences) Act 1978 remove the restrictions that prohibit the identification of an adult defendant charged with a prescribed sexual offence prior to the finalisation of committal proceedings. I thank all those who have advocated for this change. To the victim-survivors of sexual violence I say this: your resilience and courage to speak up and seek justice is why we have made this reform.

To the women and men who have marched for change, to our sexual violence support organisations and to those who appeared during the committee process, the taskforce and the commissions of inquiry: thank you for advocating for change and providing a voice for those who could not. To all those who contributed to the Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce and the commission of inquiry into Queensland Police Service responses to domestic and family violence we say thank you. To every victim of sexual violence who has not been heard or believed, I say: we have heard you and we have acted.

I acknowledge the support of honourable members for these legislative reforms. Sadly, sexual violence remains one of the most unreported crimes in Australia. As many members indicated during the debate, the current restrictions perpetuate the myth that victim-survivors make up stories about sexual assault and rape. Anyone who holds that view has never experienced the justice system and the bravery it takes to come forward. With research showing that many in the community do not understand sexual violence and accept the stereotypes that accompany this violence, appropriate reporting of these cases is critical to bring these crimes out of the shadows. We know from our sexual violence support organisations that when sexual assault stories are reported in the media it can prompt

victim-survivors to disclose a previously unreported assault and seek the extra support they need. That is why the removal of restrictions will be accompanied by a media guide to ensure appropriate reporting on matters and support journalists in telling these important stories in a trauma informed manner.

The media guide supporting the amendments will be released late next week, before the commencement of the amendments on 3 October 2023. In developing the guide my department has consulted with the sexual violence sector including the Queensland Sexual Assault Network, the Sexual Violence Prevention Roundtable and the Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Council; media outlets and organisations including journalists who regularly report on police and court matters in both metropolitan and regional areas of the state; the Media, Entertainment and Arts Alliance and Women in Media Queensland; the legal profession including the Queensland Law Society, the Bar Association of Queensland, Legal Aid Queensland, the Queensland Sentencing Advisory Council and the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions; the First Nations Justice Officer; the interim Victims' Commissioner; key government agencies and program areas; and media organisations across the state. I am also advised by my department that a draft of the guide was provided to journalists from the ABC, Are Media, News Ltd, Nine Network, Seven News, Southern Cross Austereo, Ten News and the *Guardian* to ensure the final version of the guide is easy to understand and applicable to journalists' activities.

I note that the non-government members support these amendments; however, I would like to address comments made by some LNP members during the debate. When speaking to his support of the amendments, the member for Clayfield referenced a high-profile case currently before the courts. Let me be very clear: these amendments are not about any one single case; they are about removing current protections that perpetuate rape myths and bring Queensland into line with every other state in Australia. Also during the debate the member for Currumbin suggested that the media guide is the only check and balance on the amendments. It is not the only check and balance. The amendments do not affect the existing protections in the law that prohibit the naming of complainants. The amendments establish a non-publication regime so that the court can make an order prohibiting identifying information being published.

I note that the member for Scenic Rim spoke to concerns raised by the Queensland Law Society. The Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce noted in its report the longstanding position of the Queensland Law Society that the defendant's identity should be protected until the verdict for certain types of offences. On balance, the taskforce still recommended the lifting of the prohibition on publication. I note that the member for Gregory said that these reforms should be reviewed in the future for unintended consequences. Consistent with recommendation 186 of report 2, and as stated in my second reading speech, 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 have commenced. Consistent with the recommendations made by the taskforce, the Queensland government will continue to monitor the system-wide impacts and outcomes of the reform program.

I will now discuss the amendments to the Electoral Act 1992. I note that a number of members of the opposition, including the members for Currumbin, Scenic Rim, Surfers Paradise and Maroochydhore, have raised concerns that the changes to the time frames for the finalisation of electoral redistributions by the Queensland Redistribution Commission may result in a redistribution being finalised in the 60 days leading up to an election. On this point I note that section 35 of the Electoral Act 1992 provides for the deferral of a redistribution in certain circumstances. This section is unaffected by the amendments. It is not expected that a minor change to the time frames around the Queensland Redistribution Commission finalising the redistribution will significantly affect the time frames for redistribution as a whole.

Under section 35, where the last general election was an ordinary general election and the need for a redistribution was triggered more than 28 months after the writ for that election was returned, the commencement of the redistribution must be deferred until after the writ for the next general election is returned. This deferral mechanism ensures the electoral redistribution commission has a clear period of at least approximately 20 months in which to conduct a redistribution ahead of the next ordinary general election. This time frame recognises the need for electoral boundaries to be settled well in advance of an election, particularly given the need for the preselection of and community engagement by potential candidates. This amendment is not proposed because it suits the Labor Party agenda, as suggested by the member for Scenic Rim. As I indicated in my second reading speech, this amendment reflects the reality that there is increasing participation by stakeholders and the general public in the electoral redistribution process in Queensland, which this government welcomes. It will ensure

objections received and public comments thereon are meaningfully considered by the Queensland Redistribution Commission ahead of the redistribution being published.

I also note in some of the most recent debates to this bill that issues were raised by some members opposite around postal votes and the changes around postal votes. I believe the insinuation was that if these amendments had been made earlier fewer seats would have been won by Labor. There was particular mention by the member for Buderim that the results for the Bundaberg and Nicklin electorates could have been different. Let's be clear: if you are relying on changes on postal votes to win an electorate, you need to rethink your strategy. That is not the basis on which you should be hoping to win. To be clear, these changes have been recommended by the Electoral Commission. It has put these proposals together to ensure more votes are counted and are not discounted as a consequence of the mere error of putting the ballot outside the declaration envelope as opposed to inside when all other elements are met.

My last point concerns the commentary around omnibus bills. First of all, the term 'omnibus bill' is a colloquial term that we all use. It does not sit in any of the standing orders of the Legislative Assembly, the sessional orders, the Queensland Parliamentary Procedures Handbook or the Queensland Legislation Handbook—or the Australian *House of Representatives Practice*, for that matter. It is a term used to say that we have amendments to an act that often also amend other acts. It is pretty rare to be changing just one single act and to not have whatever the bill is 'and other legislation'. The more legislation that is attached to it, the more it is known as an omnibus bill.

The fact is: an omnibus bill is anything that goes beyond just the core bill and makes other amendments to other acts. This has been going on for many years. In fact, under that definition, there were 62 omnibus bills under the LNP. The member for Clayfield moved a number of those, although of course he was outdone by the member for Kawana, who introduced 20 omnibus bills in their fewer than three years. I really do not think those opposite can come in here and carry on about omnibus bills.

If we were to split amendments into single, individual bills and split each issue within the same piece of legislation into separate bills, the committee process would be so bogged down that we would not get through the work. We need to bring these amendments together, because many amendments on their own, although they are very significant, as the ones we are dealing with today are, are not so comprehensive in the physical amendments to bills to justify a standalone bill in many cases. That needs to be pointed out because of, to be honest, the rhetoric we heard at the start of this debate about this being an omnibus bill. This is an important bill. Putting aside the arguments around it being omnibus and the comments around electoral law, I really appreciate the respectful way in which the very significant issues in this bill have been dealt with.

We all feel deeply when it comes to the loss of an unborn child. None of us can put ourselves in the shoes of a parent who has lost an unborn child, particularly at the hands of a criminal act. We can sympathise, but we can never say we how they feel. What we can do is do what we are employed to do and elected to do, and that is to make good laws, make a difference and listen to the community. Although I am sorry it has taken so long, it is done. Thank you to Sarah and Peter and their beautiful daughter Sophie.

The member for Capalaba spoke about other parents as well. There are other parents who are sadly in this position. Sophie's parents, who are in the gallery, are doing this not just for Sophie but so there is justice in the future for other families. We truly hope that in the future there are not families who lose an unborn child due to a criminal act, but if there are then it's Sophie's legacy that will make sure they have justice, so thank you.

I thank all the sexual assault victims who were not believed over the years, who were ignored and dismissed, who were treated differently under the criminal justice system, particularly women coming forward and talking about sexual assault, because their trustworthiness was questioned. It is very hard for male sexual assault victims to come forward too. We hope that this makes it just that bit easier to come forward, to shine a light on sexual assault and to encourage other victims to come forward so they can heal and others can be held to account. I commend the bill to the House.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

Consideration in Detail

Clause 1, as read, agreed to.

Clause 2—



Mrs D'ATH (3.22 pm): I move the following amendments—

1 Clause 2 (Commencement)

Page 19, after line 6—

insert—

(1AA) Part 9 commences on 3 October 2023.

2 Clause 2 (Commencement)

Page 19, line 17—

omit.

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

Tabled paper: Justice and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023, explanatory notes to Hon. Yvette D'Ath's amendments [\[1327\]](#).

Tabled paper: Justice and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023, statement of compatibility with human rights contained in Hon. Yvette D'Ath's amendments [\[1328\]](#).

The amendments set a commencement date for part 9 which will give certainty to matters on foot as this applies to any matters on foot before the courts and matters coming before the courts. It will provide clarity for the media in particular but also for complainants and defendants in terms of what the media guide will be. As I say, it will be released by the end of next week. It has been widely consulted on and a draft circulated. I thank my department for the work they have done on that to make sure that we could put the commencement date into this bill through the amendments today and move forward with these important reforms.

Mr NICHOLLS: The LNP will support the amendment bringing forward the commencement date of part 9 of the bill. I want to make sure that the House and the record is clear on a couple of things. One is that, in her reply to the second reading debate in relation to this amendment, the Attorney made mention of my contribution and my reference to a high-profile case in Toowoomba. That was by way of example only and not saying that this was directly related to that. I want to be absolutely clear on that. I am very respectful of the separation between what this place does and what the courts do. I want to make it clear that it was not my intention and nor did I say that this was in response to that case. That was by way of example.

The second point is in relation to the guidelines. I made specific mention of those in my contribution to the second reading debate. The Attorney has just mentioned those as well. In my contribution I made the suggestion that it may be worthwhile tabling those guidelines in this place for the consideration of members as a courtesy to this place, noting that they now seem to have been consulted on wide and far and there would be very few people who would have an interest in them who would not know about them—other than the members in this place who may not have seen them. I reiterate to the Attorney that this may well have been a worthwhile consideration in terms of those guidelines because often members in this place are called upon to comment on things. It would benefit and guide members in this place to be aware of the media guidelines. They may wish to incorporate them into their comments in relation to matters that they are often called upon to comment on. Other than that, we support the amendment.

Mrs D'ATH: I thank the member for Clayfield for his comments. I want to make clear that I was not asserting that he was particularly referencing that case for any other reason other than an example, but I thought as the Attorney-General it was very important for me to clarify the intent of this legislation.

In relation to the media guide, I take the member for Clayfield's point. I believe that if I am going to table something in this House it should be the final version so that what is forever on the record and what we end up releasing and distributing for use by the media and the courts is accurate and we do not have two different versions out there to create any sort of doubt or confusion. Obviously, it will be publicly released. Everyone will be able to get access to that and look at it. I am more than happy when the parliament next sits to table the media guide in its final form.

Amendments agreed to.

Clause 2, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 3 to 108, as read, agreed to.

Clause 109—



Mrs D'ATH (3.26 pm): I move the following amendment—

3 Clause 109 (Amendment of s 300 (Definitions for pt 3.4))

Page 81, line 9, '\$750'—

omit, insert—

\$1,500

As I said in my second reading speech and also in my reply to the second reading debate, this amendment goes to lifting the threshold from \$750 to \$1,500 as was raised by the Queensland Law Society and others during the committee process. I ask that members endorse this amendment.

Mr NICHOLLS: The LNP will be supporting this amendment. We do so because it was a matter that was raised in the dissenting report by the LNP members on the committee. They raised in their dissenting report the genuine concern with regard to low fee arrangements for legal practices and the increasing compliance costs. I also note the report of the committee where the matter was raised again.

I raised in my contribution to the second reading debate the issue contained in the Queensland Law Society's submission and other submissions, but predominantly I raised the Law Society's concerns in relation to it, and the committee comment in relation to it. This is another example where committee comments and the dissenting report have proven to be the ultimate outcome adopted by the department. I am glad that the department has done so. It is important to acknowledge the contribution committee debate and dissenting reports make to the outcome because here we have that outcome being accepted and adopted.

Amendment agreed to.

Clause 109, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 110 to 117, as read, agreed to.

Clause 118—



Mrs D'ATH (3.29 pm): I move the following amendments—

4 Clause 118 (Insertion of new s 713A)

Page 87, after line 28—

insert—

(1A) For subsection (1), it does not matter whether the person entitled to the client document is or was a client of the law practice holding the document or of another law practice.

5 Clause 118 (Insertion of new s 713A)

Page 88, line 11, 'holds the document because'—

omit, insert—

is holding the document (for example, because

6 Clause 118 (Insertion of new s 713A)

Page 88, line 15, 'matter'—

omit, insert—

matter)

I will be brief as I have already addressed this in my second reading speech and in my speech in reply. This goes to the destruction of client documents and the criteria in which those documents can be destroyed and who they are held by including those in the possession of the Queensland Law Society.

Amendments agreed to.

Clause 118, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 119 to 247, as read, agreed to.

Schedule, as read, agreed to.

Third Reading



Hon. YM D'ATH (Redcliffe—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence) (3.30 pm): I move—

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

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a third time.

Long Title



Hon. YM D'ATH (Redcliffe—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence) (3.30 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.

WATER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Resumed from 25 May (see p. 1741), on motion of Mr Butcher—

That the bill be now read a second time.



Mr McDONALD (Lockyer—LNP) (3.31 pm): It is a pleasure to be able to speak on the Water Legislation Amendment Bill. I thank my committee members firstly for the way we approached this bill. I also thank the shadow minister, the member for Nanango, Deb Frecklington, for her contribution and consideration. I pay tribute to my fellow committee members: the members for Bancroft, Bundaberg, Ipswich West and particularly my colleague the member for Burleigh, who joined with me in issuing a statement of reservation. I must also pay tribute to our secretariat and thank them for the consideration in which they have assisted the inquiry.

Every time a bill is passed by this House it changes something and there is a cost. We certainly support the best use of water. In fact, water will be one of our greatest assets in the future. It is so scarce now, but it still does not have the appreciation that it should. It is taken for granted. In rural areas where water is used for agriculture and for producing food for the community it is something that we do appreciate. When this bill was introduced, we gave it a lot of consideration to make sure that we got the balance right.

We have tried to stress the importance of having practical and cost-effective measures to ensure the effective measurement of water. I appreciate that the department did say in answer to one of our questions during the inquiry that they would look at the areas of highest risk first. That means that they will be looking at the larger volume takers—those who use the most water. Fortunately, most of those large volume takers—in fact, I am not aware of one who does not—already have meters because they want to make sure that they are getting the best use of water, both in and out, and minimising evaporation.

Other smaller users have not had to use meters, but they use practical measures. They understand how big the dam is and they know how full it is after they pump overland flow in and capture water as it passes by. They know what their water take is without having to go to the expense of \$20,000 or \$30,000 in some cases for a meter. We certainly appreciate that the department have taken those issues on board. We do not want to see an imposition placed on people across the community. I stressed this to the department: 'Please don't place an imposition on the community in those areas that do not have meters at the present time. Use some practical approaches.' One of the instructions in the committee report is to have a water measurement plan for each farm that uses overland flow. That will be tailored differently to every farm. Again, it comes back to the important measure of cost when it comes to implementing this bill.

I do have a couple of concerns, particularly around the legislative changes or regulation of overland flow and how that could apply across the state without further consultation. Across the state there are properly made water resource plans. We have no problem seeing overland flow measured in those cases because most of the time it has already occurred and there has been consultation in those areas. If this legislation were to allow the government to require overland flow measurements right across the state without due consultation with the rural and farming communities who are affected, that would be very disappointing and would not be met with a great deal of appreciation by those communities.

Regional and farming communities are sceptical about government intervention at the best of times. If the government is going to have proper and meaningful consultation with those farmers, listen to them and put in place practical applications that I have just talked about in terms of practical ways to measure without going to the expense of meters, then we welcome that.

We are also concerned about the imposition of the measurement for stock and domestic take of water. I understand that our shadow minister is considering amendments in the space of both overland flow across the state and stock and domestic water. I welcome her contribution to that.

A couple of things were uncovered in the inquiry in terms of the learnings from both New South Wales and Victoria. We need to make sure that the right people are around the table on those water advisory boards to get the right advice and, again, to get practical applications in place so that this legislation works and is not just a cost imposition on our communities.


I note that generally this legislation puts in place federal requirements for the Murray-Darling Basin Plan. I must say that, if the ocean were on the New South Wales-Queensland border, we would not need this legislation. This is coming from the Murray-Darling catchment, and I think the South Australian and Victorians probably have a better deal than Queensland in this matter because it is considered on a federal basis. I cannot help but feel that in Queensland we are sometimes treated as the poorer cousin in these debates because the people down south think that we are actually taking a vast quantity of water, but that is just not the case. Perception, however, becomes reality and that is why we find ourselves faced with this imposition.

In our farming and rural communities across the state, including my home of Lockyer, farmers are very sensible about the measurement of water. They do not want to waste water at all. The cost of electricity, the cost of power, the cost of moving water—all of those things—are an impost on our farmers already. They do not want to see any water wasted. In fact, a very large percentage of farmers who may not be legislatively required to have meters on their farms actually do have them so that they understand how efficiently they are using water. In fact, through a water resources plan that was done in central Lockyer a few years ago now, some farmers realised that they could grow some crops with just over two megalitres per hectare where they were once applying nearly 10 megalitres per hectare. All farms are different, but I am talking about the same farm.

There is a lot of learning that can occur, and I am sure farmers right across the state are in a similar boat. Some have done it this way and that is the way they are going to continue, whereas there is a very large number of farmers out there who do innovate, who do make sure they get the best use of resources and who do not want to waste a single drop of water. I challenge the department to work with farmers.

I am concerned that the regulations as they stand may allow the capture and measure of overland flow to apply right across the state. That is a concern of mine, and I look forward to the minister providing some certainty that that will not occur unless there is a properly developed water resource plan with the community for that specific area. Once that water resource plan is put in place an allocation is attributed to that farm—for example, if it is four megalitres per hectare and there are 1,000 hectares then 4,000 megalitres of water are available as an entitlement. That is a capital asset of that farm. That is something the farmer can take to the bank and use as a capital asset on the farm in order to see other improvements on the farm. It is something that is tradeable but it is also a very large asset, and I know that in the central Lockyer it is a benefit they have enjoyed.

I would stress again that any measure of overland flow across the state must have a water resource plan so that entitlements are allocated through proper consultation and it is an asset for the farming community. Our good farmers will work with government; they will work with people. That fear of government can be put aside and we can produce a better outcome for all.

 **Mr WHITING** (Bancroft—ALP) (3.41 pm): I am pleased to rise to speak in support of this bill. I will address a couple of the issues the member for Lockyer raised. Clearly cost is always a big issue, and during the inquiry submitters were very clear in expressing their desire to see costs reduced. I would point out that there is \$22 million in federal funding available to put in telemetry, and that is important. Obviously it is expensive to do this, but it is clear there is a good amount of money on the table. In addition, I want to read out a comment from the committee report relating to that cost. It states—

We also note that several policy initiatives have been adopted to reduce the costs for water users such as applying exemptions to small-volume water users; allowing existing meters to continue to be used if they are appropriate; using non-pattern approved meters if there is a lack of pattern-approved meters available; and applying these requirements in accordance with the department's risk-based approach.

The report further states—

While we note the efforts made to reduce costs for water users, we have recommended that the department continue to monitor ...


I think they are important initiatives to keep in mind when we talk about this bill and how we will smooth out the path of costs.

In relation to the issue of measuring overland flow, the committee did ask a number of times where this applies. It was very clear that the bill before us is for the Murray-Darling Basin. This is probably a very important thing. The member for Lockyer mentioned whether it applies to the state, but that would be a different kettle of fish. This bill relates to the Murray-Darling Basin, and that is because we have signed national commitments that need to be enacted by 2025 in relation to measuring the water take or measuring the water in this particular basin.

In many ways this bill is about the measurement of water. The committee found there is generally an acceptance that it has to be measured. Everyone agrees that water needs to be better managed and there is a growing acceptance of the role of telemetry. Telemetry is the key to measuring water take. One of the old ways to measure water was via meter. Someone would have to make a trip out to the meter, physically read it and report back. Telemetry can send out a signal. It does not have to be constant, but whenever a Landsat passes over it can send out a signal. It does not have to be in constant wi-fi communication. Telemetry has been increasingly accepted as the best way to measure water in this particular area, and we have to adopt all of those measures to make sure it is widely accepted.

There are a couple of other things I want to say. The committee congratulated the Water Engagement Forum, which is a great body that has worked for many years on this particular issue. We want to congratulate them on their work. We also want to congratulate both state and federal governments for funding telemetry measurement. The committee could very clearly see that the aim of this bill is to build a clear and transparent regulatory framework, and that is what we need to do. Whether it is surface or underground water, we need to measure how much water is being taken. Everyone agrees on the need to manage this resource and make sure we accurately measure water.

We have all agreed that what we pointed out in this bill is the best way to go. It is where we want to go because, as we have often heard before, you cannot manage what you cannot measure. This bill provides a good start on measuring this very precious resource and how it is used. It is timely that we bring this bill in. It is very clear that the state government has committed to be part of the national measures, to which we have all committed, to accurately measure the water taken out of the Murray-Darling Basin. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr KATTER** (Traeger—KAP) (3.46 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the Water Legislation Amendment Bill. I will start by saying that I have developed a mistrust of the government on anything to do with natural resources. It starts innocently enough with everyone trying to conserve water and measure it, but then in the next few years we will have to defend a new pricing regime in a water catchment area. That has been my experience in this place. You can cut and paste the issue but it happens time and time again, so my level of distrust runs very high for the sorts of changes that are proposed. They seem pretty innocent up-front and everyone seems to agree, but it gets masked and cloaked as, 'Let's just do this properly and have scrutiny,' as we have been doing with a number of issues right now.

In relation to the Flinders River in particular, I flew over the Flinders during the 2019 floods. At about 5,000 feet in a small single-engine aircraft for about 30 kilometres each way you could just see pure water. I had never seen anything like it in my life. I did that for about an hour and a half and then I went and checked the Excel spreadsheet for the average annual flows for the last 30 or 40 years. I must say that after discussions with certain local governments and departmental people there was a considerable amount of doubt about the records that are held. There are difficulties and challenges in tracking that water. Then down the track you are told, 'We're using average annual flows as the basis for allocations for irrigation because we're doing this measuring and it's all been done in this respect.' Again the level of distrust in the integrity of some of that data is questionable, so when we are talking about overland flows—which I have moved on to now—I have a high level of distrust.

I will share an anecdote I heard recently. Ashley Gallagher, whose family has been in Normanton for generations, had the water department come and talk to him and the council. They mentioned a figure in relation to the flow they would have down the Flinders River in one year—the same river—which he immediately questioned. He went home and checked the records on the station they have been maintaining for some 70 years or more. He said that based on what he saw go over the weir—it is quite easy to estimate the volume once you go over the weir in Normanton—that number you gave us for the flow is just so inaccurate. The guy from the water department was caught red-handed with highly inaccurate figures and he responded, 'Well, that was what the modelling told us.' When we are measuring stream flows, you can forgive me for thinking that in five or 10 years we will be told, 'This is what the modelling tells us. You're going to have to cut back here. We're measuring you now and you're

going to have to cut back.' None of this seems to end up with more water going to anyone or there being any benefit to downstream users. It always ends up with, 'We're going to scrutinise this and watch it a bit closer.'

I will add my distrust with how the utilities are operating on top of that. They are no longer concentrating on enabling farming or agricultural use of the water. They are more focused on profit motivations that are built into the policy via the charter of operations they are given by the government of the day. It provides these perverse outcomes on the other end as well, like Lake Julius in my patch where Sunwater are greedily holding on to all of this water. That dam was built and half paid for by the mines to enable more mining development in the region, and it is literally now constraining mining by means of its operation. When you are saying, 'We've got to meter more things and we've got to do more overland flow,' I am sorry but I do not buy it. I do not trust the way governments have been doing this for years. I am very wary of this sort of legislation. Where I come from, more scrutiny from the government is usually not a good thing.



Mr MADDEN (Ipswich West—ALP) (3.50 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Water Legislation Amendment Bill 2022. The bill amends the South-East Queensland Water (Distribution and Retail Restructuring) Act 2009, the Water Act 2000 and the Water Supply (Safety and Reliability) Act 2008 to improve the operational efficiency of these acts. Water security is the key to the prosperity of the Queensland economy. The Water Legislation Amendment Bill 2022 delivers a key milestone in this government's commitment to improve water management and ensures regulatory frameworks remain effective.

The bill amends the Water Act 2000 to implement Queensland's strengthened non-urban measurement policy. The primary aim of this bill is to establish a clear and transparent framework for implementing Queensland's strengthened non-urban water measurement policy. Communities right across Queensland have benefited from the Palaszczuk government's water reforms, particularly by the funding provided in the government's 2022-23 budget. That delivered more than \$510 million for water infrastructure and planning to drive jobs and better services in Queensland.

More than \$447 million was set aside for water security projects, which builds on the Palaszczuk government's record investment in water infrastructure since coming to government in 2015. More than \$300 million has been committed to deliver the Toowoomba to Warwick pipeline project to provide drought contingency for Warwick and surrounding communities, including Stanthorpe, and a permanent water supply to Toowoomba's satellite communities.

In the state's Far North, \$107.5 million over two years was committed to shore up stage 1 of the Cairns Water Security Program to support the growing needs of the Far North. There was \$40.4 million over three years allocated for the construction of a drinking water pipeline from Gracemere to Mount Morgan, as well as necessary water infrastructure upgrades at Gracemere. The Lansdown Eco-Industrial Precinct includes a reservoir and 13 kilometres of pipeline connecting the precinct and pump station to the Haughton pipeline, connecting the Burdekin Dam to the Ross River Dam in Townsville. Further west, the Hughenden community benefited from funding of \$25.6 million for the development of the Flinders Shire Council's Hughenden Water Bank project. This is a 7,000 megalitre off-stream water storage and distribution system facility to support development and expansion of irrigated agriculture and industry development.

At Ilfracombe near Longreach, in 2018 the state and federal governments worked together with the Longreach Regional Council to provide water security for the Ilfracombe community. With state government funding, a new bore was constructed in 2018 to replace an older council bore which had corroded casing. As well, a reverse osmosis plant was installed by the council with funding from the federal government to address the groundwater quality issues of high fluoride and salinity. The water is then mixed with water drawn from Shannon Dam during the treatment process to make it drinkable for the residents of Ilfracombe.

The Palaszczuk government will continue to support regional communities because we know water is critical to jobs, growth and livability in these regions. The highly successful Building our Regions round 6, which had funding of \$39 million allocated in the 2022-23 budget, provided support for regional communities with urban water supply and water treatment infrastructure. Through Building our Regions, we are empowering Queensland councils to make their regions the best they can be. Improved water services are so important for the livability of our regions.

The Cloncurry community service obligation payments will continue, with almost \$28 million over four years to subsidise the delivery of water to the Cloncurry Shire Council via the North-West Queensland pipeline. Stage 2 of the Rural Water Futures program has also received \$9.3 million in

funding over two years to ensure the state's precious water resources are managed sustainably into the future and to deliver tangible benefits to irrigators, the environment and the community more broadly.

The bill provides that measurement plans will be required for overland flow water licences in the Queensland Murray-Darling Basin. Irrigators with overland flow water licences in the Murray-Darling Basin are supportive of this measurement approach because they know better than most how precious water resources are. Measurement plans will detail how water take is measured on farm and provide more accurate information about the amount of overland flow and the water taken in these catchments so its impact on river flows and water availability for other users can be better understood and managed more effectively.

In closing, I note that in its report tabled in December 2022, the committee I serve on—the State Development and Regional Industries Committee—recommended that the bill be passed. I thank my fellow members of the committee, the committee secretariat, Hansard and the submitters. I commend the bill to the House as well as the amendments proposed by the Minister for Water.

Debate, on motion of Mr Madden, adjourned.

MOTIONS

Suspension of Standing Orders



Hon. YM D'ATH (Redcliffe—ALP) (Leader of the House) (3.56 pm), by leave, without notice: I move—

That, notwithstanding anything contained in standing and sessional orders:

the Minister for Health, Mental Health and Ambulance Services and Minister for Women be permitted to immediately move a motion without notice regarding Queensland's health system with the following time limits to apply—

- 5 minutes for all members
- with the question being put after no more than an hour.

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

AYES, 54:

ALP, 50—Bailey, Boyd, Brown, Bush, Butcher, Crawford, D'Ath, de Brenni, Dick, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Furner, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Healy, Hinchliffe, Howard, Hunt, 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, Smith, Stewart, Sullivan, Tantari, Walker, Whiting.

KAP, 2—Katter, Knuth.

PHON, 1—Andrew.

Ind, 1—Bolton.

NOES, 35:

LNP, 33—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, Robinson, Rowan, Simpson, Stevens, Watts, Weir.

Grn, 2—Berkman, MacMahon.

Pair: Skelton, Purdie.

Resolved in the affirmative.

Health Workers



Hon. SM FENTIMAN (Waterford—ALP) (Minister for Health, Mental Health and Ambulance Services and Minister for Women) (4.02 pm): I move—

That this House:

1. supports and thanks Queensland's hardworking frontline health workers for the care they provide our community
2. condemns the LNP's plan to slash the pay and conditions of Queensland's hardworking health workers
3. condemns the member for Burnett's public comments attacking the pay and conditions of health workers, where he stated 'it's time we broke the back of unrealistic employee entitlements'
4. condemns the member for Mudgeeraba's refusal to apologise—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Members, I generally find that if we are going to have a debate, it is good to listen to the motion. I am having trouble hearing it. I am sure Hansard is as well. I will start warning people. I call the minister to continue reading the motion.

Ms FENTIMAN: I continue—

4. condemns the member for Mudgeeraba's refusal to apologise for labelling Queensland Health staff in regional Queensland as 'duds'

Mr O'Connor interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member for Bonney is warned.

Ms FENTIMAN: And—

5. notes the savage cuts inflicted on Queensland's health system by the Newman LNP government and member for Broadwater, including:
 - (a) sacking more than 4,400 health workers, including 1,800 nurses and midwives
 - (b) cutting \$1.6 billion from the Queensland Health budget
 - (c) closing hospital beds across Queensland
 - (d) removing \$120 million in funding to Queensland Health community organisations
 - (e) closing the Barrett Adolescent Centre
 - (f) crippling the public hospital system by trying to force unreasonable working conditions on doctors.

Mr POWELL: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I believe that there are a number of statements made by the member for Waterford in that motion where she is deliberately misleading the House, and I will be writing to you to refer those matters for consideration.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! It is not a point of order. You can take action in relation to allegations of misleading the House.

Ms FENTIMAN: If Queenslanders ever needed a reminder of the values and the views that those opposite hold about our frontline health workers, the member for Burnett let it slip late on a Monday night on his social media, arguing with constituents, grandmothers in his community. Let's not forget that he said 'it's time we broke the back of unrealistic employee entitlements'. This is the pay and conditions of our nurses, our midwives and our doctors. It is the pay they take home while they are hard at work looking after us, away from their own families. It is their annual leave. It is their leave to have young children, their parental leave. It is their sick leave because God knows occasionally our health workers get sick looking after us. It is absolutely outrageous that the member for Burnett can get away with saying 'it's time we broke the back of unrealistic employee entitlements'.

Today the Leader of the Opposition absolutely must stand up and apologise—stand up and apologise to the nurses and doctors in Wide Bay. In fact, all of the health workers in this state deserve an apology, but I will not hold my breath on an apology from the Leader of the Opposition. He still has not apologised for sacking so many thousands of health workers when he sat around the cabinet table with his mentor, Campbell Newman. He still has not apologised.

Secondly, the Leader of the Opposition today must absolutely condemn the member for Burnett's comments and rule out—come on, today—absolutely rule out slashing their pay and conditions. I am sorry, the member for Broadwater today said he was 'disappointed'. I think he was disappointed the member for Burnett let the plan slip before the election. That is what he was disappointed about. It is absolutely necessary for the Leader of the Opposition to rule it out today.

Thirdly, the member for Broadwater should absolutely stand aside the member for Burnett as an assistant minister. It is absolutely outrageous that the member for Broadwater's hand-picked shadow assistant minister—

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, members!

Ms FENTIMAN: But it is not just the member for Burnett clearly who holds these views. It is absolutely every single one of them. It is the member for Broadwater, it is the member for Kawana and, don't worry, member for Mudgeeraba, we all remember how you called our regional health workers duds and absolutely will not apologise. We absolutely know that their values and their views about our healthcare workers is that there are too many of them and they are overpaid, because that is what they did the last time they were in government, and it is the secret plan they have now if they are elected. We know they do not support our mental health levy. They will cut absolutely our satellite hospitals, and they will cut the pay and conditions of our frontline health workers.

Mr BLEIJIE: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. Now having read the motion, I bring to your attention item 2 of the motion. I would ask you, Mr Deputy Speaker, to have the minister to authenticate the claim because the Leader of the Opposition has done a press conference after question time today, the shadow minister for health has issued a statement clearly saying what the minister has said and put out in a statement was misleading and incorrect, and the motion condemns the LNP's plan which has been categorically denied by the Leader of the Opposition. As you have ruled on many occasions about authentication, if the minister cannot authenticate an LNP policy on that, I would ask the motion to be ruled out of order, or at least that provision of the motion.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I will take some advice in silence. Minister, are you able to authenticate the facts in relation to the second point of your motion?

Ms FENTIMAN: Point 2 condemns the LNP's plan to slash pay and conditions. I tabled earlier today during question time, a Facebook post—

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I would like to hear the minister's response.

Ms FENTIMAN:—which clearly outlines a shadow assistant minister from the LNP who says health workers are getting overpaid. I would ask the opposition to have a look at the Facebook post that I tabled. It was even laminated to make it nice and easy for them.


Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, minister. To the facts, please. I ask the House—

Mr Crisafulli interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Leader of the Opposition, I am going to take some advice. I ask the House to maintain decorum while I do that.

Mr BLEIJIE: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. There is a precedent for this and, in fact, you may have been in the chair. I asked a question in question time about a statement the Olympics CEO had raised. A clarifying statement had been issued since that announcement and then I was asked to change my question based on the statement that had been issued by the CEO of Olympics Australia. A statement has now been issued by the shadow health minister and made publicly by the Leader of the Opposition and that gets to my point on the first point.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you for that. We will take that into consideration. Members, we will continue with the debate. However, I would ask both the minister and the member for Kawana as the person rising on the point of order to provide information to the Speaker that supports your various views. Then we will reserve our decision in relation to this matter.

 **Mr CRISAFULLI** (Broadwater—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (4.11 pm): In relation to what has just transpired from the health minister, if that was an audition to be leader of the left, that was miles away from the sort of contribution that would be expected. If the minister is not even nimble enough to be able to change a point after what she said has been completely kicked out, does it not show honourable members that she is barely up to the job she has, let alone the one she wants?

The health minister is going to rue what she has put in writing because, quite frankly, it is wrong. I will explain how wrong it is. Not only have I called out the member for Burnett's statement as disappointing, I have explained—

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Order, members.

Mr Brown: Pretty soft language.

Mr CRISAFULLI: Oh my goodness, I just got an interjection from the member for Capalaba, who said that was soft language. Mate, I will tell you about soft language.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Pause the clock.

Mr CRISAFULLI: I withdraw.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. All comments will come through the chair and will use correct parliamentary titles.

Mr CRISAFULLI: I spent half an hour with the constituents of the member for Capalaba, who were in tears because of what he said about the crime they are going through, the living hell they have to put up with. For the member for Capalaba to not have had one ounce of consequence for what he said just proves he will keep doing it. I go back to the motion and why it is so wrong.

Not only do our nurses, our doctors, our allied health professionals earn and deserve every cent they get, they deserve more. I will tell honourable members why they deserve more. Under this government they are treated like punching bags. Under this government they get text messages telling them they have to do another shift because the system is so broken. Under this government they have no provision to be listened to, to be heard, to be empowered. Not only do I commit to making sure they are properly paid; we commit that their pay will increase and their conditions will be so much better than they are experiencing now.

Now let me contrast my response with the response of the Premier. Not only did I publicly say I expressed my disappointment and ensured that the minister knew what she is saying is factually incorrect, I addressed it directly with the member. In contrast, I ask: since the Premier came back from her break, has the Premier spoken to the member for Capalaba and called him out? I reckon the answer is no. Since the Premier found out about the \$2.4 billion cover-up, has there been any consequences for the member for Miller? I bet the answer is no. This is a government—

Mr Minnikin interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member for Chatsworth will cease his interjections.

Mrs D'ATH: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The point of order is relevance. I ask that the member be brought back to—


Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I will hear the point of order in silence.

Mrs D'ATH:—the motion, which is specifically about health.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I will take some advice in relation to that. Members, there is no point of order. Item No. 3 of the motion draws attention to the member for Burnett's public comments. I think there is a section in the motion that refers to the Leader of the Opposition's involvement; I would have to read it more carefully. Effectively, the Leader of the Opposition is simply comparing and contrasting approaches to issues that might be construed to be broadly similar, so it is relevant to the debate.

Mr CRISAFULLI: It has not been a very good week for the member for Waterford, who has been called out as the leaker and is now embarrassed on the second point of the motion. In a week when this government has proven to be at war with itself, in a week when it was refusing to even admit that Queensland Health and youth crime is in crisis in this state, what does the minister responsible for soaring ambulance ramping and releasing less data than the previous minister do? Rather than say, 'Can we have an hour to debate ways that people can respect and value our frontline staff, properly resource them and make sure that we can heal the crisis?', what does she do? In order to try to put on an audition for the backbench, which now includes the member for Woodridge, in order to try to salvage something in this wave of misery that is a government in its third term that is rotting before Queenslanders, that is seeking 14 years in office despite crises in every form of frontline delivery, despite the chaos, despite the crisis, despite every challenge facing hardworking doctors and nurses in their workforce, rather than come in and value and empower them, a government at war with themselves is auditioning for a job. It is saying things that are untrue and is proving its members will never heal the Queensland Health crisis.

 **Mr SMITH** (Bundaberg—ALP) (4.17 pm): At the end of the 2020 election the LNP picked their opposition front bench and their shadow assistant ministry. The Leader of the Opposition hand-picked the member for Burnett to be the shadow assistant minister for his own portfolio. The member for Burnett was a captain's pick to represent the Leader of the Opposition in his portfolio, to represent him at official functions, to represent LNP policy and LNP principles. It was a captain's pick.

Mr Crisafulli interjected.

Ms Grace interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): The member for Broadwater and the member for McConnel will cease their quarrelling across the chamber.

Mr SMITH: What have we seen today? We have seen the captain's pick let slip the LNP's secret plan to cut the wages and entitlements and potentially sack health workers right across the state of Queensland. The captain's pick, the one who was hand chosen by the golden boy himself, has let slip the secret plan to march nurses out the door. There is only one solution. If the LNP want to claim any credibility, the member for Burnett must be sacked, not just as the shadow assistant minister; he must be sacked from the LNP. If the member for Burnett is not sacked, we know that the nurses of Queensland will be sacked. That is for sure. If the LNP keep the member for Burnett in their party—

Mr Head interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, member for Callide.

Mr SMITH: If the member for Burnett is not sacked by the LNP, it means that nurses will be sacked by the LNP. That is exactly what it means. Let's look at what the member for Burnett said to a grandmother—

Mr Head interjected.


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

Mr SMITH:—who has fought the good fight for workers across the Bundaberg region during her time. He said 'it's time we broke the back of unrealistic employee entitlements'. It is time to break the back of fair pay for a fair day's work, according to the member for Burnett and, therefore, the whole LNP party room. It is time that the back was broken of wages and entitlements—parental leave, mental health leave, domestic and family violence leave, safe ratios to have safe patients—according to the member for Burnett. In the screenshot he talks about union dominance, denial and false reality. Apparently all of our health workers—our hardworking frontline heroes—are living in a false reality if they think they should be allowed to have a fair wage for a fair day's work.

They should be entitled to everything they fought hard for in a legally binding enterprise bargaining agreement. According to the LNP, that is a false reality. Do not worry: the member for Burnett is going to break the back of the workers. It goes even further. We see in a Facebook conversation with a grandmother 'WTF' and then 'shame on you'. They are the words he said to a grandmother in Bundaberg who disagrees with him saying that we should break the back of union dominance. I am sorry, but I think the members of the Queensland Nurses and Midwives' Union and all of those on medical ward 3, who were accused by the member for Burnett of deliberately overdosing and killing patients, might have something to say about that.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Member for Bundaberg, even when quoting it is not appropriate to use unparliamentary language. I ask you to withdraw.

Mr SMITH: I withdraw. Let's remind ourselves: last year the member for Burnett stood in front of the cameras and said that he had evidence that nurses in Bundaberg were deliberately overdosing patients, causing their death. What a disgrace. He said that. He said it on record. It is in the paper, it is online and it is on TV. An independent inquiry proved that no patient was harmed because of an overdose by nurses in the Bundaberg Hospital, yet he claimed he had the evidence. When I challenged him to go to the police with that evidence, he did not go. Instead, he stood up in front of a camera and shamed all of the nurses in Bundaberg—the same nurses whose backs he wants to break when it comes to their entitlements and wages. The LNP need to sack the member for Burnett. If they do not, it proves that the LNP will sack our nurses.

 **Ms BATES** (Mudgeeraba—LNP) (4.23 pm): If that is the minister's audition for premier, to gee up the backbench, it did not work. The minister can thank her colleagues—the Deputy Premier and the Treasurer—who threw her under the bus to make sure she never becomes the premier. We all know that it takes more to run Queensland Health than swanning around the state, taking soft portrait mode photos with the Deputy Premier's professional photographer, to heal the Queensland health crisis. We know that the minister is barely up to this job, but she is already auditioning for the next job. Make no mistake: the member for Waterford learned her trade at the knees of Jackie Trad. I am not going to get in the gutter with the member for Waterford, because the member for Waterford would beat me with experience every day of the week. Let's talk about some of the issues in the motion.

Ms Fentiman interjected.

Ms BATES: I do, and the LNP supports and thanks the Queensland Health frontline workers. I have family members who are frontline workers. I have family members who are doing triple shifts. I have family members who were doing that before COVID. They are exhausted, and the minister is out of touch if she does not realise that. Let's go to some of the other issues in this motion. We will talk about—

Ms Pease interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Order, member for Lytton.

Ms BATES:—Queensland Health staff. Let's just say how misleading this is. The minister knows it, and the former minister knows it, because I put out a media statement on 27 October headed 'Desperate D'Ath misleads parliament'. It states—

The embattled health minister has deliberately and disgracefully misrepresented me in parliament. The health minister admitted today that the Palaszczuk Labor government knowingly employs doctors in regional Queensland who have had restrictions on their registrations in other states. Remember Dr Jayant Patel? I am not okay with doctors who are chased out of other states being rolled out the welcome mat in regional Queensland.

My comments were in response to a question to the Labor government regarding suspended Mackay urologist Dr Daryl Stephens. The Labor government has no respect for regional hospitals, health workers or communities. Our regional health workers are heroes and the only dud is the former health minister, who must go. Queenslanders deserve so much more than a desperate health minister out of her depth. That was your first one.

Obviously you need to get your media team to check what is going on Twitter, because you obviously missed the memo. I will read it out to you, Minister.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Comments will come through the chair.

Ms BATES: I will read the letter to the minister personally in case she missed it. It states—

Dear Shannon Fentiman,

Your media release is totally and utterly incorrect. It is deliberately misleading and you know that.

The Opposition has categorically promised doctors, nurses and midwives pay and conditions will improve under an LNP Government.

You have already personally been informed of this.

Dr MacMahon: This is embarrassing. Oh, my God!

Ms BATES: Keep yelling, member for South Brisbane. You will probably both be on Karl tomorrow as well. It continues—

The LNP has continually affirmed our support for our hardworking doctors, nurses and midwives who are struggling under the chaos and crisis of your Labor Government.

Despite knowing this you have issued a highly misleading media release.

I encourage you, in the name of integrity, to withdraw your media release given you issued it knowing your statements were categorically untrue.

I suggest you spend more time fixing the Queensland Health Crisis that you are overseeing and less time leaking to the media against Premier Palaszczuk because you want her job.

Your desperate attempts to spread fear and distract from your own failings are quickly becoming your calling card.

For the sake of Queenslanders who rely on our health system, please concentrate on the job you have.

Kind regards,

Ros Bates, RN MP.


We know the chaos and crisis that has been caused by this Labor government.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Apologies, member. I was having difficulties hearing you over the interjections from both your own side and the government side.

Ms BATES: We know that the chaos and crisis has been under a long-term Labor government. We have seen failed health minister after failed health minister and now we have Queensland's worst ever child safety minister auditioning to be the next premier of this state. Minister, do the job that you have been employed to do and fix the health crisis that you have caused.

(Time expired)

 **Mr HEALY** (Cairns—ALP) (4.28 pm): I rise to support the motion, which will not come as a surprise to anybody. I begin by taking the liberty of suggesting that the member for Burnett possibly needs to spend less time online and more time speaking to frontline workers. I also make a personal observation. I have never seen the current leader of the LNP so animated. There are no greater examples that the truth does hurt. This continues the behaviour we are seeing all too frequently from those opposite, and the people of Queensland will see more of it as we get closer to next year's election. We hear from the member for Burnett that he wants to break the back of unrealistic employee entitlements.

The health workers in my community do not forget when the LNP cut 430 frontline health positions: 306 health jobs were lost in the Cairns and Hinterland Hospital and Health Service, including 48 nurses and midwives; some 96 people lost their jobs in the Cape York health service, including 22 nurses and midwife positions; and 37 health jobs were lost from the Torres Strait, including 13 nurses and midwives. That is the legacy that you have in Cairns and its surrounds, and these are the same people—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Direct your comments through the chair, please.

Mr HEALY: These are the same people that the member for Mudgeeraba called ‘duds’. Seriously! What sort of respect can people have out there? We can see that the intentions are slowly starting to creep out. Regional workers are the backbone of communities like mine, and that is why I am proud to be part of a government that has delivered 1,264 extra frontline health staff to Cairns since coming to government, including 288 doctors, a 64 per cent increase; 720 nurses and midwives, a 36.9 per cent increase; 192 health professionals, a 37 per cent increase; and 64 ambulance operatives, a 20 per cent increase, and this is only the beginning.


Our government is doing the work to attract and retain our regional health workforce. The Palaszczuk government workforce attraction scheme is already working, and who would not want to move to Queensland? We are making it a lot easier. Our economy is booming. We are in a far better state and enviable position than New South Wales and Victoria. Health workers interstate and overseas are already moving to our part of the world. Nurses can be eligible for up to \$20,000 if they come and work for Queensland Health. If you are a nurse, a midwife, an allied health professional, an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health worker, a dentist, an oral health practitioner or even a scientific officer, we want you. They will get \$10,000 when they start and a further \$10,000 once they have completed 12 months. Doctors who make the decision to take up a job in regional and remote areas will be paid up to an additional \$70,000.

Let us compare that to what those opposite invested in the Cairns health workforce when they were in power—nothing, not one cent. If all of that does not want to make someone move here, we have the best working conditions and we have the best entitlements across the nation. As I said earlier, people are moving to Queensland because of it. It was not enough to sack 430 frontline workers from Far North Queensland; they then cut \$120 million from community health programs in the north where they are essential. That is absolutely despicable. That is a drop in the ocean from the \$1.6 billion they cut from the health budget statewide.

The member for Burnett is only reinforcing what the member for Chatsworth has already talked about. He has identified billions of dollars to take out of our economy. The member for Burnett is now identifying benefits and taking them from workers. Nothing has changed with this mob across the aisle here. They are exactly the same. The simple fact of the matter is that the LNP is not only a risk to health but a risk to everything that we stand for. Our economy is doing well. It will threaten that. Our businesses are doing well. We recovered so well from a major pandemic, yet we see nothing from the other side. Those opposite will not give any indication. The people of Queensland are seeing little inklings with a little post here and a little statement there. That is where you are coming from and that is what you are about because that is in your DNA. You know no better.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Through the chair, please.

Mr HEALY: We are about building economies and building futures, not pulling them down for the economic benefit of offshore companies.

 **Dr ROWAN** (Moggill—LNP) (4.33 pm): I rise to address the motion as moved by the health minister, the member for Waterford. I move the following amendment—

That all words after ‘community’ be omitted.

If we look at the motion, the first part says—

supports and thanks Queensland’s hardworking frontline health workers for the care they provide our community

Everyone in this House supports all of our frontline clinicians—doctors, nurses and allied health professionals. They have done terrific work throughout the COVID-19 pandemic and they do terrific work each and every day in our state hospital systems and it is very important that we do recognise them. Let us call out this motion for what it is: it is misleading and deceptive when we look at the other parts of the motion. We already know, as has been stated by the Leader of the Opposition and the shadow health minister, that there has been a press conference and statements issued refuting what is contained within this motion.

The Labor Party is doing this because it is always about smoke and mirrors. When the going gets tough for Labor, it is always about trying to move motions and not look at its track record as to what is happening in Queensland in relation to our hospital and health system. Ambulance ramping is at 45 per cent—the highest of any state jurisdiction right across Australia, and in some places it is even worse. There have been clinical governance failures occurring at places like Caboolture and Mackay Hospital. There are rural maternity service issues when it comes to Chinchilla and Cooktown and other rural maternity services are under pressure, and this Labor government has failed to address those. The Gladstone maternity bypass had been occurring for over a year before it was restored, but it is still under pressure.

There has been no proper health workforce planning. This government has done nothing when it comes to factoring for the future in terms of the number of doctors, nurses and allied health professionals that we are going to need, let alone adequately planning the bed numbers right across Queensland. It talks about satellite hospitals, but even patients themselves are turning up to the satellite hospitals and saying that they are misleading because the services that they thought they would get at satellite hospitals they are not getting. They think they are going to turn up and get emergency care through an emergency department and it is simply not there, and it is not the opposition that is saying that; it is the patients and the public who are turning up to these facilities. Look at the newspaper today in relation to the number of tier 3 hospital declarations right across Queensland.

Ms Fentiman interjected.


Dr ROWAN: The health minister interjects, but what the health minister should be doing is looking at those tier 3 declarations and fixing them for patients, because what it means for patients is that they are not getting the surgery that they need on time or patients are going to have to be sent to other hospitals and their clinical care is potentially jeopardised and patient safety is put at risk. Then we have those ambulance delays that I talked about before and what that means for residents right across Queensland. They write to us all of the time—to members of parliament and to members of the opposition—about the fact that they cannot get an ambulance. They are waiting at home, they have serious health issues and the ambulances do not turn up. Why do they not turn up? Because they are ramped. Nearly one in two ambulances in Queensland are ramped.

Then there is renal dialysis in Longreach. It was promised in 2020. Is it still being delivered? It has not been delivered yet. Again, some of our most vulnerable people with kidney disease, particularly in the central west, should be entitled to that and it was promised in 2020. We have seen this all before under the Beattie and Bligh Labor governments. Do members remember Labor's 'triple P' program? It had the payroll fiasco, the Jayant Patel debacle and the fake Tahitian prince. They are examples of absolute clinical governance failures, and the government could not even pay its staff. That is why it had the \$1.2 billion payroll fiasco. Those opposite come in here and talk about conditions in relation to health staff in Queensland, but they could not pay those staff back then.

This is really about the chaos and crisis of the Labor government. This is really an audition when it comes to the member for Waterford, but maybe it is going to be the member for Woodridge or the member for Murrumba. They are all jostling over there. They all want the top job. Labor has been at war with itself and it is just a matter of who is going to take out that top job. I tell members what: the LNP is listening to Queenslanders. That is why there have been the town hall meetings that our shadow health minister and the Leader of the Opposition have been facilitating.

Ms Bates interjected.

Dr ROWAN: There have been 33; I take the interjection from the shadow minister for health. They are about healing Queensland's health crisis under this Labor government. When it comes to this motion, we can all agree that we need to support our frontline clinicians, but our frontline clinicians are desperate for the support that they are not getting from this Labor government. They are not getting the resources that they need. They are not getting the beds that they need. They are not getting a functional Ambulance Service. They are not getting everything else that they need and Queenslanders are crying out for help. As I said, we have seen it before under the Beattie and Bligh Labor governments. The Palaszczuk government is exactly the same as those. This is a government of chaos and crisis and this is simply an audition by the health minister to be the premier of Queensland.

 **Mr HARPER** (Thuringowa—ALP) (4.38 pm): It is very interesting to follow the contribution by the member for Moggill. We all remember individual doctor contracts. Remember the Pineapple Hotel? We all remember those. We know how much you value health staff in this state!

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Direct your comments through the chair, please, member.

Mr HARPER: I completely agree with the minister's motion and I would ask the member for Burnett to own the mistake. Stand up in this House and apologise. Do not follow the member for Mudgeeraba, who has never apologised for calling regional health workers 'duds'. The member has the opportunity to do that. I say this, Mr Deputy Speaker Kelly, and I know you will understand: there is not one person on the LNP side who would understand managing a trauma patient for an hour and handing over to a medical team in the emergency department—not one—or a paediatric resus or an asthma case or a cardiac case.

As a former paramedic I did that for 30 years. I will not have anyone in this place challenge what I did for 30 years. I am gunning for the member for Broadwater. Let me put on the record that he was the member for Mundingburra in the Newman years. At that time I happened to be a state councillor in the ambulance union and we did two EBAs, one under the Bligh government and one under the Newman government of which the Leader of the Opposition was part of. We got far better entitlements under the Bligh government. When the LNP came in they wanted to strip away our entitlements: strip away meal overtime, strip away afternoon penalties, strip away weekend penalties. They wanted to break the back of health workers in our state.

As the acting OIC of the Townsville station in 2014, we lost our entire customer service staff who did first aid training and our baby capsule fitter. He was crying in front of me when he lost his job. The hypocrisy of the Leader of the Opposition to say that they care when they sacked 4,400 health workers in this state. Four hundred were in Townsville. When you are dealing with people who are crying in front of you for losing their jobs I would shake my head too, Leader of the Opposition. He has never apologised for sacking 4,400 health workers in our state and trying to rip entitlements away from health workers who are the hardest working, most dedicated health professionals we have in this state. What we get from the front bench and now the backbench is absolutely a disgrace. Regional health workers have never had an apology from the shadow health minister for calling them duds. Own it and apologise.


I say to the member for Burnett that I am absolutely livid when I hear that they are trying to break the back of health workers in this state. Shame on the lot of you. Shame on the LNP. The record shows they sacked 4,400. How shameful. Our government has employed more nurses, doctors, paramedics and allied health workers in this state. We have undone the damage. I have never heard an apology from any of those opposite for the sackings. They have no idea how personal it gets when you have staff crying in front of you when they lose their jobs. The Leader of the Opposition sits there laughing. It is absolute hypocrisy. They should apologise.

Mr POWELL: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. Those comments directed to the Leader of the Opposition have no relevance whatsoever to the current debate.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): I will take some advice in relation to that. I do not believe there is a valid point of order in relation to relevance. However, member, earlier in your speech you made some comments that I deem to be unparliamentary and I would ask you to withdraw those comments.

Mr HARPER: I withdraw. The LNP in this state has a shameful history of sacking health workers—you know that better than I do, Mr Deputy Speaker—right across the board and we have never had an apology. They do not back nurse-patient ratios. I remember 100 nurses in the gallery at one o'clock in the morning when those opposite opposed nurse-patient ratios. They sacked nurses. That is the legacy of the LNP. I will never let my community of Thuringowa forget what the LNP did to health workers in Townsville. I will remind them every single day, member for Broadwater. Lift your head up; own it. Get your shadow ministers to apologise, get the member for Burnett to withdraw his comments and apologise for the absolute insult to every single health worker in this state. We will back our health workers. We would never sack our health workers.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Before I call the next speaker, I would like to remind all members—and I have had to do this on previous occasions and it applies to all members of the temporary speaker panel and myself—that when we are in this chair we are impartial and we are not to be drawn into or referred to in debates. At times during adjournments members will refer to nice things about our electorate, and that is acceptable, but we are not to be drawn into debates when we are sitting in this chair.

 **Mrs FRECKLINGTON** (Nanango—LNP) (4.44 pm): I want to start this speech by asking the member for Thuringowa, are you okay? That contribution and his anger was really quite concerning. I am being genuine in that. I hope you are okay.

In relation to this motion, obviously the health minister, after a couple of weeks in the job, is under a huge amount of pressure. We know exactly where what we have seen here today comes from. As the member for Mudgeeraba said, it was an audition. It was pretty obvious to us on this side that the health minister was set up. I cannot believe that she would have taken the call from whoever suggested the idea to do this motion where already half of it has been ruled out. It would have been Dr Miles. I support the amendment from the associate professor, the good doctor, the member for Moggill, when he said every part after the word 'community' should be ruled out because of course everyone in this House supports and thanks Queensland's hardworking frontline health workers for the care they provide for our community.

I want to give a massive shout-out to Jess at the Kingaroy Hospital who looked after me the other night. She did a fantastic job. She was really helpful. I did get a tetanus needle and my arm hurt more than my leg for some time afterwards. She is completely incredible. Those hardworking nurses at the Kingaroy Hospital are the ones who keep coming into my office and saying, 'Deb, this is how we need to fix the system.' That is exactly why I stand behind the Leader of the Opposition, the member for Broadwater, when he says we will value nurses, because we already value nurses. We will increase their pay, we will increase their conditions. Part of that is because they want to be listened to.

Mr Harper: You sacked them!

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Order, member for Thuringowa.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: He might need a blood pressure tablet, I think.

Ms Boyd interjected.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: I will take that interjection. Did the member for Pine Rivers just say she would recommend medication? I am not sure she is a health professional so I am not sure he should. I do know the good doctor, the associate professor, the member for Moggill, would possibly be more than happy to attend upon the member for Thuringowa.

What these nurses say to us is that they want to be listened to. The record of those opposite is absolutely abysmal. Let us look at some of these figures. What about the mums of the Callide electorate? For over five years—for 2,000 days—Chinchilla maternity has been on bypass. What about Biloela? After 384 days it is still on bypass. What about Gladstone? How many days was Gladstone on bypass—three hundred and thirty-nine days. Just like the good doctor, the member for Moggill, said, it is still under pressure. The health minister can say we now have maternity back in Gladstone, but what about Chinchilla, Weipa, Cooktown, Biloela—and the list goes on? When we were in government we opened maternity services. We planned for new hospitals. We opened Beaudesert. We planned for the opening of those regional health services to get back to the bush just like all those brilliant hardworking regional nurses, allied health professionals and doctors.

A government member interjected.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: I completely take offence to that. My daughter Lucy is one of the hardest working nurses in the Queensland Health system and I am so immensely proud of her.

Mr Tantari: She should be paid properly.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: At least we paid the nurses, unlike the former and the current Labor government. They are still trying to take money off our nurses. The member for Hervey Bay knows the troubles at his local hospital. I will be talking about that a little later in another debate. The health minister has been set up and for some reason she is taking the fall.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Before I call the next speaker, I will take some advice. Member for Nanango, during your contribution you made a statement to the effect that much of the motion had been ruled out. In fact, in my ruling I reserved any decision or judgement in relation to this motion. I give you the opportunity to correct the record.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: I am happy to correct the record and I apologise, Mr Deputy Speaker. I was referring to the amended motion.



Mr O'ROURKE (Rockhampton—ALP) (4.49 pm): I rise to speak in support of our motion. Queensland frontline doctors, nurses, midwives and all of our health staff dedicate their lives to supporting us. That is why I am committed to supporting them and to ensuring that Queensland has the health workers we need. We all know that Queensland's health system, like every health system around the world, is facing recruitment challenges. Our government is continuing to work hard to address those

challenges, including by offering up to \$70,000 for interstate and overseas healthcare workers to move to Queensland and funding obstetrics training for GPs in regional Queensland. While we will continue this work, let us not forget that it is the Palaszczuk government that has grown our health workforce, not cut it.

My son Harry is one of the many new nurses in Central Queensland. He works for the Central Queensland Hospital and Health Service. We know that there is too much at stake for Queenslanders to risk the LNP. Our government has a strong track record of delivering for Queenslanders in the areas that matter most to them such as health, education and building the infrastructure that our growing state needs. Since we were elected, we have employed almost 19,000 additional healthcare workers. We have opened more than 1,700 new hospital beds, with more than 3,000 on the way across three new hospitals and 11 hospital expansions. We are delivering seven satellite hospitals to take pressure off our busy emergency departments. We want people to have access to world-class services regardless of what they earn and where they live.


However, we know that those opposite do not share our views. After all, they were the ones who sacked 4,400 healthcare workers, including 1,800 nurses and midwives. They failed to plan or build a single new hospital while in government. In Central Queensland, in my electorate of Rockhampton, they cut 197 health staff when they were last in power. They sent the box man around to clean out the desks. It was unbelievable. The LNP's plans and legacies do nothing but put pressure on our EDs and more pressure on our hardworking staff.

I acknowledge and thank the Central Queensland Hospital and Health Service staff. Central Queensland hospitals had 37,595 patients come through their emergency departments in the June quarter. Patients were prioritised and category 1 patients, being the sickest, were seen within two minutes of arrival. In the June quarter the average wait time across all five categories was just 16 minutes.

Even in opposition the LNP continues to criticise the hardworking health staff. We do not call them duds. We do not attack their entitlements. We do not vote against nurse-to-patient ratios. We are absolutely committed to investing in our hospitals.

In Rocky we have announced a \$92 million mental health unit refurbishment and expansion, delivering 32 mental health beds. We are investing in local mental health services, unlike those opposite who had a shocking record in mental health, including closing the Barrett centre and the suicides that took place as a result of that. We are serious about tackling mental health, which is why we implemented the mental health levy—a levy that those opposite opposed.

I cannot believe that the LNP would go to these lengths. Healthcare workers are the people who support our constituents and our local businesses. They are great people. All those opposite want to do is cut their entitlements. They work hard each and every day and those opposite do not care. They want to go in and sack them. Those people have mortgages and so on, but those opposite have no respect for what they do for our communities.

 **Mr BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (4.55 pm): Honourable members will know that, from time to time when we get sick during a parliamentary sitting week and cannot get to a doctor, we may seek the advice and services of some people in this chamber such as the good member for Moggill or the good member for Mudgeeraba, Nurse Bates RN. I can tell you this, Deputy Speaker: there is one person I do not seek advice from and that is a former Labor industrial lawyer who goes on skiing trips with Jackie Trad in Whistler. That is who I do not take my health advice from.

Ms Fentiman interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: The health minister may scream at me all she wants, but I would not take health advice from her at all.

What we are clearly seeing here is the health minister's attempt to get the attention of the Labor Party backbench. Cameron Dick, the Treasurer, did it with his manifesto and now it is the health minister's turn. She said this is her 'look at me' moment. This is also a moment when the Labor government tries to distract from all the leadership rumblings going around in the Labor Party: 'Let's just grab onto something. Let's grab onto a Facebook post. Let's just move a motion. Let's blow it up so it distracts from the issues that Queenslanders are talking about and it distracts from the leadership turmoil of the Labor Party.'

I say to the health minister that Queenslanders will not be distracted by silly little motions moved in this chamber. Queenslanders expect this health minister to concentrate on what she gets paid for, which is to assist Queenslanders to get the health care they want and they deserve. That is why I absolutely support the amended motion to back our health workers.

It is no secret that, when the Labor Party were elected in 2009, the very first thing they did was delay the Sunshine Coast University Hospital. They delayed it. That was their priority in health and then the Bligh government did not pay health staff.

Ms Fentiman interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: I take the interjection: zero dollars. Health staff got zero dollars under the Labor government. Zero!

Ms Fentiman interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: I take the gesticulatory interjection from the health minister. Zero dollars were paid to health staff under them.

The health minister wants to talk about hospitals. We opened maternity services in regional Queensland. We got rid of the dental waiting list. The cataract waiting list went down to either zero or very low. The waiting list to get on the waiting list was gone because people were getting the surgery they needed under the LNP government. We prioritised patients in Queensland and we got them the services that they so desperately needed.

The member who spoke previously, the member for Rockhampton, gave a really enthusiastic contribution. However, what he failed to mention is what he has failed to do for his community, that is, to tell this health minister that his community is suffering the worst ambulance ramping outside of South-East Queensland. He shakes his head. Is he denying the fact that his Rockhampton community—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Through the chair.

Mr BLEIJIE:—is suffering 55 per cent ambulance ramping at the local hospital? That is the worst result in the state outside of South-East Queensland.

The member had five minutes to stake a claim for his community against this health minister and call on the health minister to get rid of the ambulance ramping so that members of his community are better protected when they go to hospital and get the services they need. He said not a word to this health minister because their priority is politics, not patients. This health minister prioritises photos, not patients. It is about photo opportunities, not patients.

Ms Fentiman interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: I take the interjection. The Leader of the Opposition had a press conference. The shadow health minister said that what the minister said was deliberately misleading. She should listen and look at the press conferences.

(Time expired)



Ms KING (Pumicestone—ALP) (5.00 pm): Our Palaszczuk Labor government has a very strong track record when it comes to investing in mental health care, alcohol and other drug services and suicide prevention, but what did we see after we handed down our Mental Health Select Committee report? The Mental Health Select Committee report backed the biggest uplift in mental health funding and services that this state has ever seen. One would have expected the member for Broadwater and the LNP to have something to say about it. They did have something to say about it. The member for Broadwater stood up and condemned the Palaszczuk Labor government for our mental health care levy that will fund that enormous uplift in mental health care services into the future.

The member for Broadwater stood by the only stakeholders that matter to him. The member for Broadwater stood by the stakeholders with payrolls in the order of millions, tens of millions and hundreds of millions of dollars. He stood by those wealthy, huge, business stakeholders ahead of the most vulnerable people in our Queensland communities—the people who are facing challenges to their mental health, the people who are in suicidal crisis, the young people who need services.

When we look at the LNP frontbench, who do we see? We see the same set of faces that closed the Barrett Adolescent Centre, leading to the deaths of multiple young people. Members opposite have blood on their hands and they need to be ashamed. Not once in my time in this place or once in the time any members of the Palaszczuk Labor government have been in this place have we seen those

opposite apologise for the deaths of those young people or for the 4½ thousand health workers they sacked. Now they want to break the backs of our health workers. They need to be ashamed and they need to apologise.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Member, you used some unparliamentary language in that contribution. I ask you to withdraw.

Ms KING: I withdraw.

Interruption.

SPEAKER'S RULING

Motion, Authentication of Facts



Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Mr Speaker has asked me to deliver a ruling on his behalf. Paragraph 2 of the motion has been the subject of a point of order on the basis that the facts contained in paragraph 2 cannot be authenticated. The minister has pointed to a document tabled by the minister in the morning session. That document is a laminated copy of a social media exchange between the member for Burnett and another person. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition has provided a copy of a media statement by the minister about an LNP plan and a rejoinder from the shadow minister for health of today's date. It is well established that notices of motion, motions, questions and petitions can be challenged on the basis that facts stated cannot be authenticated. The document tabled by the minister in the morning session falls short of authentication of the fact. In the absence of any other authentication, I am ordering that the motion be altered by omitting paragraph 2.

MOTIONS

Health Workers

Resumed.

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

In division—

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Order! Minister for Health and Leader of the Opposition, you will cease your quarrelling across the chamber.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, members! I will warn you during divisions.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order, members! Standing orders still apply. You will cease those cross-chamber conversations.

AYES, 33:

LNP, 33—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, Robinson, Rowan, Simpson, Stevens, Watts, Weir.

NOES, 50:

ALP, 50—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, Palaszcuk, Pease, Power, Pugh, Richards, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Scanlon, Smith, Stewart, Sullivan, Tantari, Walker, Whiting.

Pair: Skelton, Purdie.

Resolved in the negative.

Non-government amendment (Dr Rowan) negatived.

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

Mr SPEAKER: Ring the bells for one minute.

AYES, 50:

ALP, 50—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, Palaszcuk, Pease, Power, Pugh, Richards, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Scanlon, Smith, Stewart, Sullivan, Tantari, Walker, Whiting.

NOES, 33:

LNP, 33—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, Robinson, Rowan, Simpson, Stevens, Watts, Weir.

Pair: Skelton, Purdie.

Resolved in the affirmative.

Motion, as agreed—

That this House:

1. supports and thanks Queensland's hardworking frontline health workers for the care they provide our community
3. condemns the member for Burnett's public comments attacking the pay and conditions of health workers, where he stated 'it's time we broke the back of unrealistic employee entitlements'
4. condemns the member for Mudgeeraba's refusal to apologise for labelling Queensland Health staff in regional Queensland as 'duds'
5. notes the savage cuts inflicted on Queensland's health system by the Newman LNP government and member for Broadwater, including:
 - (a) sacking more than 4,400 health workers, including 1,800 nurses and midwives
 - (b) cutting \$1.6 billion from the Queensland Health budget
 - (c) closing hospital beds across Queensland
 - (d) removing \$120 million in funding to Queensland Health community organisations
 - (e) closing the Barrett Adolescent Centre
 - (f) crippling the public hospital system by trying to force unreasonable working conditions on doctors.

Hospitals, Performance



Ms BATES (Mudgeeraba—LNP) (5.11 pm): I move—

That this House condemns the current health minister for releasing less information than the former health minister on code yellows in Queensland hospitals, and

1. notes between April and June 2023:
 - Queensland hospitals were on tier 3 for around 7,000 hours
 - Rockhampton Base Hospital was escalated 15 times
 - Mackay Base Hospital was escalated 14 times
 - Townsville University and Caboolture hospitals were escalated 13 times
 - Gold Coast University and Robina hospitals were escalated 11 times
 - Hervey Bay Hospital was escalated seven times
 - Bundaberg Hospital was escalated six times; and
2. notes comments of the United Workers Union ambulance organiser that demand has not increased in any significant way and that time lost at hospitals waiting to transfer the care of patients has the greatest impact; and
3. calls on the government to:
 - release real-time health data in line with LNP policy
 - release the duration of each tier 3 escalation at each hospital as previously provided
 - release the number of days each hospital spends at tier 0, tier 1, tier 2 and tier 3 escalation
 - release and provide details on the number of part 9 investigations since 2015.

How embarrassing for the health minister. She could not authenticate the claims.

Ms Fentiman interjected.

Ms BATES: It does not matter how much you screech in parliament, it does not make any difference. It is all about how things look not how things are. If that was the minister's audition to be premier, that was a belly flop.

Queensland Health is in crisis. It is not new. It is not by accident and it is not going away under the Palaszczuk Labor government. I do not know how many times we have to say it over here, but there are real consequences for the failures that those opposite are overseeing across our health system. Queenslanders are living in pain as a result. Queenslanders are suffering as a result.

It is being lost on those opposite. They are so mired in their own chaos and crisis that it seems they no longer have the capacity or the compassion to care about those in our community who are frail or vulnerable. Make no mistake, it is not just patients who are feeling let-down; it is doctors and nurses, paramedic and other allied health professionals who are broken too. They are the ones left picking up the pieces of a health system which has buckled under the pressure of a government which has failed to plan, resource and run Queensland's health system with the careful and considered leadership that is required.

One needs to look no further than the shocking tier 3 figures published today which show on 150 occasions the state's public hospitals were at the highest level of a capacity emergency. That is only in the three months of April, May and June. Those numbers are dire. They are damning. There were 15 tier 3 capacity escalations in Rockhampton, 14 in Mackay, 13 at Caboolture, 11 at the Gold Coast University Hospital and another 11 at Robina. It is awful.

I feel for the patients ramped or left waiting in the ED or told their surgeries might have to be postponed during these events. I feel for the staff—overrun and exhausted. They are not just numbers on a spreadsheet, Minister. You have said that before about child safety. That did not go down well.

Ms Fentiman interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Pause the clock. Member for Mudgeeraba and Minister for Health, you will stop the cross-chamber attacks. Members will direct their comments through the chair.

Ms BATES: These are not just numbers on a spreadsheet, Minister. These are real events with real consequences. The minister can put some fancy graphics up on her new website, but fancy graphics do not mean there is more information.

Here are the facts. The former minister—despite her flaws, of which there were many; she is looking very comfortable over there these days—used to provide the number of code yellow or tier 3 instances along with how long each escalation lasted for. If the minister does not believe me, she should go back and check question on notice 92 from last year. There was an instance at the Royal in 2021 where a tier 3 lasted 495 hours—that is 20 days.

Queenslanders no longer get that information under this health minister. We will never know how deep the problems run now. The Queensland public, the media and the opposition now have access to less information. The minister saying she is transparent does not actually make her transparent. Announcements do not fix the health crisis. Faux transparency does not drive accountability or cultural change. If the minister actually wants to be transparent, not just say she is, then she would do the following: release real-time health data in line with LNP policy; release the duration of each tier 3 escalation at each hospital as previously provided; release the number of days each hospital spends at tier 0, 1, 2 and 3; and release and provide details on the number of part 9 investigations since 2015. There is a start for the minister. We have written the health transparency platform for the government in black and white. Go ahead and copy it—like all the other policies we have put up.

The last point is particularly pertinent because those part 9 investigations are investigations like the one at Mackay Base Hospital. That is as serious as it gets. Just like the last minister, this minister will not tell Queenslanders how many of those investigations have happened on the watch of the Palaszczuk government. There is a different minister, but nothing has changed. In fact, this minister is worse. It is a disgrace.

There is one difference with this minister though, and it is her personal attacks. They are low, they are undignified, they are petty and they are spiteful. Those are the words that describe the ministers MO. They are qualities which are unbecoming of the office she holds—

Mr Dick interjected.

Ms BATES: The Treasurer should know that. Minister, there is a health system, that is your responsibility, which is on its knees out there. There are patients and clinicians who need treatment from and work in the public health system crying out for help. Minister, do the job for which a minister gets paid—focus on the health system in crisis, focus on the people affected, stop pretending, stop the personal attacks and get on with it because Queenslanders deserve better than the Palaszczuk Labor government.



Hon. SM FENTIMAN (Waterford—ALP) (Minister for Health, Mental Health and Ambulance Services and Minister for Women) (5.16 pm): I move the following amendment—

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

- '1. notes the new transparent health data reporting as committed to by the Palaszczuk government
2. notes the Queensland Health and Hospitals Plan is delivering the largest ever hospital building program in our state's history, including:
 - (a) three brand new hospitals in Bundaberg, Toowoomba and Coomera
 - (b) seven new satellite hospitals to help take the pressure off emergency departments, including:
 - (i) Redlands
 - (ii) Tugun
 - (iii) Caboolture
 - (iv) Ripley
 - (v) Kallangur
 - (vi) Bribie Island; and
 - (vii) Eight Mile Plains
 - (c) 11 major hospital expansions across Queensland, including:
 - (i) Cairns Hospital
 - (ii) Hervey Bay Hospital
 - (iii) Ipswich Hospital
 - (iv) Logan Hospital
 - (v) Mackay Hospital
 - (vi) PA Hospital
 - (vii) QEII Hospital
 - (viii) Redcliffe Hospital
 - (ix) Robina Hospital
 - (x) The Prince Charles; and
 - (xi) Townsville University Hospital
3. notes the impact the wait times and costs associated with seeing a GP are having on Queensland's health system and the work underway with the Commonwealth to further address these issues.'

I am so proud to be part of a government that is investing in more infrastructure, more beds and more staff. Last month I was very proud to release more health data than ever before—more than ever in Queensland's history. We are committed to transparency and I do want Queenslanders to know the pressure that our Queensland health system is under. It is under enormous pressure from everyone who wants to move here and live in this great state to our ageing population to the critical shortage of GP, particularly those who bulk-bill. That is why we have a plan. We have the Big Build to deliver the beds and infrastructure that will take the pressure off our emergency departments.


Some 2.2 million people attended our emergency departments in the last financial year—the highest number on record. Many of those presentations included category 4s and 5s, like earaches, UTIs and ingrown toenails, that should have been seen by a GP. Now they can go to a satellite hospital and make sure that they do not put pressure on our emergency departments.

I am so proud of our three new hospitals, our seven satellite hospitals and our 11 expansions, delivering 3,300 more beds over the plan and 500 beds this financial year. It is not just about the beds, the buildings and the infrastructure because we can have the very best buildings in the world, but what makes a health system is the frontline staff. This financial year we are employing an extra 4,000 frontline health workers—more nurses, more doctors, more midwives. I will tell members what we will do. We will not cut their pay and conditions. Despite what the member for Burnett—posting late at night—said about having to break the back of these unrealistic entitlements, we back our healthcare workers and we back the pay and conditions that they have fought hard for. They are always going to attack nurses' pay. It is in their DNA. It is absolutely part of their DNA.

What I am very pleased to see is that our investment in beds, staff and infrastructure is starting to see results. Despite there being more presentations than ever before, 100 per cent of category 1 patients are seen in time. We have seen huge improvements in elective surgery because of our hardworking staff. The data that I released today about the Caboolture Satellite Hospital, which has only been open for a month, is already showing fewer tier 3 selections at the Caboolture Hospital—one of our busiest hospitals.

The record of those opposite speaks for itself. How many thousands of health workers lost their job? I cannot travel the length and breadth of Queensland without a nurse or a doctor talking to me about how terrifying that time was when they and their colleagues were constantly under attack, never knowing whether they were going to wake up and have a job tomorrow. People still talk to me about that time. The Leader of the Opposition has still not apologised for sacking those health workers, he has not apologised today for the member for Burnett getting out ahead of them talking about their plan to cut their pay and conditions, and he has not apologised for his shadow health minister referring to our health workers as 'duds'. I am proud of our government delivering the beds, the infrastructure and the staff we need for a wonderful health system.

(Time expired)

 **Dr ROWAN** (Moggill—LNP) (5.21 pm): I rise to support the motion as moved by the shadow minister for health, the member for Mudgeeraba. This is a government of chaos and crisis, and we have seen that in the last hour. When it comes to fixing and eliminating the number of tier 3 hospital declarations, it does not matter who in the state Labor government is in the top job as premier—whether it is the current Premier or the state members for Woodridge, Murrumba or Waterford. This state Labor government has stopped listening and has stopped caring about Queenslanders. It has to be remembered that the three contenders wanting to be the premier—those being the member for Woodridge, the member for Murrumba and the member for Waterford—have all either held or currently hold the health portfolio.

There is no better example of the ongoing crisis impacting Queensland's hospital and health system than today's report that the highest level of capacity emergency, tier 3, was declared at Queensland hospitals more than 150 times in three months. That is 12 tier 3 declarations across our Queensland state hospitals every week from April to June of this year. What does that mean for Queenslanders? It means that patient care is jeopardised and clinical outcomes are put at risk. It means that hospital capacity is exhausted, with no ability to meet ongoing demand. It means that our hospitals struggle to admit new patients, leaving more Queenslanders ramped in ambulances or, alternatively, left to be transferred to other hospitals. It means that elective surgeries are either delayed or cancelled. Of the 22 hospitals reported, almost a third recorded 10 or more instances of tier 3 escalations. Let us look at just some of the revelations that have been reported today where Queenslanders have seen their hospitals repeatedly placed on tier 3.

At the Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital there were six escalations, lasting a total of 204 hours, or 34 hours on average. At the Ipswich Hospital there were five escalations, lasting a total of 180 hours, or over 36 hours on average. At the Bundaberg Hospital a shocking total of over 488 hours were spent on category tier 3 across six escalations. At the Gold Coast University Hospital there were 11 tier 3 escalations, lasting a total of more than 600 hours, or over 54 hours on average. At the Townsville Hospital more than 911 hours were spent at tier 3 across 13 escalations that lasted more than 70 hours on average.

In total, in the three-month period of April to June of this year, our state's hospitals spent more than 7,000 hours on tier 3. This is absolutely outrageous and a complete abdication of duty when it comes to Queensland hospital services under the failed Palaszczuk state Labor government. Unfortunately, Queenslanders have seen this all before—the chaos and crisis and the Labor government mismanagement of our state's health and hospital systems. Under the Beattie-Bligh and now Palaszczuk state Labor governments, we have seen our hospital system in Queensland in crisis.


Our dedicated and hardworking frontline clinicians—our doctors, nurses and allied health professionals—all deserve so much better and they are certainly not getting that from this Labor government. They deserve a Queensland government that acts and provides the support and resources needed to deliver effective clinical care. That is why they go to work each and every day. They want to be able to ply their trade and deliver good clinical services for the benefit of all Queenslanders. The national ambulance coordinator for the United Workers Union spoke an uncomfortable truth for the state Labor government when she stated—

Demand hasn't actually increased in any significant way. The time lost at hospital waiting to transfer the care of patients is what has the greatest impact.

It is appalling that the current Queensland health minister is releasing less information and less data than the former minister for health on code yellows in Queensland hospitals. The state Labor government stands condemned for its abject failure to provide openness and transparency to Queenslanders. That is why the motion as moved by the Liberal National Party's shadow minister for health and ambulance services is demanding the comprehensive transparency that all Queenslanders deserve.

The Labor state government must release real-time health data in line with the Liberal National Party's policy; release the duration of each tier 3 escalation at each hospital, as previously provided; release the number of days each hospital spends at tier 0, tier 1, tier 2 and tier 3 escalation; and also release and provide details on the number of part 9 investigations since 2015. On that last point, part 9 investigations cover some of the most serious and concerning matters throughout our health and hospital system. For the state Labor government to repeatedly stand in the way of providing full transparency on the details and number of part 9 investigations only further demonstrates the contempt this state Labor government has for the people of Queensland. They are saying to the people of Queensland, 'You don't deserve to know.'

Enough is enough. The Labor Minister for Health and the Labor state government should be condemned. I certainly support the motion as moved by the shadow minister for health and ambulance services. Queensland deserves a mature government and a government that will act on health in this state.

 **Ms LAUGA** (Keppel—ALP) (5.26 pm): I rise to speak in favour of the amendment moved by the Minister for Health. I am proud to serve as the Assistant Minister for Health and Regional Health Infrastructure under the Palaszczuk government. We are committed to boosting performance in our health system, and part of that is delivering the infrastructure and workforce numbers that our growing state needs. As part of our Big Build, we have a plan to deliver almost 3,500 new hospital beds over the next six years. We are building three new hospitals, 11 hospital expansions and seven satellite hospitals. These investments are targeted at boosting capacity in our hospitals and reducing wait times for Queenslanders, no matter where in our big state they live.

Just a few of the projects that I am most excited about include a brand new Bundaberg Hospital, a brand new Toowoomba Hospital and expansions at the Cairns, Mackay and Townsville hospitals. It is great news that these expansions are being funded by the Palaszczuk government's progressive coal royalties, which those opposite have refused to support time and time again. The LNP has not and will not support progressive coal royalties. So, my question for those opposite is: what projects will they cut if they are elected? Will it be the new Moranbah Hospital in the electorate of Burdekin? Well, we know that the member for Burdekin thinks that health workers are paid too much, so will he take an axe to Moranbah's new hospital too? Or will it be the Townsville University Hospital, delivering 143 new beds?

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

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Order, members! I will take the point of order in silence.

Mr LAST: I take personal offence at the comments of the member for Keppel and ask that they be withdrawn.

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

Ms LAUGA: I withdraw. Or will it be the new Toowoomba Hospital, which provides high-quality services to people across the Darling Downs? If those opposite do not support this government's progressive coal royalties, they do not support these projects.

We are not just investing in infrastructure with our progressive coal royalties. I am proud that this year's budget included a more than \$70 million boost to the Patient Travel Subsidy Scheme so regional Queenslanders can access highly specialised care when they need it. Queensland is the most decentralised state in Australia, and our No. 1 priority is increasing services so regional Queenslanders can access treatment closer to home. Unfortunately, some people will need to travel away from home to access specialist services that are not available in their community.

I was proud to work with a number of my regional colleagues on this side of the House to fight for an increase to the subsidy scheme. This boost will mean that Queenslanders who need to travel for health care will be able to do so. So, will the LNP cut this scheme if they are elected next year? Will the members for Warrego, Callide, Southern Downs and Gregory return to their communities this week and tell them that they want to have less access to health care?


Mr Lister: I will tell them I haven't got a dam yet. What are you doing about that?

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Member for Southern Downs, I never cease to be impressed at the level of debate you can bring the Emu Swamp Dam into, but nonetheless you are warned.

Ms LAUGA: I would ask the member for Southern Downs if he is going to return to his community this week and say that he does not support progressive coal royalties and therefore does not support the increase to the Patient Travel Subsidy Scheme. People in his community use the Patient Travel Subsidy Scheme in order to access specialist health care in South-East Queensland and further afield. This is a really critical subsidy scheme for people in regional Queensland. The boost of more than \$70 million is funded through progressive coal royalties. Does the member for Southern Downs believe that the boost should not be funded or that progressive coal royalties should not be part of this government's budget, thereby increasing the boost to the Patient Travel Subsidy Scheme? I would ask the member for Southern Downs whether he is going to be clear with his community about exactly where he stands.

We recently announced that we will deliver a \$92 million refurbishment and expansion of the Rockhampton mental health facility. The new mental health facility will ensure Rockhampton and surrounding areas have access to more beds and the vital support services they require close to home. We know that regional areas are particularly vulnerable to mental health challenges, and by increasing our commitment to services in Rocky we can ensure this community has access to the support and services they expect and deserve. Deputy Speaker, you will never guess how we are paying for it: progressive coal royalties. If the LNP are elected next year will they cut this project? We know they have a record of cutting mental health services and funding. They are the only government in Queensland's history to cut mental health services. There is too much at stake to risk the LNP next year. We know their record on health care: 4,400 healthcare workers sacked, including 197 in Central Queensland and not a single new hospital. We know they will do it again. Today we revealed their plan to cut the wages and conditions of health workers and they revealed their \$10 billion infrastructure hit list. I commend the motion amended by the minister to the House.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Before I call the next speaker, I want to take some advice. I want to note that as the member for Maryborough was leaving the chamber he was interjecting and arguing across the chamber outside of his seat. That behaviour is not acceptable. It is unparliamentary.

 **Mr JANETZKI** (Toowoomba South—LNP) (5.32 pm): I have been sitting here for the last 90 minutes, and in my seven years in parliament I cannot remember whether I have seen a bigger own goal than what we have seen from the health minister here tonight.

Mr Minnikin interjected.

Mr JANETZKI: I take the interjection from the member for Chatsworth. The member for Miller has probably had a few more own goals over the last seven years. Over the last 90 minutes we have seen an own goal of a nature that is really rarely seen in this parliament. The health minister's attempt to turn the spotlight on the opposition has simply reflected on themselves. As the member for Mudgeeraba has already said, it has been the biggest bellyflop any of us can remember.

Over the course of the last 90 minutes we saw the member for Rockhampton lose the last page of his speech, and how symbolic is that of the last 90 minutes! We have seen the health minister have a limb of her motion struck out by the House. We have seen that the only doctor who has benefited from this disaster here tonight is Dr Miles. That is the only doctor who has benefited from the motion moved at four o'clock by the health minister and now at five o'clock by us.

I want to reflect a little bit on the motion so admirably moved by our shadow health minister, the member Mudgeeraba. Does it not say something that tonight's motion proposes that the member for Redcliffe is more committed to openness, transparency and accountability than the member for Waterford! Does that not reveal how low the bar has been set in Queensland? As Attorney-General the member for Redcliffe has probably overseen some of the most vitriolic attacks on the democratic process in Queensland's history: optional preferential voting gone with 18 minutes notice. We have seen the member for Redcliffe take donations from entities she has been regulating like Star. We have seen her try to stamp big money out of—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Member for Toowoomba South, I would ask you to come back to the substance of the motion.

Mr JANETZKI: I will take your guidance, Mr Deputy Speaker. The fact that the member for Redcliffe was more transparent than the health minister tells us everything about how low the bar has been set. The health minister has a record of her own: we saw the member for Mudgeeraba prosecuted for so many years in the child safety ministry back in 2016 and 2017; we saw the washing of documentation and information; we saw Mason Jett Lee; and we saw 4,000 cases leaked by a whistleblower in the child safety department. We have seen all of that from the health minister, so we have to take everything the health minister says with a grain of salt.

Just because the health minister is now trying to control the release of information does not mean that any of the services are improving. In fact, we have heard again today how damaged the health system is here in Queensland. In the Far North we have seen eight escalations over the last quarter for roughly 40 minutes, for a total of 314 hours. That is just the tip of the iceberg when Queensland hospitals have been on tier 3 for around 700 hours. Ramping remains the worst in the country at 45 per cent. It is 55 per cent in the member for Rockhampton's seat. It was 15 per cent when we left office and 30 per cent before COVID. That remains out of control. The people of Cairns are starting to wake up to the member for Cairns, the member for Barron River and the member for Cook. Notwithstanding their little pretend announcement today in Cairns—

Government members interjected.


Mr JANETZKI: Far along in the assessment process! We know the system is broken.

An opposition member: *Utopia*.

Mr JANETZKI: It was pure *Utopia*. We will stand on our record. We were the ones who introduced 16 health and hospital boards throughout Queensland. We backed the travel subsidy scheme. We reintroduced maternity services, including in Cooktown and Beaudesert. If we are elected, we will pay health workers more and we will heal the health crisis.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Toowoomba South, you made statements in your speech to the effect that the House had struck out part of the motion. It was in fact a ruling of the Speaker, so I would just ask you to correct the record.

Mr JANETZKI: To correct the record, it was a ruling of the Speaker rather than the House.

 **Mr WALKER** (Mundingburra—ALP) (5.38 pm): I rise to speak in support of the amendment and to thank the member for Burnett for blowing the lid on the LNP plan for health workers in this state. The Queensland Health and Hospital Plan is the largest investment in the Queensland health system in our state's history. It represents \$9.785 billion in capital works that will deliver world-class health facilities right across the state of Queensland. We are expanding 11 hospitals and building three new ones—that is what Labor does. The Townsville University Hospital is the only tertiary hospital in our region and the largest in northern Australia. It is only going to get better. Our \$530 million investment will see 143 new hospital beds and expanded services in Townsville. That \$530 million will support 1,270 jobs in construction alone. BESIX Watpac are expected to start construction in 2026. It represents the largest upgrade in our hospital since it was first built.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr WALKER: Listen carefully, those opposite. We are building 30 kilometres of hallway, laying 167 kilometres of vinyl, installing over 130,000 lights and delivering over 1.75 million items of furniture, fixtures and equipment and more health jobs.

Mrs Frecklington interjected.

Mr WALKER: Listen carefully. The expansion will improve access to a range of health services for the growing local community—even a health service for the opposition leader because he does not look well today. It is part of the \$3.08 billion in contracts awarded so far through the Health and Hospitals Plan.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr WALKER: I know you do not like what you are hearing but it is the truth, so listen up. You do not like hearing the truth. These contracts represent over 6,500 construction jobs. That is right—6,500 jobs across seven sites. There is \$710 million to deliver the Ipswich Hospital stage 2 expansion, delivering an additional 200 beds; \$465 million to deliver the QEII Jubilee Hospital expansion, delivering an additional 112 beds—

Mrs Frecklington interjected.

Mr WALKER: Member for Nanango, listen up. There is \$530 million to deliver the Logan Hospital stage 2 expansion project, delivering an additional 112 beds; \$350 million to deliver the major expansion at the Princess Alexandra Hospital, delivering an additional 249 beds; and \$250 million to deliver the Cairns Hospital expansion project, delivering an additional 96 beds. How is that, member for Nanango? It is getting better. Let us compare that to what those opposite built—absolutely nothing. Nothing has changed over there. The only thing you did in Townsville was sack 398 health workers.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Direct your comments through the chair.

Mr WALKER: We know what they think of health workers, don't we? The member for Burnett has let the cat out of the bag. The member for Mudgeeraba calls them 'duds' and the member for Burnett thinks it is time we broke the back of unrealistic health employee entitlements. This is from the LNP and the opposition leader's campaign book for 2024. The LNP plans for health care in this state are an absolute embarrassment. You should all hang your heads in shame.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Direct your comments through the chair.


Mr WALKER: We build; they cut. When they sack health workers, we grow our health workforce. We respect our frontline health workers in this state.

Mrs Frecklington interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Member for Nanango, you have your opportunity coming up.

Mr WALKER: Since coming to government, we have done more than fix the mess they left. We have grown our workforce in our health services right across the state. In Townsville we have employed 720 extra frontline staff. That is 208 doctors, a 34.9 per cent increase; 337 nurses and midwives, a 15.6 per cent increase; 110 health professionals, a 19 per cent increase; and 64 ambulance operatives, a 27 per cent increase. Not only do we employ more health workers; we give them nation-leading conditions like our nurse-to-patient ratio that those opposite voted against.

We can do all of this because we have increased the operational health budget by 77 per cent. We are delivering more staff, more hospitals and more beds. When it comes to health, the LNP have a plan which has been leaked by the member for Burnett. They have a plan to cut, sack and sell. It is the only thing the LNP know. I wish the opposition leader, the member for Broadwater, good health because he does not look well at all today.

 **Mr MICKELBERG** (Buderim—LNP) (5.43 pm): If you were listening to those opposite, you would think it was all good—that there were no problems, that there was not a health crisis. I do not think the member for Mundingburra even mentioned patients once—not once. He spoke about the opposition leader a lot and he spoke about money a lot, but he did not talk about patients once. That tells you everything you need to know. Queenslanders are scared. They are scared, and who can blame them? They woke up this morning to the front page of their local newspaper saying that their hospitals were at emergency capacity 150 times in just three months. Queensland hospitals could not cope 150 times in three months, so they have every right to feel scared.

The chaos and the crisis created by this lazy, third-term Labor state government cannot be covered up or watered down. Real-time data must be shared. The light must shine in. Queenslanders deserve to know how their local hospital is performing. They deserve to know that in their hour of need there will be a hospital bed for them when they need it. The previous health minister was given the heave-ho in an attempt to hoodwink Queenslanders into thinking there was change on the horizon and that this tired, third-term Labor state government were going to take this problem seriously. Despite the fly-in fly-out photo opportunities and despite the shiny new performance website that has even less performance data than its predecessors, nothing has changed. The spin might have improved but health outcomes have not.

Queenslanders deserve more respect than what is on offer by the new Minister for Health. Queenslanders can see through the spin. Even the most optimistic Queenslander could not have hidden their dismay in finding out that the new health minister is even more secretive than the last. I notice the new health minister came in here and said that GPs were to blame for the problems in the health system in Queensland. Let us look at some facts. The *Medical Journal of Australia* on 7 August published a review about this issue and they said that non-urgent patients are not the cause of overcrowding in emergency departments. They said that more than three-quarters of patients deemed suitable for GP care by Australian Institute of Health and Welfare criteria were unsuitable. They said that a clear and undisputed cause is a lack of inpatient bed capacity. It is a problem of this state government's making because they have not built the hospitals that Queenslanders deserve and that Queenslanders need.


I join with my colleagues in condemning the health minister for releasing less information than her predecessor—less information about code yellows in Queensland hospitals. Queenslanders need to know and they deserve to know when their local hospital is busting at the seams. They deserve to know when it is busting at the seams—not three months later—when it is at maximum capacity, when every bed is taken and when patients are ramped in ambulances. That is exactly the situation that is happening right across the state now. We have got tier 3 escalations, code yellows, right across the state—in Mackay, Townsville, Caboolture, Gold Coast, Robina, Hervey Bay and Bundaberg, just to name a few.

I feel for the people of Rockhampton and the Capricorn Coast most. Rockhampton Hospital has been escalated to emergency capacity 15 times in three months—I repeat: 15 times in three months. How many times did the member for Rockhampton mention that in his contribution or the member for Keppel? Zero. How can the residents of Rockhampton, Yeppoon, Emu Park and Gracemere rely on their local hospital to help them when the worst happens? There is 55 per cent ambulance ramping at Rockhampton Hospital. What are the Labor members for Rockhampton and Keppel doing to fix things? Nothing.

I have been spending a fair bit of time in Rockhampton recently, and in Yeppoon, Gracemere and Emu Park, and everyone says the same thing. They want state members who will fight for their community, state members who will take the fight up to Brisbane if they need to, state members who will fight on crime, health and housing. The people of Central Queensland deserve a state member with the character and the capacity of Nigel Hutton—our LNP candidate for Keppel, a councillor, a father, a teacher—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Pause the clock. Member, I bring you back to the substance of the motion.

Mr MICKELBERG: Queenslanders deserve better. The LNP has committed to releasing health data in real time within 100 days of forming government. People like Nigel Hutton know that is the answer. They know that hiding data does not help. They know that the state government is not serious about addressing this problem. They know that people like the member for Keppel and the member for Rockhampton are beholden to their Labor masters and ministers down here in Brisbane. They know that they will not fight for their communities. They know that when code yellow and tier 3 hits the Rockhampton Hospital the member for Keppel and the member for Rockhampton are not on the phone saying, 'Minister, what are you doing to fix this?' There is nothing. There is radio silence from those opposite because they do not care, and Queenslanders deserve better.

 **Hon. MAJ SCANLON** (Gaven—ALP) (Minister for Housing) (5.48 pm): I rise to speak in favour of the amendment moved by the health minister. I am surprised to hear that the opposition want to talk about health data because, unlike the member for Broadwater, I as a Gold Coast MP actually went to the election with health commitments. Here is some data on the Gold Coast. We are expanding the Robina Hospital by 114 beds and there is \$16.5 million for a Robina Hospital emergency department expansion as well. There is: a 70-bed expansion of the Gold Coast University Hospital; a \$4 million redevelopment of Southport Ambulance Station; a \$1.3 billion, 404-bed hospital at Coomera; a satellite hospital in Tugun; and a 40-bed secure mental health rehabilitation unit at the Gold Coast University Hospital, which is under construction right now. That is in stark contrast to those opposite who, when they had their time in office—

Ms Grace interjected.

Ms Bates interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): The members for McConnel and Mudgeeraba will cease their quarrelling across the chamber.

Ms SCANLON: When they had their time in office, they closed down the Barrett centre, the adolescent mental health facility for young vulnerable Queenslanders. That is their record. In stark contrast, we are partnering with the federal government to also deliver an urgent care clinic.

What did those opposite actually commit to on the Gold Coast? There are quite a few Gold Coast members on that side opposite. What did the member for Broadwater commit to? What did the member for Mudgeeraba, the shadow health minister, commit to? The members for Coomera, Theodore, Surfers Paradise, Mermaid Beach, Bonney, Burleigh, Currumbin and Southport—none of what I just mentioned would exist if those opposite were elected to government. In fact, the urgent care clinic would not exist as well if the Morrison government were re-elected to government. They did not commit a single dollar to actually build any health infrastructure on the Gold Coast, yet they have the audacity to come in here and whinge and whine with no plan. All they committed to was a planning study—that was it—for the entire Gold Coast; a planning study, but no actual money for infrastructure. In fact, they committed to 5,000 fewer health workers than the Palaszczuk government as well, so there would be 3,270 fewer nurses, 750 fewer doctors, 860 fewer allied health staff, and 155 pure paramedics. You want to hear some more health data? 4,400—that is how many health jobs those opposite cut as part of their so-called debt reduction plan.

Ms Bates interjected.

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


Ms SCANLON: We heard today what some LNP members really think about those health workers—the shadow minister in the LNP saying, ‘It is time we broke the back on unrealistic employee entitlements,’ talking to a grandmother of a health worker here in Queensland. The Leader of the Opposition has had to do a bit of scrambling, though, this afternoon to try to backtrack on what his member said. He had to try to put out some fire after his assistant minister started to highlight the real DNA of the LNP’s hatred for pay and conditions of hardworking frontline health workers. I suspect he is disappointed—disappointed really that each and every day someone from his team describes a little bit more of what their secret plan for cuts is. I would also be disappointed if I were the Leader of the Opposition. In fact, their shadow health minister referred to regional health workers as duds. So you can just imagine what they actually say behind closed doors if that is what they say in the public domain.

In stark contrast, we have been employing more doctors, nurses, paramedics and health staff. In fact, in the most recent budget, we provided a record budget of over \$2 billion for the Gold Coast Health and Hospital Service. That is a 100 per cent increase since 2015, and I am very proud of the track record of our health staff. On the Gold Coast alone, our emergency department saw more than 50,000 patients in the last quarter with a 15 per cent increase in the most critical category 1 cases. Despite that, the median wait time at EDs was 12 minutes, with the majority of patients being seen within clinically recommended times. We are also seeing the Queensland Ambulance Service being the busiest ambulance service in the country.

Mrs Frecklington: They are sitting on ramps.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: You are on the speaking list next, member for Nanango. Cease your interjections or I will warn you.

Ms SCANLON: This Labor government will continue to make sure that that service is free and that we employ more paramedics. I find the member for Nanango’s interjections bizarre, given that if she were the leader elected at the last election, there would be fewer of those frontline health workers. I will stand up on our track record any day of the week.

 **Mrs FRECKLINGTON** (Nanango—LNP) (5.53 pm): It gives me great pleasure to follow the minister for—what is the new job now—minister for housing. One of the other crises that we have in this great state. We have a health crisis, we have a crime crisis and we have a housing crisis. One of the crises we have in health is the fact that the nurses do not have houses to live in, in all of these regional towns. Why? Because this government has been in for eight long years. Guess what? It has been a hard, tough month for this government. We have now seen the new health minister, in all of her glory, get shot down in flames—

Ms Bates: Bellyflop.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: I will take that interjection—a complete bellyflop. Not just an hour ago, I was standing on my feet talking about the horrendous nature of the Palaszczuk government in this state. I will get back to Callide in a minute—so please remind me to do that—but what I want to talk about is the Wide Bay health system. We now have a new health minister who is trying to hoodwink Queenslanders by saying she is releasing more data than the former health minister. We know about the failed, embattled former health minister, the now re-issued Attorney-General—thanks for being in the House, Attorney-General—but we know, for all of the former health minister’s faults, we used to get more data about code yellows and tier 3 issues with hospitals under the former health minister. This health minister is just giving us averages.

Let’s have a look at some figures for the Wide Bay. This is just for three months. Of that, 30 per cent—91 days in three months—we have seen those hospitals were at tier 3. At Bundy Hospital, there were six tier 3 escalations lasting for longer than 81 hours, totalling 488 hours. At the Hervey Bay Hospital—I promised the member for Hervey Bay I would talk about his failures—there were seven tier 3 escalations lasting for 38 hours or more. Let me say this: it is important to note that it is not the fault of the hardworking nurses, doctors and allied health people in those hospitals. It is not the fault of the hardworking ambos who are sitting on the ramps at all of our hospitals. It is not their fault. It is because the Palaszczuk government does not know how to manage the health system.

I will refer to Callide because we have some good people from the Callide electorate in this chamber right now, up in the gallery. I want to acknowledge Don Stiller, the newly minted OAM! Hear, hear! Here is someone who has spent his entire life working on behalf of the community. He has made sure that all of his family know that we have to work on behalf of our community. Dad, that is why I am here today. Thank goodness Mum is not trying to give birth to Ross, Tim, Jackie and me at the moment, because if you live in the Callide electorate, good luck. I mean, honestly! To all those mums from the Callide electorate, thank goodness for the new member for Callide, because he continues to talk about this government's failings. How long has Chinchilla Hospital been on bypass? 2,000 days, over five years. Maternity on bypass—what an absolute shame! What about Biloela? How many days? 384 days. The new health minister tries to tell us she has fixed the maternity crisis in this great state. What a furphy! It is still on bypass. Now, Gladstone has been on bypass for 339 days—

An honourable member interjected.

Mr Bleijie: It is my Biloela tie.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: I will take that interjection from the deputy while I draw breath. I want to quickly talk about another really important issue and the failures of the Palaszczuk government in the health system. We have been asking, demanding and requesting on behalf of the good people of regional Queensland for telestroke. What an important piece of kit that would be for our regional hospitals, not like renal dialysis at Longreach that we are still waiting for—I am not sure for how many years; not like the mental health beds promised how many years ago for Rockhampton. Thirty-two beds promised around 2016 or 2018. The government want us to cheer them on because they have just re-announced them. A re-announcement of a re-announcement does not fix the health system. Member for Keppel, we cannot wait to make sure we get those seats back. The member for Bundaberg is definitely gone. The member for Hervey Bay—gone! We can only fix the health system with an LNP government.



Mrs GILBERT (Mackay—ALP) (5.58 pm): I support the health minister's amended motion. The Palaszczuk government is throwing everything at the health system to make sure Queenslanders get the world-class health care that they deserve. We are building new beds, and employing frontline staff as our state needs to keep up with demand. The data that the LNP have been talking about today is part of our commitment to making sure that Queenslanders have access to more data about their health system than ever before.

Tier 3 escalations are one of the many ways that our senior clinicians monitor and report capacity in our public hospitals so that resources can be directed to where they are needed most. They allow for central coordination of patient flow and resourcing, meaning patients can get the care they need and critical cases are prioritised. The LNP continue to show that they are more interested in spreading fear and misinformation about our health system and around the community than they are in seeing real solutions. These escalation processes mean that the most critical patients are still able to be prioritised and ambulances are able to take patients to hospitals that have capacity. Tier escalations are about giving our amazing health workers the tools they need to ensure the most critical patients are looked after.

Mrs Frecklington: This is exciting, isn't it?

Mrs GILBERT: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I would like the member for Nanango to withdraw.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Pause the clock, please.

Mrs GILBERT: I take offence at the member for Nanango's comments.

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


Mrs FRECKLINGTON: I withdraw.

Mrs GILBERT: However, on our side of the House we know we build our hospital capacity by investing in our hospitals and investing in more beds. We have committed \$250 million for the expansion of the Mackay Hospital. This project is delivering 128 overnight beds which includes: 112 additional acute beds, eight additional paediatric beds, an additional four maternity beds, four additional neonatal spaces, 12 additional same-day beds, an additional birthing room and an expansion of facility support services. This is on top of the work that the Palaszczuk government has already done, such as having our heart catheter lab upgraded to 24/7. We also have a dedicated orthopaedics ward with specialist trained staff. That is something we have done as a government.

I am proud to be delivering for the people of Mackay, but capacity is not just about beds. It is about making sure that we have the staff needed to look after the people in those beds. Since we were elected we have employed almost 19,000 more frontline workers and we are committed to hiring 9,475 more during this term of government. We will not sack our health workers; we will bring them back.

The Palaszczuk government proudly introduced nurse-to-patient ratios in 2016, a measure that those opposite voted against. We know that ratios save lives and money, but those opposite would rather see our hardworking nurses be stretched thin. They just want to break their backs. Thanks to the progressive coal royalties, we are building a brand new \$48.5 million hospital in Moranbah, much to the delight of the Moranbah community and, I am sure, the member for Burdekin. Of course, we have no idea what their position is on coal royalties. The opposition leader says one thing, the member for Burleigh contradicts him and the member for Burdekin runs off to do his own thing. We just cannot trust those opposite on health. This is a party that cut \$45 million from mental health during their first year in government, the first government in Queensland history to do so. This is the party that cut thousands of health workers including 1,200 nurses and midwives. This is the party that called regional frontline staff 'duds'. The LNP have a disgraceful track record when it comes to mental health.

(Time expired)

 **Ms CAMM** (Whitsunday—LNP) (6.03 pm): I just heard fear and misinformation being expressed by the member for Mackay. Let me remind the member for Mackay, the broader community and the state of Queensland of the track record of the then assistant minister for health, who oversaw the biggest disaster for women's health in this state. A review showed that 26 women had received below standard care and had been injured or harmed under this state government's watch. That was 26 women in Mackay. There were over 170 women in Mackay in obstetrics and gynaecology who came forward. These were women who had their bladders cut, women who had hysterectomies, women who lost their babies. That is the track record of the member for Mackay. That is the track record of this Labor government when it comes to health standards.

We hear lip-service about the care of our frontline staff. That debacle in my community of Mackay has set back our reputation in Mackay a decade in terms of attracting doctors and nurses not to mention creating a culture of cover-up in Mackay. There were nurses who could not come forward and speak up, who were not protected by this government. A former health minister opposite said the LNP was politicking when we were standing up for victims. That is what we do here in the LNP: stand up for regional women and regional women's rights to give birth, to have a baby where they live. I stand by our track record on regional and rural women's health more so than I ever would looking at this Labor government's track record.

I also want to point to some statements that were made about the Big Build, particularly at the Mackay Base Hospital. We have now seen the former health minister and the current health minister fly to Mackay to re-announce, as they do. This statement has come from clinicians who have written to the opposition. It states—

This will be the third maternity unit during my 40 years in Mackay.

...

Once again patronising planning officials come from Brisbane—

with no ministerial oversight—

hold perfunctory consultations with clinical staff then tell us what we need.

...

The women of Mackay are going to be given a quick and easy bottom-shelf, "home brand" product, essentially—

to put a bandaid fix on what has been—

an on-going substandard service for the next generation—

of Mackay mothers and women. It goes on—

With the new unit, women are, at times, still going to wait for days to access emergency surgery for serious clinical problems including miscarriage, pain, bleeding, large abscesses and the like.


Women from the new maternity unit, who will need a caesarean section, are still going to continue to be wheeled through public corridors to reach the current theatre suite.

That is not a first-class system, and the women of Mackay, the Whitsundays and the Central Queensland region deserve better. It goes on—

They are still going to have to compete for theatre time, sometimes for days, with trauma, general surgery, orthopaedics and other disciplines.

That is what happens in a regional and rural community: we have to prioritise. We understand that, but when the government is taking royalties from our region—\$220 million—and investing it in our hospital, we deserve a better standard of care. We deserve our clinicians and our frontline nurses to be listened to, to be heard and not to be talked at. I certainly hope the new health minister goes and asks some questions of the member for Mackay, who was previously the assistant health minister, when it comes to the lack of consultation undertaken.

I turn now to the shadow health minister's motion regarding tier 3 escalations that have been detailed in our question on notice. In Mackay there were 14 escalations, averaging 66 hours. That totals over 900 hours. In Townsville in North Queensland, the tertiary hospital that Mackay residents in desperate need are transported to, there were 13 escalations, averaging 70 hours. That also totals over 920 hours. Right now this government has a facade of releasing and providing access to more data when, in fact, the opposition has uncovered that there is less data. The only thing that we have seen from the new health minister is more Instagram-worthy photos than we have ever seen of any other minister before, and Queenslanders will see through it.

 **Ms McMILLAN** (Mansfield—ALP) (6.08 pm): I rise to support the amendment moved by the health minister. I am proud to be part of a government that supports our health heroes, the health professionals on the front line who day in, day out provide quality services to the people of this great state. We make no secret of the fact that the health system in Queensland is imperfect, but we are proud of the work led by the Premier and the Minister for Health to improve, reform and revitalise the system for those who work in it and for those who rely on it.

Part of this work is a commitment to provide Queenslanders with a transparent and honest account of the state of play. Greater transparency encourages monitoring, tracking and greater accountability, and we are following through on that commitment. Indeed, just last month the Minister for Health announced an updated Queensland hospital performance website, ensuring Queenslanders will have access to more health data than they have ever had. Six new data points are now included on the updated website: monthly patient-off-stretcher time; the number of tier 3 escalations, designed to help hospitals manage local capacity issues; comparative data to show how Queensland shapes up to other jurisdictions; the number of long-stay patients in our hospitals; trend information for the number of specialist outpatient appointments offered; and ambulance response times. Further, the new-look and easier-to-navigate website means that this information is easily understood and more accessible for all Queenslanders.

We now know that more meaningful information about how our health system is performing means that we will all have a better understanding of the pressures on our frontline health staff and what they are facing every day. We know that transparency, scrutiny and feedback help to drive service improvements which benefit all Queenslanders. This is why we make so much health data available to the public—not like those opposite, to score political points and denigrate our hardworking health professionals. It is not lost on me that this very data—the data we are proactively and proudly releasing—is being leveraged to criticise the supposed opacity of the government. I categorically reject this notion. It flies in the face of fact, and it is certainly not a view shared by the broader public. Indeed, just this morning, an editorial in the *Courier-Mail* described the government's commitment to transparency and the proactive release of this data as 'right and brave'. This is a far cry from the member for Mudgeeraba's characterisation.

The member for Mudgeeraba, the member for Broadwater and the member for Kawana all sat around the Newman cabinet table when the LNP wreaked havoc on our health system. Here is some health data: they sacked more than 4,400 health workers including 1,800 nurses and midwives. Some 1,470 public servants from my electorate of Mansfield were sacked during the Newman years. They cut \$1.6 billion from the Queensland Health budget. They axed hospital beds across Queensland. They closed the adolescent mental health unit, a facility that supported the most vulnerable young Queenslanders. They cut \$120 million in funding to Queensland health community organisations and they crippled the public system by trying to force unreasonable working conditions on doctors. The member for Moggill knows that very well. They cut, sack and sell. That is all the LNP know. It is always the same story—the same people, with the same dastardly plan and the same destructive outcome for our health system and for hardworking Queenslanders.

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

AYES, 50:

ALP, 50—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, Smith, Stewart, Sullivan, Tantari, Walker, Whiting.

NOES, 33:

LNP, 33—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, Robinson, Rowan, Simpson, Stevens, Watts, Weir.

Pair: Skelton, Purdie.

Resolved in the affirmative.

Question put—That the motion, as amended, be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

Motion, as agreed—

That this House

1. notes the new transparent health data reporting as committed to by the Palaszczuk government
2. notes the Queensland Health and Hospitals Plan is delivering the largest ever hospital building program in our state's history, including:
 - (a) three brand new hospitals in Bundaberg, Toowoomba and Coomera
 - (b) seven new satellite hospitals to help take the pressure off emergency departments, including:
 - (i) Redlands
 - (ii) Tugun
 - (iii) Caboolture
 - (iv) Ripley
 - (v) Kallangur
 - (vi) Bribie Island; and
 - (vii) Eight Mile Plains
 - (c) 11 major hospital expansions across Queensland, including:
 - (i) Cairns Hospital
 - (ii) Hervey Bay Hospital
 - (iii) Ipswich Hospital
 - (iv) Logan Hospital
 - (v) Mackay Hospital
 - (vi) PA Hospital
 - (vii) QEII Hospital
 - (viii) Redcliffe Hospital
 - (ix) Robina Hospital
 - (x) The Prince Charles; and
 - (xi) Townsville University Hospital
3. notes the impact the wait times and costs associated with seeing a GP are having on Queensland's health system and the work underway with the Commonwealth to further address these issues.

WATER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Resumed from p. 2647, on motion of Mr Butcher—

That the bill be now read a second time.



Mrs FRECKLINGTON (Nanango—LNP) (6.18 pm): I rise to speak to the Water Legislation Amendment Bill as the shadow minister for water. The primary objective of this bill is to amend the Water Act 2000 to establish a regulatory framework for implementing Queensland's strengthened policy for measuring the take of non-urban water. It follows the Labor government's public comments made in 2018 in response to the independent audit of Queensland's non-urban water measurement and compliance as well as the Murray-Darling Basin compliance compact to improve non-urban water

management and compliance. The bill also amends several other pieces of water legislation to apparently improve their operational efficiency through amendments that increase the coverage and standard of meters used to measure non-urban water take, provide for measurement of overland flow take, improve data quality and timeliness, and ensure fit-for-purpose enforcement for measurement of take, for which we know the Labor government would like to have as many enforcements as possible.

The State Development and Regional Industries Committee tabled its report on 9 December 2022 and recommended that the bill be passed and made three further recommendations: one, continue to monitor the cost implications and transition time needed to implement the strengthened requirements; two, provide the Water Engagement Forum with exposure drafts of regulations and standards in advance of implementation and that a review of regulations be conducted after a period of no more than five years; and, three, develop and publish a clear framework that specifies how that reported data will be collected, used, distributed and published.

From the outset I want to confirm that the LNP opposition will not stand in the way of this bill, and it is good to see the water minister in the House.

A government member interjected.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: No, it is good to see the water minister in the House because he has the manufacturing event that we would both like to be at right at this moment, so I do acknowledge the presence of the water and manufacturing minister in the House, and all of the best for your event tonight. I know that we have been enjoying the purple carpet that has been rolled out for the women in manufacturing.

I want to confirm that we will not stand in the way of this bill. However, there are issues and flaws with this legislation that I want to place on record. In doing so, I want to acknowledge the work of the State Development and Regional Industries Committee, in particular the deputy chair, the member for Lockyer, Jim McDonald, and the member for Burleigh, Michael Hart. Both the members for Lockyer and Burleigh listened intently and consulted widely during the committee process and brought to light a number of issues throughout the hearings, as is evidenced by their statement of reservation. This shows why the committee process is so important and perhaps the Premier might like to understand this the next time she decides to trash parliamentary process and procedure by ramming through legislation like she did during the last sitting week to avoid scrutiny and transparency. In bizarre scenes that even those opposite have spoken out about as being chaotic, it just obviously adds more to the chaos and the crisis. Disappointingly but not surprisingly, the Labor members on the committee used their numbers to avoid including many of the issues that the LNP raised during the committee process. However, it is important for me to raise these issues during the debate.

The issues identified during the inquiry proved that this legislation has not been fully thought out and completely rushed through, and it is not just me saying that but many stakeholders and advocacy groups are also saying that. Is it any wonder that this appears to be the case after the embarrassment the member for Gladstone had during the 2022 budget estimates? Who could forget when I revealed that two years into his ministerial role at that time—and we are now up to three years—the member for Gladstone still had not put any bills forth at all? In fact, this is the first—

Mr Stewart: How many have you done?

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: I take that interjection from the Minister for Mines: it is obvious he has never been in opposition! It is well over a year since that date and it is clear that the member for Gladstone had to be dragged kicking and screaming into the chamber. He relented to my pressure and brought a bill into the House—

A government member: You are dreaming!

Mrs FRECKLINGTON:—in his capacity as water minister. I am happy to take that interjection that I am dreaming. Yes, I am dreaming: it has actually happened. The water minister's bill is here before the House. Like the rest of his ministerial colleagues, it is clear that the member for Gladstone is all-too consumed with the chaos and crisis that is engulfing the government. I want to put this on the record: where are the leaks coming from in this Palaszczuk government? He has the title. Do members think the Minister for Water is the leaker in this government? After that estimates I can just imagine that the minister would have gone back to his staff and said, 'Quick! Find me a bill about anything. We don't want to have to go through with that.'

Ms Boyd interjected.

An opposition member: Catch up!

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: Catch up. We are now at 2023, so catch up. As I pointed out, it has taken close to three years for the minister to bring forth any legislation into this House. After those three years of inaction, we have seen many missed opportunities for the water portfolio—an important portfolio for all Queenslanders. The minister's department continues to commission study after study—going round and round in circles with another study—and this complete mismanagement from the minister is starving Queenslanders of reliable and secure water not just now but into the future. It is not just me saying that; it is the constant stream of whistleblowers who are calling into my office.

Ms Pease interjected.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: I will take that interjection, because at least I had a plan, unlike these jokers opposite. Honestly, the minister could have brought forth—

Ms PEASE: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I believe the member is misleading the House: she never had a plan for the Bradfield scheme.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Martin): That is not a point of order. Resume your seat.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order: that is a frivolous point of order from the member.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Nanango, I have already dealt with that point of order.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: The minister could have brought forward legislation to give better support to councils in maintaining their water assets—something I constantly hear about from mayors and councillors right across this state and something that I know my colleague and friend the member for Warrego is very passionate about. I recently met with one of my local councils, the South Burnett Regional Council, to discuss important water security measures that must be implemented for the long-term economic future of our region. It needs the Labor government to listen to those commonsense plans and obviously that will drive economic growth in the ag sector, because, like so many other regional areas, growth is only restricted by access to additional water.

We know that the South Burnett Regional Council has three major projects: the building of the Barlil Weir—something that we have announced several times over for our crop farmers in the Byee and Mondure areas; an extension of the mighty Blackbutt irrigation scheme for our avocado growers, and a big shout-out to the Blackbutt Avocado Festival on the weekend—it was fantastic; and water allocation for Gordonbrook Dam to improve Kingaroy's current water shortage problems.

The minister could have brought forward legislation to make more water affordable for Queenslanders and allow more water supply for domestic use, but that has not happened. The minister could have brought forward legislation to build new water infrastructure. In contrast, the minister's record is actively campaigning against investment in dams in this state. It would be remiss of me not to highlight that under the member for Gladstone's watch as minister we have seen the Paradise Dam fiasco. We have also seen Urannah Dam cut. We have seen Emu Swamp Dam cut. We have seen the Hughenden irrigation project cut and Hells Gate Dam cut. All of these projects—nation-building, drought-proofing projects—will underpin the future of not only urban supply but the future of ag and manufacturing right across this state.

A major issue that was raised during consultation on this bill was the cost and unrealistic time frame for the implementation of compliance measures for our hardworking irrigators. In July I travelled to Bundaberg with my colleague the member for Burnett where we met with the coastal Burnett groundwater management advisory committee. It highlighted its concerns about the implementation of the Queensland non-urban water management policy, in particular the cost involved and the unrealistic time frames for the water meter revalidation.

These irrigators I met echoed the feedback the committee received in its submissions that the November 2023 deadline is completely inappropriate. There is just not enough bodies on the ground to validate these meters, especially given the extreme contractor shortage affecting the industry at present. It neglects to consider the cost of implementation to primary producers as a major concern. Feedback from many submitters has suggested government funding will not be sufficient. AgForce has advised costs of meters can be in the range of between \$2,000 to \$30,000 for some of the larger patent approved meters. The Kalamia Cane Growers organisation estimated it to be even higher, with costs of \$10,000 given that there may need to be pipe or pump infrastructure changes as well. In my electorate I have received similar feedback from the Cressbrook Creek Irrigators who simply do not understand, and rightfully so, the unrealistic November time frame. I again plead with the minister to push it back.

Mr Butcher: If they book it in they'll be looked after.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: We are just going to trust that, are we, Minister? Where are they going to book it in? There is not enough validators to have it booked in. Please listen. It is reasonable to expect that these costs for implementation will be passed on to the consumer resulting in the prices of fruit and veg further increasing purely because of this government's reckless actions. Is this yet another secret tax on grocery items by the Palaszczuk Labor government? This is in addition to fruit and veg already going up due to other negligible policy changes by both state and federal Labor governments.

The LNP was also concerned that the telemetry study will not fully cover the costs primary producers will incur, with many already affected by high input costs and the effects of natural disasters, like the many horticulture producers in my region of the Somerset and the member for Lockyer's community. The Somerset and Lockyer regions are the food bowl for South-East Queensland. These producers are only just emerging from the devastating floods of 2022 and now they will be hit again by a Labor government who just do not understand how these extra costs are going to impact them. Let us not forget that many producers—and this is probably a lesson for some of those Labor people who have no clue—do not only have one meter, they often have multiple meters. That might mean that if they have six meters at, let us say conservatively—and I am saying conservatively—\$5,000 on average per meter, they are just expected to find \$30,000.

QFF in its submission raised concerns about the establishment costs and noted that the cost of compliance should not result in agriculture businesses becoming non-viable. This expense has no benefit for the producer. It does not improve their farming practices. It does not improve the food and fibre they are growing for us. It is just a regulatory cost. It hits at the hip pocket and nothing more. It is another cost like rising electricity costs that just has to be absorbed by business. What it does, however, is help the Labor government look like they are doing something for the green inner city voters. We know Labor are desperate to do anything to cling onto power. The member for McConnel, the member for Bulimba, the member for Cooper and the member for Millar are all feeling this threat loud and clear.

The LNP is also concerned with the lack of consultation undertaken with detail lacking when it comes to the development of regulations. We know that consultation is not a strong suit of those opposite so I guess this is not much of a surprise. Dale Miller, formerly of AgForce, advised the committee—

We do not know, as far as I am aware, what the department has done with that information in terms of making adjustments to what firstly had been proposed.

It is incredibly concerning that the minister is not taking into consideration the feedback provided to him by key stakeholder and advocacy groups. I would implore the minister to review the consultation undertaken. The other issue that came up during the committee inquiry was the risk that local contractors will not be used for the installation of these meters. The LNP believes local contractors should be used where possible to install the approved meters. Every effort needs to be made at a regulatory level to ensure local contractors are used for these works. Stakeholders raised this issue of being able to secure the services of duly qualified people who can install and validate the meters and the availability of the meters themselves, particularly in some parts of regional Queensland.

While I note the department's advice that they will monitor the situation, this is just another example of a government not understanding the realities of day-to-day primary production. We saw something similar in the floods with the unrealistic deadlines for the QRIDA flood grants which assumed landholders would be able to just hire contractors out of the air and have them come and immediately fix flood-damaged paddocks, fences and equipment. The government imposed deadlines which looked good in their reports but had no actual meaning in the real world. We had to constantly beg and plead with the government to extend the deadlines because access to contractors for these flood-impacted farmers is nearly impossible. A similar situation will most likely occur with the meter installation. I urge the minister to take that into consideration. There is also no way for irrigators to appeal their water meter revalidation requirements. The arbitrary deadlines imposed on irrigators for the revalidation must be reconsidered because the department knows that most meters will not be able to be revalidated in time—it is actually impossible.

The bill fails to consider the fact that landholders using water for low-risk takes are likely to result in water entitlements being exceeded. Therefore, the many landholders across Queensland that use water for stock and domestic purposes will be potentially exposed—I can see the minister shaking his head, but he cannot just say 'trust me'; we need to see it in the legislation—to unnecessary costs from these amendments. I acknowledge that in their submission AgForce stated on behalf of their members—

Strongly support not requiring metering on stock and domestic use.

They go on—

Water used for stock and domestic purposes is a basic landholder right with intrinsic limits related to land capability and should not be metered.

...

Water used for S&D purposes is negligible compared to Queensland's total water use.

I could not agree more.

In relation to an objective of this bill to provide for farm scale measurement of overland flow water take, I have, like all members on this side, serious concerns. It is ambiguous, to say the least, whether the measurement of overland flow relates only to Queensland's Murray-Darling Basin catchment or does it relate to all dams, including stock and domestic dams across Queensland? On one hand we have Minister Butcher in his speech stating—

The bill provides for measurement plans which will be required for overland flow water licences in the Queensland Murray-Darling Basin ... Measurement plans will detail how water take is measured on-farm and provide more accurate information about the amount of overland flow and the water taken in these catchments so its impact on river flows and water availability for other users can be better understood and managed more effectively.

On the other hand, in the committee report there is no specific mention that the measurement of overland flow only relates to the Murray-Darling Basin. In fact, the committee report just says that the bill introduces—and this is where our concern is—a head of power for regulation to require the measurement of farm scale overland flow. The devil really is in the detail or, in this case, the regulation. It is noted in the committee report that much of the detail underpinning the strengthened arrangements are to be provided in regulation. How do we trust the minister to do the right thing in that regulation, which the committee has not reviewed?

I note the QFF raised issues about the application of overland flow measurement requirements and how they will be implemented inside and outside the Murray-Darling Basin area, including the cost of meeting those requirements. AgForce shared those concerns, especially outside the Murray-Darling Basin. What is the actual end goal here for the government? Is it to start the process in the Murray-Darling Basin and gradually, quietly, move measurement of overland flow to cover all farm dams across Queensland?

I look forward to the minister stating that in the House. It was very quiet but I take the interjection from the minister: he shook his head and he said, 'No.' I look forward to the minister stating that in the House. It is extremely concerning if that is the case.

Government members interjected.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: They joke and laugh about it but they do not get the seriousness of this for primary producers in the state. I am being very considered in my contribution. The department even estimated costs of between \$30,000 and \$40,000 to deliver overland flow measurement requirements, hence the minister will understand my concerns. Therefore, I will be moving an amendment to alter clause 39 of the bill in an effort to remove that ambiguity and address the need to exclude the measurement of water used for stock and domestic purposes. I am happy to table those amendments now and have them circulated.

Tabled paper: Water Legislation Amendment Bill 2022, amendments to be moved by Mrs Deb Frecklington MP [\[1329\]](#).

Tabled paper: Water Legislation Amendment Bill 2022, explanatory notes to Mrs Deb Frecklington's amendments [\[1330\]](#).

Tabled paper: Water Legislation Amendment Bill 2022, statement of compatibility with human rights contained in Mrs Deb Frecklington's amendments [\[1331\]](#).

To that end, the amendment will exclude the measurement of overland flow for stock and domestic use across the entirety of the state. The amendment carves stock and domestic use out of the authorisations to which measurement requirements apply.

The Water Legislation Amendment Bill could have been an opportunity for the government to invest in ensuring access to clean and safe water, particularly for our Indigenous communities. Like many Queenslanders I was shocked and disappointed to hear reports from brave whistleblowers about water contamination in the Yarrabah Aboriginal Shire Council. Our First Nations people should not be forced to live in Third World conditions because the government has been too busy with its internal chaos to deliver those basic services. It is unacceptable that a community in Queensland—

Government members interjected.


Mrs FRECKLINGTON: This is a serious issue. It is completely unacceptable that right now—

Government members interjected.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: On behalf of the people of Yarrabah, I will take that interjection because they want us to bring up this issue with the Palaszczuk government because the Palaszczuk government is not listening to them. I am doing it on their behalf. It is unacceptable that a community in Queensland does not have access to clean drinking water. Again, that just shows that the chaos and confusion of this government does not seem to be finished.

As I mentioned earlier in my contribution, the LNP will not stand in the way of this bill. However, there are a tranche of issues with the legislation that have stemmed from this bill being rushed and not completely thought out, which are symptoms of the chaos and crisis that are engulfing the government. It is disappointing that these issues are occurring time and time again because the government has given up on the basics of governing and is too obsessed with itself. This bill is a missed opportunity to address many of the issues in the water portfolio in this state. I look forward to the next bill because it is exciting to be able to debate these issues with the minister.

I urge members opposite to please, on behalf of rural and regional landholders across the entirety of this state, consider and support the LNP's amendment, which I have just foreshadowed and will talk about in consideration in detail, to exclude the measurement of overland flow for stock and domestic use across the entirety of the state. I implore the minister to make this the start of a strong legislative agenda by accepting my amendment—an agenda to secure the future of Queensland's water supply and an agenda that will actually deliver for all Queenslanders.

 **Mr HART** (Burleigh—LNP) (6.43 pm): I too rise to contribute to the debate on the Water Legislation Amendment Bill 2022. We need to consider that we are now in the eighth month of 2023 and reflect on the fact that this bill was put to the House on 12 October 2022 and reported on, by the committee that I sit on, on 9 December 2022.

It always worries me when we see a government trying to change things to make them more accurate. In this case, they are talking about installing water meters in places that did not have water meters or where they want to install more accurate water meters. With that thought in mind, my devious mind immediately jumped to thinking that maybe this is some sort of revenue raiser for the government. At the department briefing I asked whether any modelling had been done to see whether the revenue stream from water may change under these changes. The department representative said—

I might ask for clarification about 'the revenue stream'.

She did not quite get that. I then said—

I am trying to figure out whether this is about revenue or water take or environmental issues. Has there been any consideration that this may bring more money into the government from being able to measure the take versus what we are doing now?

The response was—

There is no current proposal to increase the revenue of the government that is a part of this. The bill is certainly about improving measurement to ensure we have transparent access to information and we are responsible manager of water.

This legislation provides a head of power under the regulation for the minister to make changes. When the department talks about there being no 'current' proposal to increase revenue that indicates to me that this regulation, which none of us have seen by the way, could make those changes.

The minister talks about the regulation. I will refer to the government's response to the committee report on the bill. It states—

The government notes and supports this comment from the committee. The department has developed a more detailed information paper about the proposed Water Regulation amendments and provided this to the Water Engagement Forum ...

Apparently, it has been recently provided to the Water Engagement Forum. As I have said, this bill was reported on in December of last year and the regulation has been given to the Water Engagement Forum but it is not available to members of parliament to peruse to see exactly what it is that we are signing up to. Unfortunately, I do not trust this government to make these sorts of changes.

Another major concern that I have relates to fitting the water meters and associated pumps. I guess they are going to have a water meter and a pump. That work has to be carried out by a duly approved person. In the past we have seen this government change regulation and legislation to make it a 'duly approved person' who signs off on the installation of whatever it maybe that the legislation is talking about. What tends to happen is that we end up with a training company training this 'duly approved person' and, for some strange reason, most of those training companies are associated with unions. It is, in fact, a revenue stream for the unions—

Mr Lister: And the Labor Party.

Mr HART:—and, hence, the Labor Party every time this government changes something that requires a ‘duly approved person’ to do an installation. Having a duly approved person install these things leads to a whole lot of other problems, as was articulated by the member for Nanango.

In a lot of regional areas these pumps, and hence the meters, are actually installed by the supplier who may not be a registered plumber, a registered electrician or a duly approved person. Suddenly they will have to be this duly approved person. We did ask the department how many of these duly approved people there are, because we do not know who a duly approved person is. They were not able to tell us. That leads us to the problem of how many there are, where they are, how hard they are to get and how much it will cost to get this duly approved person to install the water meter.

We are not reinventing the wheel here; this is something that has happened in other states. We are talking about the Murray-Darling Basin, so Victoria and New South Wales have some input in terms of what they have done in their states. You would think the government would want to hear about the sorts of problems that have occurred over the years in New South Wales and Victoria as part of this process, but they have not in fact invited some of the key players who were involved in what happened in New South Wales. This seems very strange to me.

We heard from John Shannon, from the Border Rivers Food and Fibre group, who is not part of the Water Engagement Forum but who had some very interesting things to tell us about his observations.


Mr Lister: He represents people who grow about a billion dollars worth of produce.

Mr HART: I take that interjection. You would think the government would want to listen to his input, but he is not on the Water Engagement Forum. I encourage the government to put the Border Rivers Food and Fibre group into the Water Engagement Forum and use their expertise. He told us that his initial observation from looking at the information schedule for the policy is that it is ambitious. Here is a guy who has gone through this process in another state looking at the Queensland process and saying it is ambitious. What does ‘ambitious’ mean?

Government members interjected.

Mr HART: I take the interjections from the Labor members, because they are hardly ambitious at all! This is a bill that was reported on in December last year and here we are in September—eight months later. This bill has finally made it to the top of the *Notice Paper*. Mind you, it has been there before but then has been shuffled backwards. Wouldn’t that indicate to members that this government is not serious about water at all? This is the very first bill that the Minister for Water has been responsible for, yet it has been shuffled backwards. I do not know what he has been doing with his time.

I remind members opposite that, if they are going to start talking about water delivery, it is no good just having pipelines, pumps and so on. They actually need to build a dam. What is this government’s history with regard to building dams? The last dam they built was Paradise Dam. What have they done with that? They have torn it down and will have to spend five times more to build it up again—Labor logic! There are no dams planned for water use in this state apart from the Rookwood Weir, which the government was dragged screaming to. I actually went to Rockhampton in 2017. The LNP promised to build that dam and the Labor Party followed suit soon after. The Labor government has cancelled dams. The government has a Big Build which is actually a big hoax. It talks about building some dams in the Pioneer-Burdekin area. It is just not going to happen. They will never build a dam.

 **Mr SMITH** (Bundaberg—ALP) (6.53 pm): There is a lot there from the member for Burleigh that I could respond to; however, that was not my plan. My plan, seeing as he is a fellow member of the committee, was to acknowledge that the member for Burleigh has announced that he will not be contesting at the next election. Whilst it is fair to say that the member for Burleigh and I bring colourful commentary to the committee, I will miss my attempts at getting him thrown out of estimates. The member was not thrown out this year; he was very well behaved, despite a prop. Whilst we may not always agree politically, in his statement he spoke about his family. I know that he loves his family very much. From my family to his, I wish him all the best.

One of the great parts of this parliament is convention. When a member speaks in a debate and it is not ruled out of order, it becomes a part of the debate. I thought I would respond to a few comments by the member for Nanango. There is a lot of conjecture about whether or not the member for Nanango had a plan involving the Bradfield scheme that did not quite work out. The member for Nanango did have a plan—a plan to be premier. Like the Bradfield scheme, that did not quite work out. Then the member for Nanango had a plan to stay on as leader. Again like the Bradfield, that did not quite work out. Today the member for Nanango had a plan to take a picture of the purple carpet rolling out on the Speaker’s Green and attack the Premier, saying that the Premier is going to—

Mr MICKELBERG: Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order on relevance. When the member for Nanango made her contribution she was drawn back to the bill as well. I fail to see how this is relevant to the bill, particularly the long title of the bill.

Mr SMITH: On the point of order, Madam Deputy Speaker, as I just outlined, it is convention that if anything is ruled acceptable within a debate and the Speaker does not pull it up for relevance, members are allowed to reply to that element of the debate. The element is about the member for Nanango having a plan.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Lui): I will take some advice. Member for Bundaberg, I ask you to come back to the long title of the bill.

Mr SMITH: Absolutely. It was wonderful to hear the member for Nanango also talk about the importance of Paradise Dam for agriculture and horticulture and the importance of Paradise Dam being safe. As outlined by the Queensland Audit Office and the department, there are 40,000 people who would be at risk should that dam fail. The member for Nanango called the minister's work around Paradise Dam a 'fiasco'. It would be a disaster if the LNP had its way, because it would mean that there would be an unsafe dam, with 300,000 megalitres of water behind it, ready to destroy the lives of 40,000 people in the Bundaberg community. That is an absolute shame. I hope—I have my fingers crossed—that in a week or two, as the Leader of the Opposition was screaming out to me, their candidate is one of the ones who received money to deliberately run a false and misleading campaign. I look forward to having that candidate announced. We will see what the CCC has to say about them. I also know that there was a plan to retain Pumicestone, Caloundra, Hervey Bay, Bundaberg and Nicklin, but that plan also did not work out very well at all.

I thank the committee for its work on this piece of legislation. This piece of legislation was brought to the House by the minister. The minister, as I said before, has done outstanding work in his role, whether it is on Paradise Dam or Rookwood Weir or whether it is ensuring there is investment in infrastructure right throughout the state. The background to this policy is that it follows the government's commitment in 2018 to improve Queensland's water management and compliance following the independent audit of Queensland non-urban water measurement and compliance and the Murray-Darling Basin Compliance Compact. I refer to the concerns raised by those opposite around the costs with respect to telemetry. I asked the department what subsidies there would be and how the department would support those who need to put telemetry on and around the Murray-Darling. In her response, Ms Stiles said—

In terms of the telemetry subsidy, the eligibility will be those Queensland Murray-Darling Basin catchment areas where we would be requiring telemetry through a legislative requirement. It will be an 80 per cent subsidy, so 80 per cent of the costs would be subsidised, up to \$4,000 per device.

It is important to put on record that the Palaszczuk government and the current federal Albanese government are working hard for growers and as legislative requirements change that support remains. In this House we know that the Nationals have deserted the bush. The Nationals have deserted landowners across Queensland because they have fallen foul of their Liberal Green friends in inner-city Brisbane—the same Liberals who directed their preferences to the member for South Brisbane. We know that the Liberals are pandering to the Greens. It is an unholy coalition of a 'noalition'. We know that because the Nationals do not speak up against—

Mr Lister interjected.

Mr SMITH: The member for Southern Downs is one of the biggest supporters of the Greens there has ever been.

Debate, on motion of Mr Smith, adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT

Buderim Foundation



Mr MICKELBERG (Buderim—LNP) (7.00 pm): I would like to take this opportunity to highlight a recent record achieved by one of Buderim's unique organisations—an organisation that is responsible for the betterment of Buderim and the broader Sunshine Coast. Last Sunday, I was privileged to attend one of the highlights of the Buderim calendar where the Buderim Foundation presented nearly \$100,000 in grants to local communities groups. Along with Mayor Mark Jamieson and Alistair Cook of the Buderim Pharmacy, who is the proud sponsor of the foundation, I was proud to present cheques to 21 of our selfless community organisations.

There were grants to help fund all sorts of projects, including shade sails at the local Buderim Community Kindergarten, a local cornerstone that has delivered early learning for our children for over 50 years. I should mention that I was also privileged to recently attend the Buderim Community Kindergarten's 50th birthday celebration. Alongside my four kids, who were very excited to play in the mud kitchen, devour some expertly cooked Buderim Lions sausages, get their faces painted and consume way too much birthday cake, it was great to reminisce with stories of years past and reflect on the special place that is the Buderim Community Kindergarten, which is today still delivering excellent play-based learning for young children in their year prior to starting school. On behalf of the community, I would like to wish the Buderim Community Kindergarten a happy birthday.


Some of the other projects that were supported by the Buderim Foundation last weekend include vehicles to assist nursing and animal rescue organisations, the development of a dementia awareness program, a mental health program, along with extra resources for cancer and palliative care patients. Local sport was given a big boost—including athletics, croquet and pony clubs—along with many social groups.

I would like to congratulate every recipient, but it is everyone in our community who will benefit as the Buderim Foundation increases opportunities for locals and strengthens the overall social fabric of our community. Each grant recipient has their own special cause and goal; however, each has the common goal and purpose of improving our Buderim community.

The Buderim Foundation strives to build a stronger community by harnessing the power of giving. The concept is simple—money comes in from incredibly generous donors and philanthropists, it is carefully invested and managed to generate income, and then whatever money is generated is distributed to community-based organisations. It is simple and immensely effective, and it will continue long into the future. The foundation has awarded almost \$830,000 to local groups since 2008, and this money has backed many local initiatives that Buderim residents use and enjoy today. I am looking forward to the day that they crack a million dollars in grants, which will be not too far away, I am sure.

I want to use my remaining time to thank everyone behind the success of the Buderim Foundation, including the grants committee led by Rebecca Ramsay. Rebecca will soon be stepping down from her role after five years of both assessing the applications and making the decision about what is going to get supported. Her efforts have not gone unnoticed. I have no doubt that new chair Linda Bolton will continue the good work. I am excited to see what new heights the Buderim Foundation can reach and what community groups can achieve with its unwavering support.

Mansfield Electorate, Events

 **Ms McMILLAN** (Mansfield—ALP) (7.03 pm): September is set to be another busy month for the Mansfield electorate, hosting a variety of community events enjoyed by all. Last Sunday, small businesses, community leaders and families flocked to Rochedale's Kev Vanstone Park for the 2023 Rochedale Community Day. With beautiful weather, terrific music and activities for all ages, it was heartwarming to see such a close-knit community come together to celebrate their suburb. The Rochedale community has the most inspiring community spirit. I would like to especially thank the committee, Marc, Jezza and Helen as well as Frank, for all the work they did to make the event the success it was.

Recently I attended the Wishart State School public speaking grand final, an annual event that sees every student recite a poem and a persuasive speech to their classmates, with three students chosen from each year level to present in front of the entire school. Congratulations to all students on this incredible achievement. Public speaking is one of the most important, yet terrifying, skills to learn. Maybe one day we will see some of these students presenting their maiden speeches as members of parliament.

The Mount Gravatt PCYC is very excited to be receiving \$1 million as part of record funding of \$56 million to PCYCs throughout the state. I am thrilled that our local club will be among those to benefit, ensuring our PCYC continues to support our young people in our community.


The Mansfield electorate is home to many palliative care and retirement villages. Last week, to show my appreciation and to lend a hand, I donated wheelchairs to three of these aged-care facilities as well as the Mount Gravatt Community Centre. These wheelchairs were given to me by Chung Tian Temple to give to those who need it most in our community. I have been told these wheelchairs will assist families who wish to take their residents out on day trips.

Finally, last Thursday night I participated in the Forgotten Women Project's Live Like her Challenge which saw me and 240 others sleep in our cars for the night, raising approximately \$250,000 and awareness of homelessness amongst women over 55. I would like to thank all those who donated to my cause. These donations will work towards making such a difference to the lives of our most vulnerable demographic at risk of homelessness. I share with all members of parliament that it was such a humbling experience to sleep in my car for the night and then wake up and do a full day at work. It very much gave me the experience of what it must be like for the homeless women in our society.

Mr Lister interjected.

Ms McMILLAN: I challenge all members of parliament, including the member for Southern Downs, to show their support and participate, as I mentioned, in this incredibly humbling experience in 2024.

Toowoomba, Events; Toowoomba Regional Council


 **Mr JANETZKI** (Toowoomba South—LNP) (7.06 pm): September is always a big month in the Garden City, and this month is no exception. Firstly, I want to give a shout-out tonight to the South West Queensland Thunder girls who play in the grand final of Queensland's pinnacle football competition this weekend. They are up against it. They are up against Brisbane City that have been undefeated all season. They have scored 144 goals in 19 games. We are coming off a big win—five nil over Broadbeach United. Good luck to the girls. They have done an amazing job all season. It is the best ever season from them. They are also doing great work in the community and building culture in their club. Good luck to them on the weekend.

I also want to comment on the Toowoomba Choral Society's production of *Les Mis*. The last year or two I have been pretty obsessed about *Hamilton*, but I must admit *Les Mis* remains my favourite musical. They have done an outstanding job. The season finished up on the weekend. It had a great local cast. It was a great local production. It had great local talent. There was Brad as Valjean, Shannon as Cosette—well known to Toowoomba audiences—Tara as Fantine and Flynn as Enjolras. John Maskell did an outstanding job as Javert. The stars brought the house down. For the Toowoomba Choral Society it is another season behind them of their much loved production of *Les Mis*.

I also pay tribute to our long-serving mayor who stood down recently. I congratulate new Mayor Geoff McDonald and new Deputy Mayor Rebecca Vonhoff. They are going to do an outstanding job for our region. They are going to lead an invigorated and refreshed team. I pay tribute to Paul for his 40-odd years of public service. He has made an outstanding contribution over all those years. Out of 23 candidates yesterday, we also have a replacement councillor on our council—a small business owner, well known to the Toowoomba community—Edwina Farquhar. I congratulate Eddie on her appointment yesterday as our new councillor. We need to see small businesspeople, small and family business, represented in our local government areas. She is going to do an outstanding job and bring great talent, energy and a forward-looking approach to council. I wish her well.

Finally, it would be remiss of me not to give a plug for the Carnival of Flowers because this weekend the grand floral parade is on Saturday morning. It is the time when our city comes alive. I have to pay tribute to the Toowoomba Regional Council. They have done a great job with all the parks and gardens again this year. We saw that at all of the memorial services we have had for Vietnam Veterans' Day over the last couple of weeks and other services. They have done a great job on the gardens. If anybody is looking for something to do this weekend, get up to the Toowoomba and enjoy the very finest that our region has to offer.

Miller Electorate, Schools

 **Hon. MC BAILEY** (Miller—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads and Minister for Digital Services) (7.09 pm): Getting a good education is the key to life's opportunities. As a kid from a single-parent family who lived on main roads, I am eternally grateful for the very good public state school education I received. I acknowledge a few of my old teachers: Mrs Zeibarth at Broadbeach State School, Graham Iffland at Holland Park State School, and Carolyn Lingard and the late Chas Cameron at Cavendish Road State High School, to name just a few of many good teachers I experienced as a kid to get a good education. Working closely with all my local schools, my P&Cs, my P&Fs, principals, parents and staff is a very high priority for me as the member for Miller.

There are many positive things that have been completed or near completed in my electorate in the local school space that I would like to report to the chamber. Sherwood State School is a fantastic school. It has been there for more than 150 years. We are very advanced now in building disability

access there. It has the old timber verandahs in an elevated style which makes it hard for kids who are in a wheelchair or who might have a disability to get around. That project is nearing completion. We still have funding for their OSHC but they want to add to that themselves and have a good after-school care facility, so we are working with them on that too.

Yeronga State School is going very well with nine new classrooms in the converted old Yeronga dental hospital. There is some new administration there, but the classrooms are fantastic, setting up Yeronga State School for a long time to come in terms of growth. We have just finished the new security fence around the whole school. There is a lot space next to a public park. They have had a lot of people entering the grounds who should not be on the grounds. That school fence, I know, has been very welcomed by the P&C and by parents.

Yeronga State High School has been allocated \$500,000 in this year's state budget to improve its performing arts area. It certainly needs upgrading. That is on top of us working with them in past years to cover their courts. Their collaborative outdoor learning space has been very successful. They also had new fencing of their own.

Junction Park State School, another very old school in my electorate, has one of those classic old schoolhouse 1920s buildings. It is looking better than I have ever seen it, with a big heritage upgrade. That was completed about a year or so ago now. The school looks absolutely magnificent with that piece of work.

I also want to acknowledge the fetes recently at St Elizabeth's school and Graceville State School. I work closely with the other schools in my electorate: Wellers Hill, Milpera, St Sebastian's, Merrimac, Our Ladies and the Barrett school. I have a lot of schools in my electorate. Every kid should know that a good education is the key to a good life.

Fire Ants



Mr LISTER (Southern Downs—LNP) (7.12 pm): I rise tonight to speak about the scourge of fire ants. I note that my honourable friend the member for Gympie asked a question without notice this morning about fire ants. I would like the House to acknowledge and understand what a tremendous threat this is to our state. It is a threat that is currently besieging my honourable friend the member for Theodore in his electorate. It is throughout the Scenic Rim, which borders my electorate, and it is coming to Southern Downs.

This is a plague which has the potential to be far more damaging to our environment than cane toads, if we can consider that as a comparison. In terms of ecosystems and biodiversity damage, fire ants are a very serious threat indeed. That is quite apart from the obvious impacts on humans and our ability to enjoy the environment and, very importantly, to produce the food and fibre that we need to live. Agriculture and grazing is going to be severely affected in my electorate and beyond if the march of fire ants is not arrested.

I was very disappointed and shocked this morning to see that the Premier, although not directly administering the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries, which has carriage in Queensland of the National Fire Ant Eradication Program, was unable to give even the most mildly insightful response to the question. It is clear that the leader of this state is entirely ignorant of the status of the fire ant threat, how the programs are funded and who is responsible for delivering them, and what the threats to our environment and economy are.

On top of this, the federal Labor government, in their most recent budget, cut the funding for the National Fire Ant Eradication Program. It is only \$60 million compared to the \$94 million that was spent in the previous financial year. We need to be ramping up rather than ramping down if we are going to arrest this scourge, which has already gone far too far. The state government does not bathe itself in glory in the way it has discharged the Fire Ant Eradication Program here in Queensland. It is getting way out of control. There have been too many missed opportunities and too much incompetence in dealing with it, and we are going to pay the price.

I would like to give a lesson to the Labor government. They like to talk about spending money—record billions on this and record billions on that—and how many people they are employing. That money has to come from somewhere. They do not get it from taxing politicians and public servants. The funds for those things come from a vibrant and strong economy, and that strong economy in my electorate is agriculture. It is about the food and the fibre that we need to feed ourselves, to export to the world and to pay our way. I urge the government to get on top of this. I urge the Premier to avail herself of what she needs to know to be a good Premier in the case of fire ants.

(Time expired)

Algester Electorate, Schools



Hon. LM ENOCH (Algester—ALP) (Minister for Treaty, Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, Minister for Communities and Minister for the Arts) (7.16 pm): Pallara in my electorate of Algester is one of the fastest growing suburbs in the south-east and Pallara State School is fast becoming one of the largest primary schools in Queensland. Over the past six years there has been tremendous growth in this catchment area which inevitably means enrolment growth at the school.

The Palaszczuk government recognises the importance of education and the facilities that support a healthy learning environment. That is why we are investing \$15.8 million to construct a new three-storey learning centre, providing 21 additional learning spaces. This is on top of the new classrooms already delivered recently.

I recently hosted a meeting with Pallara State School P&C members Mandi Tran, Sammy Barnett and Jacob Senyard, along with the school principal, business manager and Education Queensland regional staff, for an update on the progress of the new classrooms. The department is installing four temporary additional learning spaces whilst the big build is underway.

It is a requirement to undertake extensive consultation and reach a resolution with Brisbane City Council before the project can proceed. The department staff informed the meeting that negotiations were still underway with Brisbane City Council, with a number of matters still not resolved, which is incredibly disappointing given the school needs these new classrooms. I implore Brisbane City Council to back our school and the Queensland government investment in the Algester electorate.

Pallara State School is not the only school in the Algester electorate benefiting from the Palaszczuk government's investment in education. The 2023-24 state budget is also delivering for Watson Road State School. A \$1.2 million investment in Watson Road will mean a completely refurbished amenities block with brand new epoxy flooring, cubicles, wash basins and pedestals—a terrific improvement for students and staff. This investment will also mean a completely new playground, shade structure and soft-fall completed next year as part of the government's initial \$20 million allocation of School Playground and Tuckshop Upgrades Program funding.

In addition to these fantastic major upgrades to Watson Road State School and Pallara State School, both schools will also receive funding to support minor infrastructure projects. These minor infrastructure projects ensure our schools have safe and modern learning and play environments, which is why multiple schools in my electorate of Algester will benefit from this funding. Schools that will receive funding to support minor infrastructure works include Acacia Ridge State School, Algester State School, Calamvale Community College and Calamvale Special School. I would also like to acknowledge the teachers, support staff, principals and P&Cs for their strong advocacy for their schools.

On another note I would like to acknowledge the announcement by St Stephen's Catholic Primary School principal Mr Mike Quinn on his upcoming retirement. He has been a great educator and an outstanding leader for the school community. I thank him for his outstanding service to education and I wish him the very, very best for his upcoming retirement.

Redlands Coast, Youth Crime




Dr ROBINSON (Oodgeroo—LNP) (7.19 pm): It was my privilege to join LNP leader David Crisafulli this morning in parliament to welcome Redlanders impacted by Labor's youth crime crisis in the Redlands. I want to thank locals Candice, Gary, Sara, Natalie, Adam, Daniel and Karen for being prepared to speak out about the reality on the ground that they and others are facing. I want to thank LNP leader David Crisafulli, LNP candidate for Redlands Rebecca Young, and local Bianca Kemp for caring about Redlands victims who are suffering from Labor's youth crime crisis. These Redlanders came to parliament to make it clear that the youth crime crisis in the Redlands is not a media beat-up.

That is why this morning in question time while these local witnesses were in the gallery I asked the Premier what action she has taken to discipline her government's senior whip for his statement that the youth crime crisis is a media beat-up. True to form, the Premier squibbed the answer. Premier, the youth crime crisis is real and it is hurting Redland families, despite what misguided Labor MPs think. Redlanders today told us that cars are stolen, homes are being broken into. There have been violent threats and kids' playgrounds have been burned down, leaving mums feeling unsafe. People are fearful in their own homes. It is real; it is occurring. Police are overstretched and feeling overwhelmed. There is widespread community concern in the Redlands at the extent of juvenile criminal activity. The crisis and chaos is not being fixed and locals know it. Crime is up and police numbers are down.

The voices of victims of crime like the Fields and Leadbetters will never be forgotten. Russell Field was clearly offended and disturbed by the insensitive comments made by the member for Capalaba. When it comes to the youth crime crisis, this government is stuck in neutral and Queensland is rolling backwards. The Premier must admit there is a youth crime crisis, apologise to Redlands victims of crime and sack her whip. If she will not listen to the voices of victims then Redlanders can respond to the call from Russell Field and let Labor know how you feel at election time. In other words, show Labor the door in 2024!


Burpengary Railway Station

 **Mr KING** (Kurwongbah—ALP) (7.21 pm): I rise this evening to put on record our community's excitement about the accessibility upgrade underway at the Burpengary train station. I am a big fan of public transport, and since my election to the Queensland parliament we have: been instrumental in the delivery of the Peninsula rail line, including added platforms at Petrie station; delivered a new park-and-ride at Lawnton station; delivered accessibility upgrades at Dakabin station with my neighbour, the Deputy Premier, complete with two-storey car parking; and secured funding for more car parking at Narangba station. I am told that is in the detailed design phase right now. Now our government is delivering an accessibility upgrade at Burpengary train station, which is great news for our community. Queensland Rail has taken on board the lessons learned during the delivery of Dakabin station under commuter traffic, with the benefits experienced in closing some south side stations as well during project construction.

The biggest priority is commuter and workplace health and safety, and I am sure the noise at Burpengary station is already presenting some wellbeing challenges for station staff and passengers. The other priority is to minimise the overall construction time, getting our new station up and running as soon as possible. I note that right now there are people who are finding it too difficult or impossible to use Burpengary station because it does not have lifts. This includes people with mobility issues, disabilities, commuters with prams and those travelling with luggage. To achieve these outcomes, Queensland Rail will be closing Burpengary station from about the time school goes back in January until September 2024. I know this closure will inconvenience people, and I encourage local commuters to put forward your feedback to Queensland Rail by completing the online community survey or emailing stationsupgrade@qr.com.au. You can find the survey through a link on my website shaneking.net.au under the news tab.

There will be some parking available at Burpengary station during the closure period and shuttle buses to other stations. I will be working closely with Queensland Rail to make sure the full alternative transport plan has carefully considered the circumstances of all commuters, including whether they travel with scooters or bikes. I will also be meeting with local schools to make sure staff, students and families are informed and that they can in turn inform Queensland Rail's planning. I will continue to update the community as I receive information from Queensland Rail. I encourage locals to keep an eye on my Facebook page for those updates. I have launched a petition to get more parking at Burpengary station when the station re-opens. The petition is also available on my website. I want to thank the minister for hearing our case and for influencing the commuter behaviour of new residents in our rapidly growing city of Moreton Bay by providing more opportunities to leave the car at home or, in this case, leave the car at Burpengary station.

Youth Crime, Shoplifting

 **Mr LANGBROEK** (Surfers Paradise—LNP) (7.24 pm): I rise tonight to speak about another issue of crime that has gone unnoticed in the youth crime crisis. It is a daily struggle for small family business owners and operators, and I am speaking about shoplifting. A constituent of mine who owns a significant business in Surfers Paradise says, 'Shoplifting is a way of life on the coast. It doesn't get the headlines that carjacking and housebreaking do, but it is the start of a juvenile sense of impunity with regard to offending.'

Since the watering down of the laws on juveniles the already outrageous levels of shoplifting have skyrocketed. Juveniles have gained another two years of having absolutely no concerns of being caught shoplifting. My constituent has found that all demographics are prepared to steal and that there are some people who are only there to steal; however, most notably young girls have become particularly brazen in their shoplifting. If you have a look at TikTok you will see examples from the US and the UK and social media generally, and that is obviously encouraging local people to copy.


The current Queensland government has also removed police beats from all but two shopping centres in the state, so centre security do what they can but they are not allowed to enter shops to assist and they have a no chase policy. Shop owners and staff are defenceless. The favourite trick of

thieves is to stick items down their pants, and of course they are unable to stop them without being accused of assault or worse. They have had physical altercations with shoplifters who refuse to return items they know they have on them. Recently my constituent had a wrestling match with a known male criminal to get his items back. They report all thefts to the police, but once their job is lodged they have no knowledge of the outcome or even if the information is acted on. On a daily basis they will prevent two to three attempts at theft with many more going unnoticed until later. Staff cannot walk through the centre without noticing theft occurring. The larger retailers like Myers, Woolworths and Coles are just training grounds for thieves. He says—

I recommend you become a shoplifter because there is little chance of getting caught, and if you do there is little in the way of punishment coming your way. I have taken the approach that I prosecute every offender. Magistrates have ordered restitution at the wholesale price of the goods, so why not steal? If you get caught, you get the goods at a great discount.

It is clear that while these offences do not attract the same attention as car theft or breaking into houses, it is obvious there is a generation of young offenders who are doing this throughout shops across South-East Queensland and in fact across Queensland, and it is small and family business owners who are wearing the cost of this. More needs to be done by this out-of-touch Labor government with more police resources and more enforcement of the existing laws. I note the member for Buderim said to me that shop stealing is up 40 per cent. That is an example of how this government has taken their eye off the ball when it comes to crime, especially juvenile crime. Queenslanders deserve better.

Bundamba Electorate, Sport

 **Mr McCALLUM** (Bundamba—ALP) (7.27 pm): The sporting prowess of our community was on full display over the weekend as footy finals fever gripped our local community and many of our local teams were crowned champions. The Rugby League Ipswich A grade final saw the Redbank Plains Bears prevail in a huge 42-12 victory over the Fassifern Bombers. That is their first ever A grade championship in the club's history, so huge congratulations to the Bears. I was really privileged to be at the North Ipswich Reserve to watch a very high quality game. Rest assured there were many happy locals in Redbank Plains and surrounds on Sunday evening and probably into the early hours of Monday.

In addition to the Bears' huge win the Dinmore Bush Rats football club claimed the over-30s division 2 title. It was wonderful to catch up with the Bush Rats on Saturday and present them with a cheque for some grant funding which is going to see a new grandstand. The Westminster Warriors Soccer Club took out the men's over-40s division 2, senior women's divisions 1 and 3, the under-15 and under-16 boys division 2, and under-12 Rockets, which makes it an incredible six from six grand final wins for the Warriors this season. I very much look forward to joining them at their presentation night this Saturday.

The Blackstone United Dragons Football Club won the senior women's division 2 championship. Our Western Spirit Football Club were crowned under-16 division 1 champions, with another three finals to be played after the school holidays. The mighty Goodna Eagles Rugby League women also wrote their names into the record books as back-to-back premiers in the QRL south-east competition.

This is an absolutely fantastic result for our local clubs. These results are only made possible through the hard work, dedication and selflessness of our club volunteers. Each and every player is supported by coaches, managers, water runners, first aid officials, canteen volunteers and so many more people. Parents and carers wash the playing kits, remove goalposts and pads, tend to bumps and bruises, carpool players and lend a helping hand. They celebrate and they commiserate with every match. To all of these club legends, I say thank you.

The House adjourned at 7.30 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, Smith, Stevens, Stewart, Sullivan, Tantari, Walker, Watts, Weir, Whiting