



# RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

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## FIRST SESSION OF THE FIFTY-SEVENTH PARLIAMENT

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## THURSDAY, 14 SEPTEMBER 2023

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The Legislative Assembly met at 9.30 am.

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



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

### SPEAKER'S STATEMENTS

#### R U OK? Day



**Mr SPEAKER:** Before moving to statements, I just wish to ask R U OK? Today is R U OK? Day. It is very important that we all take care of each other's welfare and emotional wellbeing.

#### Parliamentary Security Staff, Acknowledgement



**Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, as you all know, a lot of people work and visit the parliamentary precinct every year, especially during sitting weeks. From time to time, there are incidents such as medical issues or accidents which we take very seriously and offer first aid and other assistance as required. Most of the time this involves Parliamentary Service security officers as first responders, and I would like to acknowledge the excellent and professional work they do handling such incidents. Yesterday a visitor to the precinct became ill and was assisted by staff until paramedics arrived. I also wish to acknowledge the contribution of the member for Moggill in providing assistance, as well as the help he provides from time to time to members around the chamber.

#### School Group Tours



**Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I wish to advise that we will be visited in the gallery this morning by students from Glenmore State High School in the electorate of Rockhampton; Broadbeach State School in the electorate of Mermaid Beach; and Bundaberg North State High School in the electorate of Bundaberg.

### MOTION OF CONDOLENCE

#### Bailey, Mr EW OAM



**Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Olympic and Paralympic Games) (9.32 am): I move—

1. That this House desires to place on record its appreciation of the services rendered to this State by the late Earle Wilfred Bailey OAM, a former member of the Parliament of Queensland.
2. That Mr Speaker be requested to convey to the family of the deceased gentleman the above resolution, together with an expression of the sympathy and sorrow of the Members of the Parliament of Queensland, in the loss they have sustained.

Earle Wilfred Bailey OAM was born in Melbourne on 5 October 1941, the grandson of the former prime minister of Australia and long-serving leader of the Country Party, Sir Earle Page. Mr Bailey was educated in New South Wales at South Grafton primary and then The Armidale School, and later in Queensland at the Brisbane Grammar School. After his schooling, Mr Bailey enjoyed a successful career as a radio and television journalist and television and film producer, including working in these professions for six years in Britain for organisations such as the BBC.

In 1976, Mr Bailey moved to Brisbane, and with Haydn Sargent went on to produce the local current affairs program *State Affair* and was also compere and producer of the television program *Bailey and the Birds*. Although the name would probably not survive in the modern age, *Bailey and the Birds* was a popular show solving viewers' problems with a panel of women and Mr Bailey. Such was his


popularity at the time that at the TV Week Logie Awards in Melbourne in 1982 he won the state award for the most popular male television personality in Queensland. There was even a *Bailey and the Birds* cookbook.

In 1983, Mr Bailey was preselected by the National Party to contest the seat of Toowong at the upcoming state election. At that election, Mr Bailey was able to wrest the seat from the incumbent and Liberal Party representative, Ian Prentice. Mr Bailey's win in Toowong helped the National Party under Premier Sir Joh Bjelke-Petersen to form government in their own right. Mr Bailey's stay as a member of this House was relatively short at just one term, as he was defeated in Toowong by Denver Beanland of the Liberal Party at the state election in November 1986.

During his time as a member of this House, Mr Bailey served on the Parliamentary Buildings Committee and also served on a number of government party committees, including in the portfolios of industry, small business, technology, health, environment, valuation and administrative services. From 1993 to 1999, Mr Bailey also served the community in local government as a councillor for the Douglas shire in Far North Queensland. He also served as a member of many organisations, such as a member on the University of Queensland Senate, a councillor for the Australian Retired Persons Association, chair of the Queensland Branch of the Variety Club and a committee member for the Autistic Children's Association.

In 2001, he was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia in the Australia Day Honours List for service to the community of the Port Douglas region through local government and tourism and to the development of the radio and television industries. This is a fitting tribute to Mr Bailey, for which his family and friends had every reason to be proud.

Earle Wilfred Bailey OAM passed away on 8 July aged 81 years. I place on record the government's thanks for the years of service Mr Bailey gave to the institutions of our democracy and to the Queensland community. On behalf of the government, I take this opportunity to extend my sympathy and that of this House to Mr Bailey's family and friends.

 **Mr CRISAFULLI** (Broadwater—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (9.35 am): Earle Bailey, whose service to this parliament we recognise today, will be remembered as a member who came into this parliament with an established career behind him and as a person who upon leaving continued to make a significant contribution to his community. He was one of a cohort of parliamentarians who ushered in a new era of politics in this state when the once entirely country and regionally based National Party established a bridgehead in Brisbane which lasted throughout much of the 1980s.

Earle Bailey, though born in Melbourne in 1941, developed his political interests in northern New South Wales. He was a grandson of Sir Earle Page, a former leader of the federal Country Party and member for the New South Wales seat of Cowper from 1919 to 1961. Another grandson, Don Page, served in the New South Wales parliament from 1988 to 2015.

He embarked on a career in journalism, working in both radio and television in Australia and the UK. He worked on significant current affairs programs, such as *This Day Tonight* and *State Affair*, before embarking on a career in television production. He compered and produced the groundbreaking Brisbane production *Bailey and the Birds* for Brisbane audiences. As an established Brisbane figure, the National Party recruited Mr Bailey to contest the metropolitan seat of Toowong in 1983 and he was elected in October that year. While his time in parliament was limited to just one term, he sought to carve out an identity based on service to the people of Toowong.

His parliamentary contribution centred on the need to protect small business, combat traffic congestion, manage the growth of the University of Queensland in St Lucia, limit the burden of taxation and promote educational opportunities. In his first major speech in the Legislative Assembly on 30 November 1983, Mr Bailey nailed his colours to the mast when he said—

To me, the most important principle of human existence is the freedom of the individual. One way of evaluating freedom is by reference to decision-making ability, decision-making being shared between Governments and individuals. It is obvious that decision-making is power, and the more power that Governments have, the less remains to be shared amongst individuals.


Earle Bailey was defeated in 1986 by the local Liberal alderman, Denver Beanland. Denver has recounted that during this campaign Earle Bailey distributed brochures around the electorate saying that Denver was such a great local representative that he should stay in council and that he was such a fine state member that he deserved to be re-elected. After his defeat, Earle Bailey embarked on a business career and he and his wife, Penny, moved to Port Douglas. As the Premier said, between 1993 and 1999 he served on the Douglas Shire Council. He was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia in the 2001 new year's honours list for his services to the Port Douglas community through local government and tourism and to the development of the radio and television industries.

Earle and Penny Bailey later moved to Noosa where he became an enthusiastic contributor to his local community. He served on the Noosa Long Weekend committee, including a term as president in 2007.

Our former colleague Glen Elmes, the President of the Former Parliamentary Members' Association, has written—

I had the pleasure of knowing Earle for many years. He lived at Noosa Springs, loved his golf and was active in the community. He also served on the committee and later as President of the Board of Advice for the Noosa Hospital. He was my campaign director at the 2015 and 2017 elections. Earle was a straight shooter and spoke his mind. You always knew where you stood.

Although his time in this House was short, Earle Bailey never ceased working for others. His contribution is acknowledged. We extend to Penny and his family our condolences on their loss.


 **Dr ROWAN** (Moggill—LNP) (9.39 am): As the Liberal National Party's state member for Moggill, I rise to support this motion as moved by the Premier and, in doing so, honour the life and public service of the former member for Toowong, Mr Earle Wilfred Bailey OAM, who passed away on 8 July 2023 at the age of 81 years. Born on 5 October 1941 in Melbourne and following his education at schools in New South Wales and Queensland and higher education at the University of Sydney, Earle Bailey commenced his remarkable career in television as a journalist, film producer and as a managing director. Prior to entering Queensland state politics, Earle Bailey was well known and recognised for his ubiquitous television appearances in the homes of Queenslanders through his television show, *Bailey and the Birds*.

Turning to Earle Bailey's parliamentary career, Earle served for one term as the Queensland National Party state member for Toowong from 1983 to 1986. The year 1983 was very auspicious in many ways. It was the year that Bob Hawke was elected prime minister of Australia—in fact, in March of 1983. Whilst I do not have a fond regard for Labor politics and policies, I must say that Bob Hawke was a fine Australian and distinguished Prime Minister. I certainly also have a soft spot for the former Secretary of the ACTU, Bill Keelty, who also assumed his role in 1983. It was also the year that Australia won the America's Cup on 26 September 1983. Do you remember the excitement and thrill when John Bertrand, Alan Bond and the entire *Australia II* team secured the America's Cup? This was the first time in 132 years that a country other than the United States of America had won the cup. It was on 26 October in 1983 that Earle Bailey was elected to the Queensland parliament.

Earlier that year, Terry White, the then Liberal state member for Redcliffe, had torn up the coalition agreement, and I remember as a then 10-year-old boy my family making the decision to support the endorsed National Party candidate, Earle Bailey. This then became the first time I became involved in a political election campaign by supporting Earle Bailey and, in fact, handing out how-to-vote cards for him as a 10-year-old. It has been a long 40 years. I also remember him well, having met him a number of times on the campaign trail and throughout subsequent years. There were also some terrific and various functions I attended in St Lucia and Toowong with my family as a part of his campaign and his subsequent tenure in office between 1983 and 1986. However, the irony is that the two parliamentarians who bookended Earle Bailey's representative career in the Queensland parliament have subsequently become both great friends and mentors to me, that being former Liberal state member for Toowong, Ian Prentice who represented the state seat of Toowong from 1980 to 1983 and was defeated by Earle Bailey, and also former attorney-general and state member for Indooroopilly, Denver Beanland, who defeated Earle Bailey at the 1986 election and who represented the state seat of Indooroopilly from 1986 to 2001. Apart from being the beneficiary of the collegiate friendship of Ian Prentice and Denver Beanland, I have also had the mentorship of the former member for Redcliffe, Terry White—the irony of Queensland politics.

As the Liberal National Party shadow minister for education, I also acknowledge that during his first speech as a member of the Legislative Assembly Earle Bailey proudly declared education as his No. 1 priority and assured parents, teachers and students of his electorate that he would actively work for the betterment of all schools in the electorate of Toowong. Following his service as an elected representative in the Queensland parliament, Earle later served as a councillor in the Douglas Shire Council from 1994 to 1999. Following his tenure and contribution as councillor, Earle Bailey was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia in the 2001 new year's Honours List for his service to communities of the Port Douglas region through local government and tourism and to the development of the radio and television industries. This was not the first time Earle had been formally acknowledged and awarded for his achievements; he was also awarded two Logie awards for most popular male in Queensland in 1982 and 1983.

As Liberal National Party state member for Moggill, I take this opportunity to recognise the service of the late Earle Bailey to the western suburbs of Brisbane. Vale, Earle Wilfred Bailey OAM.

 **Mr BERKMAN** (Maiwar—Grn) (9.44 am): I rise as the current member for Maiwar, the area that covers the former seat of Toowong, to make a brief contribution in support of this condolence motion for Earle Bailey. Unlike the member for Moggill, I was aged only between two and five during the years of Mr Bailey's service, so I cannot make any meaningful reflection on the time of his service, nor did I have the pleasure of meeting him, but I do want to simply acknowledge that the time he represented Toowong was a period of great change for the area, not least of all for the construction of Toowong Village with which I am sure all of us are familiar—a major landmark in that suburb and one that was developed not without controversy between the council and state in terms of the impact that it might have on the then Toowong train station and the suburb and traffic more generally.

I want to acknowledge that the service of every member in this place is of great value and is a great contribution to the state and it is not one that can be made without impacting on one's family, so I offer my sincere condolences to Earle Bailey's family.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Members, will you please indicate your agreement with the motion by standing in silence for one minute.

*Whereupon honourable members stood in silence.*

## PETITION

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


### Deongwar State Forest, Logging

724 petitioners, requesting the House to end the logging of Deongwar State Forest [\[1332\]](#).

Petition received.

## MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS


### Women and Girls Health Strategy

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Olympic and Paralympic Games) (9.47 am): Queensland is made up of 2.6 million women and girls, which is more than 50 per cent of our state's population. Each one has specialised needs for their health care because, as women, there are specific health issues that impact only us, and some are just beginning to get the attention they deserve. We know that one in 10 births in Queensland involve assisted conception for mothers aged 35 to 38. That number doubles for mothers between 40 and 44. More than one in five women in their mid-20s report depressive symptoms. The prevalence of endometriosis is higher in Queensland than Australia-wide. As someone who has gone through endometriosis, IVF as well as a miscarriage, I know firsthand the experience of women's health.

It is important that we share our stories so that we can learn more from women's experiences, improve those experiences, and shape the future of health care in our state. Our dedicated women's and girls' health strategy will identify and respond to the specific health needs of women, including maternal health, mental health, chronic conditions like pelvic pain and endo, cancer, and sexual and reproductive health. We cannot do this without hearing from women themselves. Today the health minister and I put the call out to all Queensland women and girls. A draft of the strategy and a survey are now available online. This is the chance to have your say on how you can be supported in the health system and help shape the future of women's health care in Queensland.

Women and girls must be able to access safe, quality care where their concerns are heard and believed. That is what we hope to achieve so that all women can fully participate in sport, at work and in life generally. I encourage all Queensland women and girls to read the draft and have their say.

### China, Tourism


 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Olympic and Paralympic Games) (9.48 am): Before the pandemic, China was Queensland's biggest source of international visitors. We welcomed almost half a million Chinese travellers a year, generating \$1.6 billion for our economy. Now as the world recovers, we want to welcome those visitors back to our Sunshine State.



Today I can announce that China Eastern Airlines will resume direct flights from Shanghai to Brisbane from next month. Initially starting with three nonstop services a week, China Eastern Airlines will expand to five weekly services within three years, bringing in almost 41,000 inbound seats in the first year and supporting over 1,200 good jobs. This brings the tally of international flights secured by our government's \$200 million Attracting Aviation Investment Fund to 26. Together, the 26 services will see 1.97 million inbound seats welcomed into Queensland each year.

China Eastern Airlines is the second Chinese airline to announce its return to Queensland in less than two months. Just yesterday Minister Hinchliffe announced that China Southern Airlines would launch seasonal daily services from Guangzhou between December and February. This coincides with the Chinese New Year travel season. Securing China Eastern flights from Shanghai so soon after China Southern Airlines announced their return to Brisbane shows just how eager the Chinese are to visit Queensland—our beautiful beaches, our rainforest, our iconic reef and of course the outback—and to enjoy our fresh Queensland produce. As I said yesterday, it is not just about the tourists who come here; each plane that flies out of Queensland is carrying our good local products in its underbelly. That is good news for jobs, for producers and for small businesses the length and breadth of this state.

### Great Barrier Reef


 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Olympic and Paralympic Games) (9.50 am): Queenslanders are truly blessed to have the iconic Great Barrier Reef, one of the seven wonders of the natural world, right on our doorstep. The reef is home to a spectacular array of marine life, including fish, coral, marine mammals, sharks and stingrays, just to name a few. It is also estimated to support more than 60,000 jobs, most of which are in regional towns the length of Queensland's east coast in cafes, restaurants, hotels and other small businesses. That is why our government has worked so hard to protect the reef since we were elected in 2015.

Over the past eight years, we have invested more than a billion dollars to protect the reef, including committing \$270 million to the Queensland Reef Water Quality Program. We have introduced robust and responsible tree-clearing laws which have resulted in a 70 per cent reduction in regulated vegetation clearing over three years.


In partnership with the Albanese government, we are implementing significant reforms to protect precious threatened species by significantly reducing net fishing and other high-risk fishing activities impacting the reef, including ensuring the Great Barrier Reef is gillnet free by mid-2027. We have also worked hard to drive down greenhouse gas emissions. We have already reduced emissions by 29 per cent based on the latest 2021 data and we continue to work to meet our commitment to zero net emissions by 2050 in line with leading global economies.

Overnight, in an acknowledgement of the work that our government and the federal government have undertaken, the UNESCO World Heritage Committee announced that it will not list the Great Barrier Reef as 'in danger'. While this decision is welcomed, our work to protect this iconic and precious ecosystem continues each and every day. We will continue to proactively protect the Great Barrier Reef, working with the Albanese government, the science community, industry, conservationists, the community and, of course, UNESCO to protect this natural wonder so it can be enjoyed by future generations.

### R U OK? Day

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Olympic and Paralympic Games) (9.52 am): Finally, Mr Speaker, to echo your words, today is R U OK? Day. It is a timely reminder to turn to your loved ones, friends and colleagues and check in and to have a conversation. We all need to connect and feel supported, not just today but every day. Let those people in your life know that you are here and ask, 'Are you okay?' You never know; you could change a life.

### Infrastructure

 **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) (9.52 am): The Palaszczuk government is backing Queensland's biggest decade of infrastructure delivery. Our Big Build is creating local jobs and delivering the key infrastructure Queenslanders need. This year's state budget included a \$20.3 billion infrastructure spend as part of an \$89 billion investment over four years. Almost two-thirds of Queensland's Big Build

is being spent outside of greater Brisbane and 95 per cent of our Energy and Jobs Plan will be spent in regional Queensland. We are also helping councils deliver projects that create good jobs, support economic development and improve livability.

Last week when I visited the Rockhampton Zoo with the member for Rockhampton I saw firsthand how our one billion dollar Works for Queensland Program is helping make our regions even better places to live. The eagle has landed in Rocky. Thanks to a \$540,000 Works for Queensland grant, Rockhampton Regional Council has delivered a new enclosure—

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order, members. Members on both sides of the House, please keep your conversations to a minimum.

**Dr MILES:** Thanks to a \$540,000 Works for Queensland grant, Rockhampton Regional Council has delivered a new enclosure for the zoo's resident wedge-tailed eagle Valkyrie. This new home for Valkyrie is just one of close to 2,200 community infrastructure projects supported so far through Works for Queensland. Facilities like this one play an important role in connecting people and creating a great local lifestyle, and the Palaszczuk Labor government is proud to be playing its part to help the zoo's future soar. Locals and visitors alike will see the benefits when they visit Valkyrie in her bigger, better home.

So far in Rockhampton alone about \$36.6 million has been allocated through Works for Queensland to help the council deliver 42 community infrastructure projects. In total, \$800 million has been allocated to councils outside South-East Queensland, creating or supporting almost 25,500 jobs where they are needed most. That is a great outcome for local economies, local businesses, local tradies and families. As the Premier always says, we work best when we work together, and none of this would have been possible without working together with local councils. I am proud to be part of a government that is backing our regions. I look forward to continuing to work with councils to benefit Queenslanders in communities across our state.

The Big Build is set to deliver big results for Queenslanders and deliver the infrastructure and essential services to support the state's growth, creating more good jobs, exciting new industries and better communities.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I note that question time will commence at approximately 10.31 am this morning.

### **Economy; GPs, Payroll Tax**



**Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment) (9.55 am): The Palaszczuk Labor government is delivering our plan for Queensland's future, a plan to ensure Queensland is strong, safe and prosperous. It is a plan that is building for our future as Queensland grows. That means delivering the Queensland Energy and Jobs Plan well into the next decade. It means ensuring that we have the necessary infrastructure for the 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games and it means delivering the largest health capital plan in our state's history through the Queensland Health and Hospitals Plan.

Our government is 'baking in' the investment to deliver these projects well beyond the four-year forward estimates of our budget. As the Queensland Health and Hospitals Plan makes clear, new beds at the QEII, Prince Charles and Ipswich hospitals and entirely new hospitals at Toowoomba, Coomera and Bundaberg are scheduled to be delivered after 30 June 2027. That means those hospitals rely on the revenue that is provided by our permanent, progressive coal royalties tiers.

Those royalties belong to the people of Queensland. They pay for the services and infrastructure that the people of Queensland will need long into the future. Any person or party that refuses to guarantee the future of those royalties will have to cut services and infrastructure. That would mean cancelled hospitals; the termination of pumped hydro, energy and water projects; CopperString cancelled; and fewer nurses, teachers and police officers because there is no third path. A refusal to commit to progressive coal royalties beyond the forward estimates condemns the future health, safety and prosperity of all Queenslanders.

Queensland's economy has long focused on international markets. Exporting our commodities, services and manufactured goods to the world has created the prosperity and economic strength Queensland enjoys today. As our economy transitions through the renewable energy revolution our ongoing prosperity will continue to rely on exports to overseas markets. Later today I will travel to Japan and then to Denmark and Germany to explore new export opportunities and to strengthen existing

relationships and agreements. Japan is Queensland's No. 1 export partner, valued at more than \$28 billion in the year to July 2023. The EU, including Germany and Denmark, remains one of Queensland's most important investment partners. The message in all these markets is clear. Their appetite for Queensland products and Queensland investment has never been stronger.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! Members to my left.

**Mr DICK:** The message in all these markets is clear. Their appetite for Queensland products and Queensland investment has never been stronger. Our government's Queensland Energy and Jobs Plan sends a clear signal about how we want to transform our economy. It gives confidence to investors in capital markets and it creates a path for Queensland's abundant natural resources to make us a natural home for more low-emission energy-intensive industries. All of this recent trade and investment activity sends a very clear message: Queensland is open for business.

While I am on that trade mission, I anticipate that the Queensland Revenue Office will next week issue an updated public ruling to provide more certainty to businesses operating medical practices. This is a national payroll tax issue that arose as a result of legal proceedings in New South Wales and Victoria. Unlike Queensland, revenue offices in other states have actively pursued compliance from medical practices. Queensland, of course, was the first state to offer an amnesty relating to payments to contracted GPs—an amnesty that is in effect until 30 June 2025. Other states have followed our lead, instituting amnesties of their own. Now, Queensland is taking the lead again. I am advised that the ruling to be issued next week will make clear that under normal business arrangements patient fees, including the Medicare benefit, and any out-of-pocket expenses when they are paid directly by a patient to a GP for that GP's services will not be subject to payroll tax. I understand that this presents a viable option for practices going forward. It is an important step on the path to the resolution of this national issue. Given that this guidance is being updated, I can also announce—

**Mr Crisafulli:** GP tax.


**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! Leader of the Opposition, you will cease your interjections.

**Mr DICK:** The Leader of the Opposition is a little sore after yesterday!

**Mr SPEAKER:** Treasurer, that is not helpful.

**Mr DICK:** Given that this guidance is being updated, I can also announce that we are extending the expression-of-interest period for the amnesty from 29 September to Friday, 10 November 2023. I thank the Queensland Revenue Office and the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners for their commitment to working in good faith to find a nation-leading solution to this issue. Along with the Australian Medical Association, they are strong advocates for their profession and we always welcome their advocacy.

### Teacher Aides


 **Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for Education, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing) (10.01 am): The Palaszczuk government knows that teacher aides play a vital role in our students' learning and wellbeing. I am sure that every member of this House knows of teacher aides in their local schools doing a wonderful job. Because of our investment, there are even more of them to appreciate—an additional 1,500 FTE teacher aides in our schools compared to 2015. Another 10 are coming soon, thanks to our new partnership with the NRL. It is no secret that Queenslanders love our Rugby League, particularly when it comes to this time of footy finals and can I say, 'Go Broncos!' Ten NRLW players will be recruited to part-time permanent additional teacher aide positions across nominated high schools, with those high schools then working with at least four primary schools each.

The presence of elite women players in our schools will not only inspire our female students but also carve out opportunities for athletes to enrol in further study and employment in the education sector once their career on the field is over. I launched a program alongside Destiny Brill, a Brisbane Broncos and Maroons player who works at Marsden State High School in Waterford. She said that she loves being a teacher aide, enjoys being involved in the school while she is playing and is excited about her opportunities after football. NRL school participation manager Andrew Peach said—

The NRL is excited to be able to support schools and teachers across Queensland, while also providing an outstanding career pathway for our elite female athletes.

On this side of the House we value our teacher aides. Our new teacher aide agreement—which 97 per cent voted in favour of—delivers nation-leading pay and conditions. We will also be delivering world-class professional development and wellbeing support programs for our teacher aides through our new Education Futures Institute. For those teacher aides who want to become teachers, we have a new supported pathway into teaching. Teacher aides employed in Queensland state schools who are doing their teaching degree will now receive special leave with pay to undertake exams and compulsory practical placements and, upon completion, will receive an offer of permanent employment. There will also be central funding for schools to meet the costs of backfilling positions while teacher aides are away. I can advise the House that 88 teacher aides working in our schools have already applied for this paid leave since I announced it last month. The Palaszczuk government backs our students, backs our schools and backs our teacher aides. I take this opportunity to wish everyone a very happy end of term 3 for tomorrow. Happy holidays to all.

### **Women and Girls' Health Strategy**

 **Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (Minister for Health, Mental Health and Ambulance Services and Minister for Women) (10.04 am): As the Minister for Health and the Minister for Women, I know all too well the challenges that women face when it comes to health care. That is why I am so proud to release the consultation survey and draft of Queensland's first ever Queensland Women and Girls' Health Strategy. The survey is an important opportunity for women and girls across Queensland to share their health experiences and to help shape the future of women's health policy and outcomes. We know that women have historically experienced discrimination and a lack of specified support in our health system. Indeed, whilst women have a higher life expectancy than men, they are likely to experience more years with a disability and have multiple chronic health conditions. We know that these impacts are further exacerbated for women from diverse backgrounds.


Only two years ago, one in three women in Queensland reported having their health concerns dismissed. I have heard these stories firsthand across Queensland time and time again. We have a lot to learn. Why is the prevalence of endometriosis higher among young women compared to previous generations? What are the causes of pelvic pain and how can we best treat it? How can we better fund and support perimenopause and menopause programs to minimise the impact to women's mental health and social and physiological wellbeing?

Our government is committed to meeting the health needs of all women, addressing the social determinants of women's health and improving health equity. To do this, we need to hear directly from women and girls in Queensland. The survey and consultation draft of the strategy are available on the Queensland Health website and consultation is open until 19 October.

We also know that women face barriers to accessing mental health. We know that women experience higher rates of anxiety and eating disorders. The fact that the number of people admitted and receiving care for eating disorders has increased about 30 per cent to 35 per cent since COVID is extremely alarming. That is why the Palaszczuk government recently announced that \$40 million will be invested in community-based eating disorder services. As a community, we are just beginning to hear women sharing their experiences of conditions like postnatal depression, or the grief and distress associated with miscarriage.

Today is R U OK? Day. It is important that we use this day, and others, to continue to give space and validate the experiences and stories of women, and everyone in the community, who are suffering from mental health challenges. R U OK? Day is an important reminder to check in with those around you and to let them know that support is available if they need it. This R U OK? Day, let those around you know that you are there for them, because one conversation can save a life.

### **Youth Crime**

 **Hon. DE FARMER** (Bulimba—ALP) (Minister for Employment and Small Business, Minister for Training and Skills Development and Minister for Youth Justice) (10.07 am): In addressing the serious issue of youth crime, the Palaszczuk government is committed to keeping the community safe, tackling the complex causes of crime, targeting serious repeat offenders and supporting victims. In addition to our strong laws, we are building two new youth detention centres. They are therapeutic centres, because once young people have been in the system we do not want to see them back again.

Focusing on addressing the complex causes of crime is an absolute priority. We have committed almost half a billion dollars to early intervention and prevention programs in youth justice since 2015. As a result, we have seen a 30 per cent decline in youth offending over the last five years. What remains

is a small cohort of 452 young offenders at this time—20 per cent of young offenders committing over 50 per cent of the crime. To a person, I can tell you that these young people have been exposed to one or more of the following: domestic violence, one or both parents in custody, substance abuse, homelessness, neglect, poverty, disengagement from education, and lack of a single adult to walk alongside them in life.

Turning their lives around is no simple task. That is why I am so pleased with the results we are getting from some of our programs which are aimed directly at this cohort. Intensive case management is one such program. It targets serious repeat offenders aged 10 to 17 years to help break the cycle of crime. Our staff are working five to six days a week with each person, sometimes for nine to 12 months before we get results, but it is working. Early evidence shows a 51 per cent reduction in offending frequency and a 72 per cent reduction in the proportion of crimes against the person.

There is the 17-year-old who began offending at 15. He has been subject to nine supervised orders for motor vehicle, property and violent robbery offending, spending 233 nights in detention. When he started intensive case management, he and his family were homeless and living in a motel. He and his siblings had not been to school for more than six months and there was drug use. In the year the family has been working with our case workers, they are now in a house, his younger brother is back at school and his younger sister is engaged with programs. The young person has started another of our successful programs, Transition 2 Success, and mum has started a TAFE course.

There was a 13-year-old teenager who was committing serious offences, including motor vehicle, stealing and robbery offences. His mum struggled to impose rules and boundaries and had difficulty managing his behaviour. First remanded at the age of 13, his offences continued escalating in frequency and severity, he would not cooperate with his youth justice workers and he was getting into drugs and alcohol. His caseworker worked with him and his family, including his siblings, and put in place a framework to help strengthen family relationships. They helped him make positive choices about the activities he would enjoy getting involved in, which for him were learning how to fish and fixing up an old scooter, and the tide started to turn. He cut ties with his antisocial peers, removing himself from their negative influence. His relationship with his family has improved, especially with his mum. He has stayed away from offending to the point where he has been removed from the Serious Repeat Offender Index list.

We have allocated over \$30 million for intensive case management to bring it to now 18 locations—Brisbane north and south, Caboolture-Moreton, Cairns, Gold Coast, Hervey Bay, Ipswich, Logan, Mount Isa, Redcliffe, Rockhampton, Sunshine Coast, Tablelands and Cassowary Coast, Toowoomba, Townsville north and south, and western districts. Stopping crime before it occurs is the most effective way to break the cycle of youth offending. It is why these programs and these teams are so important. I pay tribute to our amazing staff who are so dedicated to making a difference.

### Great Barrier Reef; Ipswich, Odour Issues



**Hon. LM LINARD** (Nudgee—ALP) (Minister for the Environment and the Great Barrier Reef, Minister for Science and Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (10.11 am): I join with the Premier in welcoming the UNESCO World Heritage Committee's decision not to list the Great Barrier Reef 'in danger'. The Great Barrier Reef is one of the world's truly remarkable places. I have been fortunate to experience the reef on two occasions and both times I have been truly amazed by the vast array of marine life and unparalleled beauty of the coral reef. It is truly one of the richest and most complex natural ecosystems on earth. Our government takes its role as guardian of the reef incredibly seriously. That is why we have been working so hard since we were first elected in 2015 to protect the reef from the threats impacting it. We have acted on water quality, tree clearing, sustainable fishing and greenhouse gas emissions and we have welcomed the opportunity to work with the Albanese government since its election. Like our government, it believes in the science and is committed to working to protect the reef.

The World Heritage Committee's announcement overnight confirms the draft decision handed down last month which cited the significant progress being made on climate change, water quality and sustainable fishing, all putting the reef on a stronger and more sustainable path. However, the job is far from over. The work to protect this iconic ecosystem continues. The commitments we have made, alongside our existing Reef 2050 Long-Term Sustainability Plan commitments, must be delivered, including accelerated action to improve water quality, fisheries reforms and climate action. I look forward to continuing to work alongside Minister Plibersek as the Queensland and Commonwealth governments work hand in hand with the science community, industry, conservationists, the community broadly and UNESCO to protect this natural wonder so it can be enjoyed by future generations.

On another matter, in 2022, after flooding in Ipswich exacerbated odour issues coming from nearby waste facilities, the government ordered an independent review of the powers and penalties in the Environmental Protection Act 1994. Richard Jones, a retired judge of the district and planning and environment courts, and barrister Susan Hedge were asked to identify whether the powers and enforcement tools available when responding to environmental harm, particularly nuisance, were sufficient. They were also asked to look at the utility and effectiveness of existing penalties, including comparing them with the penalties that apply in other jurisdictions.

Overall, the review established that the Environmental Protection Act contained adequate powers and penalties to, in most instances, enforce environmental obligations and reduce the risk of environmental harm. The review also found that the act also benchmarked well in relation to enforcement tools and penalties compared to other legislation in Queensland and in other jurisdictions. However, the review made 18 recommendations for improving the legislation and effectiveness of tools available, with a particular focus on addressing nuisance issues and protecting the health and wellbeing of the community.

The government supported or supported in principle all of the 18 recommendations. Some of the recommendations have already been implemented and I am pleased to advise the House that my department will today start public consultation on the remainder. In line with the recommendations made, the government is proposing reforms to make it easier to proactively manage environmental risks while removing barriers that may delay a regulatory response in the event of environmental harm, particularly where residential and industrial areas are co-located. This includes by placing greater emphasis on human health, wellbeing and safety within the legislation as well as clarifying what constitutes an environmental nuisance and serious environmental harm. Additionally, the reforms introduce a new offence for anyone that fails to meet their general environmental duty, which requires people and industry carrying out activities that cause, or are likely to cause, harm, including nuisance to others or to the environment, to proactively manage the risks. Public consultation will close on 10 November, with the Department of Environment and Science then considering the feedback received.

I acknowledge the ongoing impacts from odour being experienced by the Ipswich community, particularly around the Swanbank area. I acknowledge the ongoing strong advocacy of the members for Bundamba, Jordan, Ipswich and Ipswich West who have continued to raise these matters with me since I was appointed minister and my predecessors. The Department of Environment and Science has a dedicated team actively investigating odour issues in the area. This team has been bolstered with additional resources to undertake increased compliance inspection activity.

Field investigations, community feedback and other intelligence have helped to identify that composting facilities located in the southern part of the Swanbank industrial area are a likely main cause of these recent odours. These facilities have been subject to increased targeted compliance inspection activities over recent months to ensure operators meet their environmental obligations. This included a series of unannounced detailed site inspections at composting sites in the industrial area in late July this year.

Looking longer term, the department is developing an air-monitoring plan for the Swanbank Industrial Area with a view to providing air-quality information to community and to provide further intelligence to underpin compliance actions. Resolving odour issues is complex, especially where residential areas are located close to industrial areas that are generating odour. However, if and when noncompliance is a cause, we must leave no stone unturned to reduce environmental harm and nuisance. Local members and the local community rightly expect nothing less. I trust that the Ipswich City Council will take the same approach and I look forward to working with it, alongside local members and the community, to achieve the best outcome for residents.

### China, Tourism




**Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE** (Sandgate—ALP) (Minister for Tourism, Innovation and Sport and Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympics and Paralympics Sport and Engagement) (10.17 am): Tourism Research Australia data shows that Chinese visitors have returned to Queensland's top 5 list of the biggest spending international holiday-makers. In the year to June, Chinese visitors generated a promising \$228 million for Queensland's tourism operators.

As the Premier announced earlier, Chinese visitor demand for Queensland's great lifestyle has given China Eastern Airlines the commercial confidence to restore direct flights to Brisbane from Shanghai. From the end of October, China Eastern returns to Queensland for the first time since the pandemic grounded global aviation. Initially flying nonstop from Shanghai three times a week, China Eastern is the second reconnected service from mainland China secured by the Palaszczuk

government's \$200 million Attracting Aviation Investment Fund. Some 26 services, as the Premier said, have been backed by our partnership with Queensland's international airports to bring back overseas visitors. Before the first China Eastern Airbus A330-200 has touched down in Brisbane, the airline has committed to daily seasonal services from early December. That is matched by China Southern Airlines from Guangzhou which last month launched an initial four flights a week into Brisbane from mid-November.

As the Premier said earlier, December to Chinese New Year in February is peak travel season for Chinese visitors to Queensland and post pandemic there is a lot to celebrate. The lifting of China's suspension on group travel and Tourism and Events Queensland's Chinese marketing have turbocharged travel season demand for China Southern airfares to world-class Queensland holiday destinations. Over three years, the two carriers are predicted to tip \$755 million into Queensland destinations and support 3,000 good Queensland jobs. This is terrific news for Queensland tourism operators and puts the state in the pilot's seat to fast-track year-round daily flights from mainland China. Over coming months TEQ will roll out 80 international campaigns in partnership with global travel giants such as Expedia. It is all part of an industry-wide strategy to build back better and to see an \$11 billion international visitor economy on Queensland's runway to the 2032 games.

### Homelessness Services

 **Hon. MAJ SCANLON** (Gaven—ALP) (Minister for Housing) (10.20 am): When I was sworn in as housing minister I made a commitment to travel around the state and listen to people with a lived experience of homelessness, our hardworking frontline housing staff and specialist homelessness services. They have spoken to me about the demand for not just social housing but also wraparound support. This has echoed during our Gold Coast community cabinet. We have listened to those calls and we are responding.

Last week I joined the Deputy Premier to announce two big projects. After conducting a statewide land audit following the Housing Summit, we are creating a new housing precinct in the Southport Priority Development Area. The first stage of this project will feature a supportive housing development called the West Tower, which could include up to 150 homes. Occupants will have access to wraparound services that could include on-site health as well as employment support to transition from social assisted living to independent living. We have listened to specialist homelessness services, which is why we have moved forward with this supportive housing proposal.

That news has been welcomed by leaders in the field. On Friday, Maria Leebeek, the chairperson of the Gold Coast Homelessness Network, said—


It is great to see the diverse range of housing needs being supported by the Queensland Government.

She said that this will be a game changer for the people they see on the Gold Coast. Her organisation stated that for people who are experiencing chronic homelessness this model of housing is vital and will make a significant contribution. I am pleased to advise the House that planning is now underway for this supportive accommodation site and site preparation works have already started. Additionally, next month my department will go out to tender for a provider that will provide valuable input to the process.

The second project announced last week was at Lumina within the Gold Coast Health and Knowledge Precinct. Depending on the final mix of housing types proposed, it is expected this opportunity could deliver about 500 units, providing accommodation to more than 1,000 people. That means homes for potentially essential workers or students close to where they work or study.

It is a priority of mine and of this government to listen to people on the ground, which is why today we are also announcing that expressions of interest will open today for the Gold Coast community forum. Despite what the hoping-to-be LNP candidate for Burleigh may say, listening to the community is not a Marxist takeover; it is just good government. I look forward to working with the community to deliver more outcomes such as those housing projects for one of the fastest growing areas in the country.

### Agriculture Exports

 **Hon. ML FURNER** (Ferny Grove—ALP) (Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries and Minister for Rural Communities) (10.23 am): Queensland's global reputation for clean, green and great-tasting produce is serving the state and its economy very well. It gives me great pleasure to inform the House that Queensland's agriculture sector delivered a surge in exports to record a record high of \$12.51 billion for the last financial year. Data released by the Australian Bureau of


Statistics marks the second consecutive year of increasing exports, cementing the industry's position as a vital contributor to the state's economy. The \$12.51 billion figure was a 16.8 per cent increase over the previous financial year, representing an increase of \$1.79 billion. The ABS data shows the total export value of the state's agriculture sector has surged by an impressive 25.16 per cent compared to the average value of the past five financial years.

The record-breaking export levels were underpinned by robust prices and a surge in export volumes which lifted by 18.26 per cent to reach 7.87 million tonnes. Key growth commodities for 2022-23 were cereals and cereal preparations up 53.64 per cent to \$2.54 billion; chickpeas up 37.26 per cent to \$369.12 million; live cattle up 53.94 per cent to \$147.96 million, accompanied by a 9.83 per cent increase in export volume; and beef up 11.05 per cent to \$6.28 billion, with volume up 7.38 per cent to 598.765 tonnes. In the horticulture sector the volume of fruit and vegetables exported rose 3.25 per cent. Avocados were a notable winner, with exports up 38.5 per cent to \$38.21 million and with volume up 24.09 per cent.

**Mr SPEAKER:** I am sorry, Minister. Pause the clock. Members, if you are hearing about choice avocados and wishing to write your shopping lists, please do it at another time. The minister cannot be heard over the conversations.

**Mr FURNER:** I am sure they enjoy them smashed as I do. In 2022-23, Queensland's top three agricultural trading partners were China, \$2.73 billion; South Korea, \$1.82 billion; and Japan, \$1.71 billion. Key markets where exports of Queensland agricultural products increased were China, up a remarkable 53.5 per cent in value; Indonesia, up 40.1 per cent; USA, up 19.9 per cent; Vietnam, up 19.6 per cent; and South Korea, up 13.2 per cent. What this all means is good jobs for more than 360,000 people and it highlights a real driving force behind the state's economic performance. The Palaszczuk government will always back Queensland farmers as our agricultural industries continue to go from strength to strength.

### Seniors Month


 **Hon. CD CRAWFORD** (Barron River—ALP) (Minister for Child Safety and Minister for Seniors and Disability Services) (10.26 am): In October this year we will celebrate our older Queenslanders during Seniors Month. I particularly draw the attention of the member for Gregory to an event in Capella called 'Fandangle me Earbobs'. I am sure that the member will be able to report back to me what that actually means and what they do. I am advised the event interacts with youth and I do not think it will result in any injuries to older people, but the member for Gregory can report back to me.

I am pleased to announce that 59 organisations were successful in receiving grants of up to \$2,000 to host an event as part of seniors celebrations. In the electorate of Bulimba, the Wesley Mission is hosting a laugh-out-loud day. It will target all seniors, particularly seniors living with a disability. From the Cape to Coolangatta, these activities will see our older Queenslanders snapping selfies, heading off on mystery bus tours, breaking out the mirror ball and heading to the disco, bowling barefoot and connecting through croquet.

Seniors Month officially kicks off on the United Nations International Day of Older Persons, 1 October, and concludes on Grandparents Day, 29 October. The calibre of applications for this year's grants was fantastic and I cannot wait to see what those 59 community organisations deliver. Supporting a month-long program of events is part of the Palaszczuk government's commitment to building an age-friendly state. We want to see older people connect to important people in their communities and we want to see them being cared for and celebrated.

These grants are delivered through a partnership between our government and the Council on the Ageing, COTA Queensland. Together, we want to see as many people as possible, across all generations, connecting and challenging stereotypes around ageing. In 2023, we will continue to celebrate the theme of social connections. I hope to build on the success of last year's record breaking Seniors Month, which saw nearly 150,000 people participate in over 1,500 events on our calendar.

### SPECIAL ADJOURNMENT

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Leader of the House) (10.29 am), by leave, without notice: I move—

That the House, at its rising, do adjourn until 9.30 am on Tuesday, 10 October 2023.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.


Motion agreed to.



## QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

**Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, question time will conclude today at 11.29 am.

### Crime and Corruption Commission, Reports

 **Mr CRISAFULLI** (10.29 am): My question is to the Premier. The government introduced retrospective legislation to validate mining leases and council rates and to exempt themselves from the liability for holding kids in adult watch houses. Will the Premier introduce legislation to ensure Queenslanders can see the CCC report into former Labor deputy premier Jackie Trad?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** As we know, a High Court decision was handed down yesterday. I understand that the CCC has written to the Attorney-General and the Attorney-General is seeking urgent legal advice.

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order, members! We will wait for silence, members.

**Mr Hinchliffe** interjected.

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

### Crime and Corruption Commission, Reports

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** My question is to the Premier. Peter Carne first lodged his case to suppress a CCC report three years ago. In that three years, why has the government not introduced legislation to ensure CCC reports are made public?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** The Leader of the Opposition might not be aware, but the matter was before the courts, the matter was appealed, the matter went to the High Court—

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! Pause the clock. Members to my left, the Premier is trying to answer the question. I cannot hear her response. Please cease your interjections or I will start warning members.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** As I said previously, the Attorney-General is seeking advice.

### Regional Queensland, Investment

**Ms LAUGA:** My question is of the Premier and Minister for the Olympic and Paralympic Games. Can the Premier update the House on the outcomes from the recent Bush Summit in Rockhampton and advise how important the government's progressive coal royalties are in supporting this investment?

**Mr Fumer** interjected.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I thank the member for Keppel for that question and I take the agriculture minister's interjection. On this side of the House we do care about the bush. There has been no greater friend to the bush than this Labor government, especially when it came to putting in place wild dog fencing and being out there listening. It was this government that acted. I want to thank the members for Keppel and Rockhampton for attending—along with the ministers for health and agriculture—the Bush Summit that was held recently in the great city of Rockhampton. We made several announcements at that summit including: a \$92 million new mental health facility in Rockhampton to deliver a new 32-bed mental health facility; a \$30 million Backing Bush Communities Fund, repainting country pubs, putting on festivals and investing in community infrastructure right across this bush—I think that will be a very popular program; \$50 million for a Backing Business in the Bush Fund—once again, very important; \$5 million to roll out clinical trials for new Alzheimer's therapy in the regions; and 2,000 new digital devices for students in remote and regional Queensland.

One may ask where this money is coming from. The money is coming from our progressive coal royalties. I have not had one Queenslanders come up to me and say that they do not support our progressive coal royalties. Let me say very clearly: on this side of the House we support progressive coal royalties. It means our fair share coming back for Queenslanders to be used for infrastructure and for programs across our great state.

We heard yesterday the Leader of the Opposition refusing to commit to our progressive coal royalties. He did not have a position. I have here some articles: 'LNP leaves door open for Queensland coal royalty changes next term' and 'Opposition leader David Crisafulli won't confirm whether he will continue the state's coal royalty regime'. If you want to be a leader, you have to have a position—not just leave it until the election campaign. I know that this Treasurer will be asking—

*(Time expired)*

### **Crime and Corruption Commission, Reports**

**Mr NICHOLLS:** My question is to the Premier. The CCC says that not being able to report on its investigations reduces transparency and is clearly not in the public interest. Is the reason the Premier has not yet agreed to retrospective legislation that it is in the Labor government's interest, not the public interest?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I thank the member for Clayfield, who is also a lawyer and who actually understands that there was a legal process. I will give credit where credit is due: I am not saying that he is a good lawyer but he is a lawyer. As we know—I have said it before in this House and I will say it again—the CCC has written to the Attorney-General and she is seeking urgent legal advice.

### **Infrastructure**

**Ms RICHARDS:** My question is of the Deputy Premier, Minister for State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning and Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympic and Paralympic Games Infrastructure. Could the Deputy Premier advise the House how the Palaszczuk government's Big Build is creating local jobs and delivering the key infrastructure Queenslanders need and how important coal royalties are in supporting this?

**Dr MILES:** I thank the member for Redlands for her question and for her support of the revenue measures that are delivering our Big Build, our \$89 billion infrastructure program that is only possible because of the coal royalties that we are collecting. We are taking the revenue we make from selling the coal that Queenslanders own to deliver back to Queensland communities—creating jobs, delivering the infrastructure they need and decarbonising our economy so that we can have the jobs of the future.

The simple fact is: if you do not have that revenue, you cannot do those things. If you cut revenue, you have to cut spending. If you cut taxes for global multinational coal companies, you have to cut spending in Queensland communities. That is the inevitable consequence of the Leader of the Opposition's announcement yesterday that he would cut taxes on multinational coal companies. We already know some of what they will cut. There is already the \$10 billion of infrastructure cuts that the leader announced on his Twitter account. On top of that \$10 billion of infrastructure cuts he announced on Twitter, there is the secret plan for billions more to be pruned, announced by the member for Chatsworth. There is the plan to cut the pay of nurses and other health workers that the member for Burnett let out of the bag earlier in the week—truly shameful.

Now we learn that it is not just health workers whom the opposition think should take a pay cut to pay for their tax cut for multinational coal companies. Their supporters now want the tradies who are delivering our Big Build to take a pay cut. Yesterday, LNP supporter Tim Gurner said that unemployment needed to jump by 50 per cent to inflict pain on the economy. He said of tradies—

They have been paid a lot to do not too much in the last few years, and we need to see that change.

...

Unemployment has to rise 40 to 50 per cent ... We need to see pain in the economy.

This is a man who has given \$58,000 to the Liberal National Party. They want to cut tradies' pay; they want to cut infrastructure projects; they want to cut nurses' pay. On this side of the House we will deliver the Big Build and we will deliver it with taxes on global multinational coal companies.

**Honourable members** interjected.

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

*(Time expired)*

### **Metro North Health, Injured Patient Compensation**

**Ms BATES:** My question is to the Minister for Health. Kaitlin received just \$6,000 compensation following complications from procedures at the Caboolture Hospital which left her requiring a complete hysterectomy and leaving her incapable of having more children. Is this level of compensation afforded to Kaitlin suitable given her life-changing injuries, and is the minister aware of any disparities between the amount of compensation paid to other patients who have suffered like Kaitlin?

**Ms FENTIMAN:** Obviously, this is a very distressing case. I know that the chief executive of Metro North Hospital and Health Service has attempted to get in touch with Kaitlin to discuss the compensation that was awarded in this case.

**Mr Crisafulli** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Leader of the Opposition, the minister is being responsive to the question as asked.

**Dr Miles** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Thank you, we do not need any other commentary.

**Ms FENTIMAN:** Since I became the health minister I have been concerned about some of the cases that have come forward at Caboolture Hospital, which is why we have announced an independent review into paediatric and maternal care at Caboolture. The terms of reference for this review were published on 17 August. I can confirm that a panel of experts has been appointed to do this work. Dr David Krieser is a leader within the Department of Emergency Medicine and Paediatrics at Western Health in Victoria. Ms Maeve Downes is the Nursing Director in the Women's and Children's Division of Northern Adelaide Local Health Network, South Australia. Maeve is also a board member of Women's and Children's Hospitals Australasia. Ms Wendy Watson is the Divisional Director for Women's and Children's Services at Joan Kirner Hospital for Women and Children in Victoria. Mr Ty Cleary is a Gubbi Gubbi man and senior health worker at the Caboolture Woodford Kilcoy Directorate. Ms Hayley Renouf is a Gubbi Gubbi woman and senior health worker at the Caboolture Woodford Kilcoy Directorate. Given the level of expertise of these individuals, we should let them do their work and, of course, any recommendations that come back from this review we will absolutely implement.

The review will also be informed by an independent social worker and, very importantly, a consumer representative through Health Consumers Queensland. Outcomes and findings from the review will inform processes and actions for the brand new Caboolture Hospital emergency department that will open later this year as part of our huge infrastructure build in health.

We are absolutely determined to make sure that Queenslanders get the very best health care and when issues do arise—and it is absolutely not good enough for a patient outcome—we will act and get the best experts from around the country in to review what is happening at that hospital. We want to make sure that everyone in the Caboolture region gets an absolutely first-class health response.

I pay tribute to the hardworking staff at Caboolture Hospital. They have been under enormous pressure. It is one of the fastest growing regions in our state. Our new satellite hospital is doing its bit to take pressure off the hospital. Having chatted to some of the nurses and the doctor in charge at the satellite hospital, they are all very excited for what it will mean to take pressure off that hardworking emergency department.

### **Health System, Investment**

**Mr SMITH:** My question is of the Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment. Will the Treasurer please update the House on how the Palaszczuk government is planning for Queensland's future health needs, the importance of coal royalties, and is the Treasurer aware of any alternative approaches?

**Mr DICK:** I thank the member for Bundaberg for his question. As a former teacher he knows how important it is to plan for the future, which is why he lobbied so hard for the new Bundaberg Hospital. Hospitals, as with other major infrastructure projects, take time to deliver. As the Queensland Health and Hospitals Plan shows, the new Bundaberg Hospital is scheduled for completion in the second half of 2027.

For the record, that means expenditure on that hospital is beyond the forward estimates. In fact, I am advised by Queensland Treasury that our government is planning beyond the forward estimates to spend \$3.25 billion building hospitals. That commitment beyond the forward estimates is baked in by our government. We can bake that commitment in because we have baked in our commitment permanently to progressive coal royalties.

Of course, the same cannot be said for the Leader of the Opposition. Put under pressure by members of the media gallery yesterday, the LNP leader ran away from the simple commitment that would resolve this issue. The Leader of the Opposition could not say, yes, they will keep progressive coal royalties in their entirety and permanently. Instead, the leader's slippery stance was only to commit to the forward estimates because he says only that expenditure is baked in.

That means the LNP leader is willing to cut the new Toowoomba Hospital, the new Coomera Hospital and the new Bundaberg Hospital. That means under the LNP there would be no Energy and Jobs Plan and no pumped hydro. The LNP would not fund CopperString to Mount Isa. There would be no pumped hydro.

**Mr Janetzki** interjected.

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

**Mr DICK:** All those vital long-term commitments are beyond the forward estimates. Why would the LNP put those at risk? Follow the money—thousands of dollars in donations from the Minerals Council of Australia and coal companies are all going to the LNP.

Every member of this House knows why the Leader of the Opposition was so agitated and frantic when he spoke on the motion in the House yesterday afternoon. The Leader of the Opposition had been subject to the scrutiny that his auto babble and his thought bubbles deserve. He was finally subject to that scrutiny. We know that because we know that what the member for Burnett said is the truth.

**Mr Janetzki** interjected.

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

**Mr DICK:** We know that they want to cut the terms, conditions and pay of workers. We know that that is the LNP plan. When the member for Condamine and the member for Burleigh said they did not support coal royalties, they were telling the truth—just like the member for Burnett was telling the truth. When the member for Chatsworth promised to cut the infrastructure program, he too was telling the truth. We know there is a \$7 billion hole in the budget. That has come from the Leader of the Opposition. The LNP wants to cut. The LNP has to cut. The LNP must cut. All Queenslanders will suffer under the Crisafulli cuts.

*(Time expired)*

### **Metro North Health, Injured Patient Compensation**

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** My question is to the Minister for Health. Brittany McDaniel was forced to undergo two surgeries to remove an ectopic pregnancy after the surgery resulted in a blood vessel being cut. Unlike Kaitlin, Brittany went to the media and was reportedly, and justifiably, offered \$200,000. Do victims of botched surgeries only receive adequate compensation if they go to the media?

**Mrs D'ATH:** Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I believe that that question is certainly argumentative, but I also believe it has imputations in the language that was used, and I ask that it be ruled out of order.

**Mr SPEAKER:** I am going to allow the question and I will allow latitude.

**Ms FENTIMAN:** It would be completely inappropriate for me to talk about confidential legal settlements that are made with families. What I can say is that I have had the opportunity to meet with Brittany on a number of occasions because she asked to do so for me to hear about her experience. I have met with her, her husband and her father. Again, I am open to meeting with any health consumers who would like to meet with me so I can hear about their experience so that we can build a better health system.

### **Education, Investment**

**Mr MARTIN:** My question is of the Minister for Education, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing. Can the minister please update the House on how the Palaszczuk government's record investment in education is benefiting my electorate of Stretton and how important progressive coal royalties are to our budget, and is the minister aware of any alternative approaches?

**Ms GRACE:** That is a very good question. I know the member for Stretton fights every day for his constituents. Right now we are working on new classrooms at Sunnybank Hills State School—a \$20 million investment. There is a new hall coming to Stretton State College—a \$12 million investment. They also have one of our brilliant Share the Dignity vending machines providing free period products to the students at the school. The homework centre is benefiting other schools in the electorate, particularly Runcorn Heights State School.

I could say the same for almost every electorate represented in this House. We are investing in infrastructure right across the state of Queensland—\$2.1 billion and over \$10 billion since we were elected in 2015. It is amazing the number of members who come to me wanting even more. I know that we need to do more and we will, but a lot of that comes under threat when you do not have the finances to do it. That is why progressive coal royalties are so important.

Like the Premier, I have not met anyone who does not support a progressive coal royalty tax where super profits to the levels that we have seen should be paid and reinvested in our great state, whether it is investing in education, in air conditioning every single school in the state—six years ahead of any alternative plan—or in building new schools. We have delivered 25 new schools so far. There are two more next year. That means that we have delivered, on average, three schools per year since we were elected in 2015. These are not just any schools. These are state-of-the-art, magnificent, new, world-class facilities that any student, teacher, parent and staff would be more than happy to enter or teach in. The pride of the students in all of the buildings that we are delivering is second to none. I go around all of the electorates and how proud are we in delivering and transforming many of these schools and, in particular, special schools in this state. All of them have been transformed into modern facilities.

We are also introducing next year something that we as the Palaszczuk government are particularly proud of, and that is free kindy. We are already seeing the cracks from those opposite—misinformation going out about free kindy. They are going to cut coal royalties and, let me say, free kindy is also on the chopping block.

### **Metro North Health, Chief Executive**

**Mr POWELL:** My question is to the Minister for Health. I refer to the minister's previous response to the member for Mudgeeraba. On what date, as just referenced by the minister, did the CEO of the Metro North Hospital and Health Service reach out to Kaitlin?

**Ms FENTIMAN:** I thank the member for the question. I think there have been a number of instances where they have been working with Kaitlin. I expect that of all CEOs of all hospital and health services—that when patients, Queenslanders, do have complaints that they are responsive and that they do work through these complaints with families. There have been a number of contacts with Kaitlin. I am happy to say to the member that there have been numerous conversations with this patient.

**Mr Powell** interjected.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order, members! I will wait for silence. Just a reminder, members, if you have asked a question and the minister is being responsive, you cannot continually ask unauthorised supplementary questions.

### **Health Workers**

**Mr TANTARI:** My question is of the Minister for Health, Mental Health and Ambulance Services and Minister for Women. Can the minister update the House on the Palaszczuk government's record of supporting frontline health staff, and is the minister aware of any alternative approaches?

**Ms FENTIMAN:** I thank the member for Hervey Bay for his question. He is a wonderful advocate for health services right across his region and, most importantly, supporting the frontline staff of the Fraser Coast and Wide Bay region. As I have said time and time again, on this side of the House we absolutely back our frontline health workers. That is why we are employing more than 4,000 of them in just this term alone.

I am very concerned though that, as we saw yesterday, not everyone in this House supports our healthcare staff. The member for Burnett's comments were particularly disturbing about how we need to break the back of 'unrealistic employee entitlements'. In fact, the comments were so alarming that one of the member's own constituents felt the need to write to the member for Bundaberg detailing her experience with the member for Burnett. I will read some of it. In the letter, local grandmother Moya Jackson—

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Ms FENTIMAN:** Mr Speaker, I think the opposition might want to listen to this.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order, members!

**Ms FENTIMAN:** In the letter, local grandmother Moya Jackson details how she and her husband met with the member for Burnett in 2018 at the Nourish Cafe in Bundaberg. I will read part of her letter. It states—

During this discussion, Stephen also stated that the LNP would abolish the Nurse Navigator roles in the Health Department, as a matter of urgency, if they regained government in Qld. His reason for this he explained was that they were simply another level of bureaucracy.

To say we were shocked by these comments of course is an understatement.

Since 2020 both Mark and I have had numerous visits to the Emergency Department, the Cancer Care Unit and Radiology ... I am now currently in contact with Nurse Navigators as I myself have metastatic terminal Pancreatic cancer. They have been brilliant in supporting me through the health system.

I table this letter to the member for Bundaberg.

*Tabled paper:* Email, dated 14 September 2023, from Ms Moya Jackson to the member for Bundaberg, Mr Tom Smith MP, regarding healthcare worker entitlements [1333].

Yesterday we saw the member for Burnett let the cat out of the bag that they over there think we are overpaying our nurses. Shame on them. Today we hear from another local grandmother in the region that they now plan to cut nurse navigators—nurse navigators who, through an independent study, save us \$110 million a year through the work that they do. I table that report.

*Tabled paper:* Media article, undated, titled 'Special nurses help save \$110m a year' [1334].

It is time the Leader of the Opposition stood up and explained why the member for Burnett is still a shadow assistant minister on his team.

*(Time expired)*

### **Manufacturing, Buses**

**Mr BLEIJIE:** My question is to the Premier. The government announced it will roll out a new fleet of 150 diesel buses despite promising all new buses would be electrified from 2025. Is the Labor government walking away from its commitment to electrify new buses from 2025 and has this announcement been affected by the well-reported cost overruns occurring on Minister Bailey's watch?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** We are happy to build buses and build trains in Queensland.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** No, no, no. That is right: we are happy to do that. We know those opposite do not support building things in Queensland.

**Mr Dick:** Schrunner sent them overseas.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** That is right. Where is the Lord Mayor building buses? The LNP Lord Mayor is building them overseas.

**Mr Bleijie** interjected.

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

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Where do the opposition build trains? They build them overseas. Where are we building trains?

**Government members:** In Maryborough!

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** In Maryborough. That is right. This month is Manufacturing Month and we have a manufacturing minister. Here we want to build things locally. We want to make things locally. We want to make sure that there are jobs here locally, unlike those opposite who have no plans to build things here in Queensland.

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. Minister Bailey, you will cease your interjections. The member for Bonney will cease his interjections. The member for Gympie and the member for Logan can stop going backwards and forwards or you will be warned under the standing orders.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** We know that those opposite have no plans to make things in Queensland, but we will absolutely continue to make sure that buses are made here and also that trains are made in Maryborough.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order with respect to relevance under standing order 118(b). My question was: has the government given up on its electric bus fleet and is this as a result of Minister Bailey's continual budget blowouts?

**Mr SPEAKER:** The Premier has made reference to that. I will ask you to come back to the question as asked.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** We will never give up on manufacturing here in Queensland. We are absolutely proud of our manufacturing. I am also advised by the transport department that there will be an ability for the order to transition to zero-emission buses.

### Central Queensland, Resources Industries

**Mr WALKER:** My question is of the Minister for Resources. Will the minister advise what the government is doing to help investment in the mining industry in Central Queensland and the importance of coal royalties?

**Mr STEWART:** I thank the member for Mundingburra for his question because he knows how important the resource sector is, particularly to Queensland. Queensland has a strong coal sector and it is a vital contributor to the state's economy, particularly to local communities like Glenden. Our longstanding support for the coal industry is clear to see. Earlier this year the House passed important reforms to legislation governing the future of several mining operations in Central Queensland.

The Central Queensland Coal Associates Agreement Act 1968 governs the eight BHP Mitsubishi Alliance mines in our state. BMA currently holds four special coalmining leases under this act which form part of the larger Central Queensland steel-making coal projects. Under the previous provisions, the act did not allow the transfer of interest in these special coalmining leases without making the transferee a party to the Central Queensland Coal Associates Agreement. The reforms passed in this House have now made it easier for BMA to sell those leases, and this agreement is now officially in place after being gazetted at the start of this month. We want to make it clear that it was BHP that approached the government in 2019 and asked us to make amendments to the agreement and the legislation.

I introduced this bill into the House in March 2022. That was well before changes to the coal royalty tiers were introduced on 1 July last year. I note that BHP is looking to divest its Blackwater and Daunia mines and there is strong interest from companies in taking over these operations. Why wouldn't there be strong interest in these assets, which generate royalties for all Queenslanders.

We have been calling on the LNP to tell Queenslanders what their position is on these royalty charges, and yesterday we finally found out. The Leader of the Opposition called our progressive coal royalties a 'bad plan'. We know that Queensland's strong economy is under threat from the LNP's secret plans to cut because the Leader of the Opposition will only keep our progressive coal royalties for the forward estimates and not beyond. The Leader of the Opposition says he will not be spooked by us calling him out for his cuts. We know that the LNP wants to cut, the LNP needs to cut, and the LNP will cut, and Queenslanders will pay the price in the end.

We also know who else is spooked: our teachers, police, health workers and public servants. They will suffer under the LNP. Remember, it was the Campbell Newman government that sacked 14,000 public servants. Our regional communities are also spooked. Courtesy of our progressive coal royalties, our regional communities are getting an injection of infrastructure to support what they need, but they will suffer under the LNP. With regard to progressive coal royalties, Townsville people say three simple words: it's about time!

### Children, Gender Dysphoria Treatment

**Mr KATTER:** My question is to the Minister for Health and Ambulance Services, Minister for Mental Health and Minister for Women. Queensland doctors are whistleblowing and calling for an inquiry into the radical state sanctioned treatment of gender dysphoric children, claiming they are forced to use the gender affirmation model even when they do not believe it to be medically appropriate. Will the minister intervene to restore the ability of doctors—including Dr Jillian Spencer, who has been stood down—to use their professional medical discretion when treating gender dysphoric children?

**Ms FENTIMAN:** I understand there have been a number of complaints made by patients in relation to Dr Spencer. These complaints are subject to a number of HR processes within Children's Health as well as referrals to Ahpra and the Health Ombudsman. It is obviously not appropriate for me to go into detail on Dr Spencer's employment, but I can advise the member that Dr Spencer has been stood down from clinical duties; however, she is still employed by Children's Health Queensland.

The multidisciplinary care that hardworking clinicians provide at the Children's Gender Clinic is of very high quality and based on the best available evidence. This is an emerging field globally—no-one shies away from that—but the evidence base is sound. Like any health system, the service continuously reviews its model of care and monitors clinical outcomes. In addition, the service has actively contributed to the evidence base and research around gender-affirming care for children and young people.

Given that today is R U OK? Day, we know that trans and gender diverse people have some of the worst mental health outcomes of any group in our community, particularly young trans people. I think it is incumbent on all of us in this House to ensure we elevate the level of debate. I call on members, particularly today on R U OK? Day, to reflect on the impact of their words and how far-reaching they can be.

I again want to say that the Queensland Gender Clinic is one of the best in the country. I have met with a lot of families who have accessed the service at the clinic. It has been 'life-changing', in their words, and we will continue to support the clinic and trans Queenslanders.

### Energy System

**Mr HUNT:** My question is to Minister for Energy, Renewables and Hydrogen and Minister for Public Works and Procurement. Can the minister advise the House what choices the Labor government has made to transition our energy system to one that is cheap, clean and secure and the importance of coal royalties during this transition, and is the minister aware of any alternative approaches?

**Mr de BRENNI:** The future of this state is about a choice and a clear plan. Our choice is to take real action on climate. Our plan is for a 96 per cent reduction in emissions. Our choice is to lower power prices. We have delivered the nation's lowest power bills. The member for Caloundra is backing real record-breaking action funded by progressive coal royalties and our record investment in renewables. What is the other choice? What is the Liberal National Party's strong choice?

Their nuclear plan for Queensland was revealed today in the *Daily Telegraph* by the LNP's federal energy spokesperson. What would a Liberal National nuclear plan mean for Queensland? I can inform the House I am advised that Queensland would need at least 25 nuclear reactors to replace our system, including our pumped hydro energy batteries. I can further inform the House I am advised that, based on current cost estimates developed by the CSIRO, it would come at a capital cost of \$136 billion and, I am informed, take 20 years. That is a 20-year delay on climate action.

With the LNP's announcement they will refuse to back progressive coal royalties, they need to come clean on how they will fund this \$136 billion investment in nuclear. What will they cut? Will they cut 2,000 beds at 15 hospitals, including on the Sunshine Coast? Will they cut 15 years of investment in the Bruce Highway? Will they cut free kindy for 50,000 Queensland families? Will they cut 13,500 new social and affordable homes?

**Mr Minnikin** interjected.

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

**Mr de BRENNI:** We know they will cut workers' pay. The member for Burnett already said they will do that. The LNP's plan for energy would nuke our hospitals, it would nuke our roads, it would nuke our schools, it would nuke housing and it will nuke health workers' pay. It would be like dropping a nuclear bomb on the Queensland economy, leaving a massive budget black hole for generations to come. We know they will not get there with cuts alone. There will not be enough cuts to fund their 25 nuclear plants, including on the Sunshine Coast. The question the Leader of the Opposition must answer is: what will they sell to pay for their nuclear plan for Queensland? On this side of the House we will invest in clean, affordable renewables. They have a nuclear plan for a budget black hole—

(Time expired)



### Kin Kin, Koala Protection

**Ms BOLTON:** My question is to the Minister for Environment and the Great Barrier Reef. With our community becoming aware this week of the Kin Kin Quarry's referral under the Commonwealth EPBCA for an expansion involving the clearing of nearly 10 hectares of habitat recognised as critical to the survival of our koalas, what can the minister and government do to stop the further devastation of our community and its inhabitants?

**Ms LINARD:** I thank the member for her question. Last Thursday was Threatened Species Day. The koala is an iconic species. The Deputy Premier, who was Acting Premier at the time, and I made an announcement of an additional \$4.2 million for Healthy Land & Water to partner with them to make sure they are working with councils around threat mitigation for koalas. I want to acknowledge straightaway how committed our government is. In 2020 we introduced the strongest protections that Queensland has ever seen for koalas. Currently we are conducting a post-implementation review of those regulations. I look forward to ensuring that they are absolutely the most effective protections we can have here. To date we have protected over 577,000 hectares of koala priority area in South-East Queensland. We have protected large and importantly connected areas that include koala habitat as well as areas that are suitable for habitat restoration in an area twice the size of the ACT. Our commitment as a government towards the conservation of this threatened species is absolutely without question.

In regard to Kin Kin, I am aware that the existing quarry operation is authorised under an EA by my department and an existing development approval has been issued by local government. However, the proposed clearing of protected vegetation is not currently authorised under that EA. The area in question falls within high-quality, core koala habitat, as the member outlined. My department has not yet received an EA application in relation to the proposed expansion of the Kin Kin Quarry. The proponent may need to obtain approval under the EPBC at Commonwealth level. They have invited public comment, which I understand closes today. I encourage the member for Noosa to encourage her community to make comment on whether that action should be a controlled action and whether it should require Commonwealth approval.

The operator may also need to amend the development approval with local government and seek approval through the state government through the State Assessment and Referral Agency process. Please be assured that any application received by the state and my department will be assessed thoroughly and rigorously, as it should be, through the state assessment and referral process. That will include consideration of any impacts on koalas, other matters of state environmental significance and indeed any other environmental values. I thank the member for raising it. I encourage her to encourage her community to make their voices known.

### Environmental Protection

**Ms BUSH:** My question is to the Minister for the Environment and the Great Barrier Reef, Minister for Science and Minister for Multicultural Affairs. Can the minister advise the House on how Queensland's strong economy underpinned by our progressive coal royalties regime is helping to protect our unique environment, and is the minister aware of any alternative approaches?

**Ms LINARD:** I thank the member for her question. Her commitment to the environment and climate action is without doubt. It was an absolute pleasure to participate in her Eco Forum a few weeks ago to discuss the actions that our government is taking in regard to climate change and protecting our iconic environment. Our government believes the science on climate change and we are taking bold steps to act. We have a costed, ambitious and practical pathway to reduce emissions, while ensuring the long-term viability of the Queensland economy, communities, regions and industries.

We have almost reached our 2030 emissions reduction target of a 30 per cent reduction below 2005 levels, having reduced emissions by 29 per cent based on 2021 data. Queensland's Climate Action Plan sets out the priority sectors for action over the next decade to achieve zero net emissions by 2050 in line with leading global economies. Our Queensland Energy and Jobs Plan will accelerate our renewable ambition by building upon the commitment of a 50 per cent Renewable Energy Target by 2030 and setting a course to power Queensland with 70 per cent renewable energy by 2032 and 80 per cent by 2035.

In terms of investment and as part of the 2022-23 budget, the Queensland government committed \$32.6 million over four years to accelerate climate action across the state—for example, to provide \$4.2 million in Community Sustainability Action grants and \$4 million to support QCoast2100. These investments are made possible by the Palaszczuk government's progressive coal royalties

regime. Our government is working very closely with the Albanese Labor government in Canberra to respond to the threat of climate change. They, like us, believe the science, which is a refreshing change from the former Liberal federal government.

We know where our government stands and we know where the federal government stands, but where does the member for Broadwater and the LNP opposition stand on the issue of climate change? What investments will those opposite make to address climate change and protect the environment? Everybody here knows the answer: absolutely none. The LNP do not support Queensland getting a fair share of record coal profits, which means they need to find billions of savings to fill their budget black hole. The only way they can do this is through their secret LNP cuts plan. When those opposite were in government, they systematically revoked every important environmental policy and program that helped mitigate the impacts of climate change. What will they cut this time? They made the largest roll backs of environmental protection since Federation. Those opposite are a threat to our environment and they should come clean with Queenslanders about what they will cut.

### **Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services**

**Mr CRANDON:** My question is to the Minister for Police. In relation to a complaint about the minister's office at estimates, the minister said—

... the Queensland Police Service immediately contacted that member and asked if the member had any further evidence. The advice I have is that the member did not even come back to the Queensland Police Service and that the member did not respond to follow-up calls.

Who gave this advice to the minister?

**Mr RYAN:** I have noticed the protestations from those opposite regarding this matter. It is quite absurd to think that, when they raise a matter publicly with the intention of getting a public answer, they then do not like the public answer and they protest about it. This was raised in the Premier's estimates hearing and my estimates hearing in the coward's castle without the opportunity for a person to defend themselves. Rightly so, all allegations that are made about any person are referred to the appropriate authority. I understand that this relates to a matter which was raised a number of years ago. I query why those opposite may sit on something for a number of years and not immediately refer it to the authorities.

**Mr POWELL:** Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order under relevance, 118(b). The question was simply who told the minister.

**Mr SPEAKER:** No. Manager of Opposition Business, there was a preamble to the question. It was not as direct as you would suggest. The minister is being responsive and I ask him to continue with one minute and 49 seconds on the clock.

**Mr RYAN:** With regard to all matters that are publicly or privately raised, of course it is the responsibility of members of this House and ministers to ensure that they are referred immediately to the appropriate authorities. I would like to think that those opposite have done that in not only this case but all cases—

**Mr Bleijie** interjected.

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

**Mr RYAN:** The other matter is that when matters are raised publicly it is the responsible course—

**Mrs Gerber:** Who, Minister?

**Mr RYAN:** I still have a minute to go. Matters that are raised publicly are matters that ministers and other senior officials should get assurances on that they have been properly investigated and dealt with. It would be negligent for a minister or a senior official not to get those assurances around serious allegations. In addition, it is important to note that ministerial staff are employed by ministerial services, which are a part of the Department of the Premier and Cabinet.

**Mr Watts** interjected.

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

**Mr RYAN:** In seeking assurances, I sought assurances through my chief of staff of the employer of that staff member. I was assured that, in respect of the matters raised by the member for Coomera, that information was passed to my chief of staff from the Department of the Premier and Cabinet.

### Uluru Statement from the Heart

**Ms LUI:** My question is of the Minister for Treaty, Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, Minister for Communities and Minister for the Arts. Will the minister update the House on the progress of the Uluru Statement from the Heart in Queensland and is the minister aware of any alternative views?

**Ms ENOCH:** I thank the member for Cook for her question and for her steadfast support of the Uluru Statement from the Heart. I stand with her on voice, treaty and truth. I want to begin by quoting from a contribution made in the Path to Treaty legislation which this parliament passed earlier this year with resounding bipartisan support. The quote states—

Path to Treaty offers ... a fork in the road. Down one well-travelled path lies a discussion had for political purposes. It talks a big game but achieves little for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people—a path where political battlelines are drawn but ultimately ends with a decade wasted and no progress made. Down the other path is a treaty.

These are the words of the Leader of the Opposition. It took only a few months after that before the far right of his party convinced him to basically start walking back his support. We saw that the far right of the party put that pressure on the Leader of the Opposition to not only walk back his support but also walk away from a Voice to Parliament.

We have an incredibly profound opportunity on October 14 where we will be asked to break the cycle of partisan policies and partisan politics, a change that can be made overnight, by recognition and by listening for better results. However, instead of encouraging this path towards a more unified Australia, what we are seeing from the LNP not only here in Queensland but also right across Australia is an act to divide all of us. Sadly, this fractured and divided nature of the LNP has absolutely worked to strip away any hope for the future.

Down on the Gold Coast, the member for Bonney backed the Voice, but Karen Andrews does not. Now Peter Dutton and local Liberal MPs like Bert van Manen, Warren Entsch and others are circulating letters under their own LNP letterhead. I will table these.

*Tabled paper:* Bundle of documents relating to the recognition of Indigenous Australians in the Constitution [\[1335\]](#).

In those letters they are peddling misinformation that has been proven over and over to be untrue. That is their nature. They are looking to absolutely divide us all.

What is the view of the shadow minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander partnerships, the member for Surfers Paradise? Still no comment. Kate Carnell told the media on the weekend that Liberal Party politicians are having their preselection threatened. She said people are not comfortable to campaign for what they believe in. We support 'yes'—yes for treaty, yes for truth, yes for Voice.

### Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services

**Mr LAST:** My question is to the Premier. The Police Commissioner has written to the opposition claiming the minister was not given this confidential information about contact between an opposition MP and the QPS. What action will the Premier take to investigate how her police minister was given private information about contact between an opposition MP and the QPS?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I will get some advice.

### Seniors

**Mrs MULLEN:** My question is of the Minister for Child Safety and Minister for Seniors and Disability Services. Can the minister inform the House of the Palaszczuk government's plans for Seniors Expos for the rest of this year and the importance of coal royalties in providing cost-of-living relief for our seniors?

**Mr CRAWFORD:** I thank the member for Jordan for her question. Like all members on this side of the House, everyone understands the importance of seniors and Seniors Expos for the many, many thousands of seniors we have. As the Premier made clear, the Palaszczuk government is listening to Queenslanders who are facing major cost-of-living pressures, particularly the voices of older Queenslanders.

In the second half of 2023, we are continuing to deliver Seniors Expos and seniors' savings pop-ups across Queensland. We will be holding our next Seniors Expo on September 26 for a specific cohort of Queensland seniors, those in the LGBTIQ+ community. This follows on from a very successful Seniors Expo held recently in Mackay. There is more in Brisbane in October, Hervey Bay

and Mareeba in November, and Woodridge is programmed for December. In addition, there will be pop-ups in Logan, Garden City, Port Douglas, Atherton, Gatton, Toowoomba and out to Roma. These events provide vital information on concessions and rebates available to older Queenslanders that will help with the cost of living and connect them to the services to assist with their needs.

Every expo reminds me that older Queenslanders are economically, politically, socially and culturally active. That is why it is critical we hear firsthand from seniors about what is important to them. Expos are just one way we can do that. Seniors can share their views with the government and give us their input.

What they are really excited about is the \$1,072 that many of them are entitled to through their power bill. One thing we hear consistently from our Seniors Expos is that the cost-of-living pressures are felt by Queensland seniors. The Palaszczuk government is listening. Seniors line up at our concession stand. They want to make sure they do not miss out. We want to make sure they do not miss out. We are committing almost \$1.8 billion in concessions to eligible Queenslanders, including up to \$1,072 in electricity rebates alone, delivered to Queensland households because of our progressive coal royalties.

While the opposition is hatching away plans to work out how to prune, cut, sack and sell, the Palaszczuk government is delivering more concessions, rebates and discounts to help older Queenslanders address the cost of living and enjoy a better life. We know the Leader of the Opposition and the LNP do not support Queensland getting a fair share of record coal profits. They need to find billions in savings to fill their budget black holes, and the only way they can do that is through their secret LNP cuts plan, sacking thousands of hardworking frontline services, cutting Queensland's Big Build infrastructure program in roads and hospitals and selling off assets that Queenslanders own, particularly our older Queenslanders.

### **Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services**

**Mr JANETZKI:** My question is to the Minister for Police. The police minister was quite explicit at estimates that he knew about phone calls between an opposition MP and the Queensland Police Service. Who told the police minister about this contact?

**Mr RYAN:** I mentioned this. My chief of staff was informed by DPC, the employer of ministerial staffers—

**Mr Crisafulli:** How did the DPC know about that?

**Mr SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. I will wait for members to be silent. Leader of the Opposition, I have already asked this to stop in terms of supplemental questions being asked. The minister is barely 14 seconds in. Three minutes to respond—you have the call, Minister.

**Mr RYAN:** You have serious allegations made publicly about government employees, and it would be negligent to not refer them. It would be negligent not to provide information back to the community around serious allegations, so that there is confidence in employees of government agencies, including ministers' offices. But also, what did the member for Coomera do in respect of the allegation? He raises it publicly. Did he immediately refer it to the authorities? Or did he just choose to come in and use parliamentary privilege to try to undermine confidence in a government employee, but also to make an attack on a government employee? We know they hate public servants. We know they do not respect public servants.

**Mr POWELL:** Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order on relevance under standing order 118(b). Phone calls between the police and an opposition member are private. The question was: how did the police minister find out about that phone conversation?

**Government members** interjected.


**Mr SPEAKER:** I do not need any guidance from members. Minister, I will ask you to directly respond to the question and be somewhat less argumentative about the question itself.

**Mr RYAN:** For the third time, I was informed by my chief of staff about the information provided to my chief of staff by DPC.

**Mr SPEAKER:** The period for question time has expired. Members leaving the chamber please do so quietly.


## PRIVILEGE

### Alleged Contempt of Parliament

 **Mr KRAUSE** (Scenic Rim—LNP) (11.29 am): I rise on a matter of privilege suddenly arising. During ministerial statements this morning the member for Stafford approached me in my seat in the House and spoke to me in what I consider was an aggressive and intimidatory manner. This was observed by other members. The matter related to the scheduling of a PCCC meeting and attendance of non-government members. I consider the member for Stafford's conduct potentially constitutes a contempt of parliament as it attempted to intimidate me in my conduct as a member. I will be writing to you, Mr Speaker, about this matter.

**Mr SPEAKER:** The member is entitled to do so.

### Alleged Deliberate Misleading of the House

 **Mr SULLIVAN** (Stafford—ALP) (11.30 am): I rise on a matter of privilege suddenly arising. The description of that conversation is utterly disgraceful. The chair and I as deputy chair have—


**Mr SPEAKER:** Member, what is your point of order?

**Mr SULLIVAN:** I will be writing to you about the member for Scenic Rim misleading this House.

**Mr SPEAKER:** We will deal with the matters as one matter.

## EMBLEMS OF QUEENSLAND AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

### Introduction

 **Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE** (Sandgate—ALP) (Minister for Tourism, Innovation and Sport and Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympics and Paralympics Sport and Engagement) (11.30 am): I present a bill for an act to amend the Crime and Corruption Act 2001, the Emblems of Queensland Act 2005, the Parliamentary Service Act 1988 and the Parliament of Queensland Act 2001 for particular purposes. I table the bill and the explanatory notes and a statement of compatibility with human rights. I nominate the Economics and Governance Committee to consider the bill.

*Tabled paper:* Emblems of Queensland and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023 [1336].

*Tabled paper:* Emblems of Queensland and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023, explanatory notes [1337].

*Tabled paper:* Emblems of Queensland and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023, statement of compatibility with human rights [1338].

I am pleased to introduce the Emblems of Queensland and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023. As noted, this bill will officially recognise the *Muttaborrasaurus langdoni* as our state's fossil emblem. This is the culmination of an extensive consultation process and reflects our government's commitment to supporting a world-class tourism industry that provides vibrant, authentic, accessible and transformative visitor experiences that reflect our natural and cultural values, and our communities and regions. Queensland has much to offer our visitors and our emblems highlight the beauty and many wonders of our state.

Our new fossil emblem will provide a unique representation that showcases Queensland's rich palaeontological discoveries and history. The state fossil emblem will support economic development and palaeo tourism in outback Queensland. Many of the Southern Hemisphere's key dinosaur finds are in outback Queensland. I am advised that these locations account for an estimated 11 percent of all tourism, or almost 122,000 visitors, and 26 percent of leisure tourism visitors to the outback Queensland region.

The state fossil emblem will support existing Queensland government investment, including funding allocated to deliver a road map to grow dinosaur tourism across outback Queensland. The search for a fossil emblem was initiated after a petition from the Winton community putting forward *Diamantinasaurus matildae* as Queensland's official fossil emblem. A working group was formed, and additional nominations of potential fossil candidates were sought. Consultation was undertaken with community groups, including relevant cultural heritage groups and traditional owners. From this consultation, the working group short-listed 12 candidates for the state fossil emblem ahead of a community vote.

**An honourable member** interjected.

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** They were all great. They were all quite impressive and a demonstration of the rich palaeontological heritage of this state.

After extensive public consultation, Queenslanders clearly indicated their preferred fossil. Around 9,000 responses were received for the state fossil emblem. From amongst those *Muttaborrasaurus langdoni*, named after the Central Queensland town of Muttaborra, was the clear popular choice, receiving some 27.55 per cent of the vote. I am pleased today to be able to introduce this bill to affirm the people's choice and officially recognise *Muttaborrasaurus langdoni* as the state fossil emblem in our Emblems of Queensland Act. I encourage Queenslanders to plan a visit to our outback dinosaur destinations to walk in the footsteps of dinosaurs and learn more about our fossil emblem and all the other fossil finds that were highlighted by this process.

I now turn to the other aspects of the bill, which progress a number of technical amendments to parliamentary related legislation. These amendments relate to requests made of the government by the Speaker, either in their role as Speaker or as chairperson of the Committee of the Legislative Assembly, and were outlined to the House on 11 May 2023 or in consultation with the Speaker and the Clerk of the Parliament. On 11 May 2023, the Acting Speaker circulated a statement by the Speaker which stated—

I wish to bring to the attention of the House three requests to government for amendments to legislation relating to the administration of the Parliament that have been made by myself either as Speaker or as Chairperson of the Committee of the Legislative Assembly in recent times.

These amendments related to the following, which the government has accepted and acted upon: a request to amend the Crime and Corruption Act 2001 and the Parliament of Queensland Act 2001 to retrospectively clarify that since 23 April 1998 members of parliamentary committees have been able to participate in committee meetings in person or by telephone, video or other electronic means; further, amend the Parliament of Queensland Act 2001 to refine the process by which a member of the Legislative Assembly in a state of ill health has their request for a proxy vote notified to the Assembly; and amend the Parliamentary Service Act 1988 to clarify that the parliamentary precinct includes the Legislative Assembly chamber and its galleries when the Legislative Assembly is sitting.

During the drafting process the matter of making a human rights certificate was raised in respect of by-laws and rules made by the Speaker. As the Parliamentary Service Act provides that these by-laws and rules are subordinate legislation under the Statutory Instruments Act 1992, a human rights certificate pursuant to the Human Rights Act 2019 and explanatory notes pursuant to the Legislative Standards Act 1992 are required to be prepared for them when they, or amendments to them, are made by the Speaker. The government has discussed this matter with the Speaker, the Acting Speaker and the Clerk, and it has been agreed that to give effect to the independence of the Office of the Speaker in these matters and the independence of the parliament from the government, it would be more appropriate for the Speaker, rather than a minister, to be responsible for the preparation of these documents that accompany subordinate legislation that the Speaker makes.

In drafting the amendment requested by the Speaker in respect of the definition of 'parliamentary precinct', an evidentiary matter was raised. As such, with the agreement of the Acting Speaker and the Clerk, the bill provides that in a proceeding against a person accused of an offence against the Speaker's by-laws, evidence may be given in a court or place out of the Legislative Assembly, of a direction made or purportedly made by the Speaker or a person authorised to make such directions during proceedings in the Assembly. I am advised that a similar provision currently exists in the Criminal Code in relation to the prosecution of a person under the Criminal Code for interfering with or disturbing the legislature.

Finally, the bill updates a number of cross-references in the Parliament of Queensland Act to definitions explained and provided for in the Electoral Act 1992. These updates were identified by the Office of the Queensland Parliamentary Counsel during the drafting of the bill. I thank the Speaker, the Acting Speaker and the Clerk for their advice and feedback during the drafting process. With those words, I commend not only the bill but also the *Muttaborrasaurus* to the House.

### First Reading

**Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE** (Sandgate—ALP) (Minister for Tourism, Innovation and Sport and Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympics and Paralympics Sport and Engagement) (11.38 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 Economics and Governance Committee


**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Kelly): In accordance with standing order 131, the bill is now referred to the Economics and Governance Committee.

## WATER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

### Second Reading

Resumed from 13 September (see p. 2680), on motion of Mr Butcher—

That the bill be now read a second time.

 **Mr SMITH** (Bundaberg—ALP) (11.39 am), continuing: Yesterday I was talking about our government's investment in water and water infrastructure and looking after the landholders across this great state, especially in regional Queensland. I reinforce the point: it is only our government that is standing up for Nationals held electorates. It is only Labor governments that look after those who live in electorates represented by members of the National Party. Yesterday I also mentioned that there is no greater friend of the Greens political party than the member for Southern Downs. Whilst he may not agree with that statement politically, it is because he is a very friendly bloke. Therefore, no doubt, he is the greatest friend of the Greens political party in this House.

I also spoke about how we know there is a fracture in the LNP when it comes to policy out in the bush. When it comes to the policies of the National Party, the Liberal Party and the Labor Party, our party—our government—is making sure that we are building water infrastructure. Whether it is Rookwood Weir—the member for Rockhampton is a passionate fighter for and supporter of that project—or whether it is making sure we are securing water in the Bundaberg and Burnett region through the restoration of Paradise Dam, standing up for people in that part of the world, we are doing the right thing by those in the bush. We know that the LNP will go to the upcoming election with a focus on saving inner-city Liberal seats from the Greens. They will not give the Nationals anything they want around their policies because they need to make sure that they save Dr Christian Rowan in Moggill, Tim Nicholls in Clayfield and Tim Mander in Everton. We know that our policies are delivering for the bush.

I mention irrigation discounts. It was wonderful to have Minister Butcher in Bundaberg recently with local grower Dean Akers. Dean is a great man; I have spoken about him before in this House. We are extending the 15 per cent irrigation water discount for irrigators and growers using the Sunwater irrigation scheme through to 2024-25. It is a great policy that makes sure we are supporting all of our regional growers. It is wonderful that the minister is here in the House. He has been an absolute champion for agriculture and horticulture through his work in the water portfolio.

I know that the water minister backs in his government workers as well—whether it is Seqwater or Sunwater. Irrigation discounts are occurring through Sunwater because we have great government departmental staff within the department and also with boots on the ground throughout the Bundaberg region. I know a lot of those workers from Sunwater and I reckon they might be pretty interested in the speaking list for this debate. The member for Burnett is on the speaking list. What a wonderful opportunity this will be, after he dodged the media yesterday, for the member to make a contribution in this House about what plans he has for Sunwater workers—

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order under standing order 118(b), relevance.


**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Kelly): Member, I will bring you back to the long title of the bill.

**Mr SMITH:** The long title of the bill is about what the department is doing through Sunwater and Seqwater. We know that in order to install telemetry devices and water meter devices we need a strong government owned workforce. Those workers on the ground need to be paid fairly. When they do the tough job of putting in the devices they need a good bargaining agreement with good wages and good leave entitlements.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member, I am not finding the relevance there. You will need to come back to the long title of the bill.

**Mr SMITH:** The department conducted a trial of telemetry devices throughout the Queensland Murray-Darling Basin. They trialled 47 different devices over approximately 10 months through different forms of network providers, whether it was satellite or cellular. The device trial was very successful. They did highlight a few interruptions in terms of installation, but overall the trial worked very well. I thank those members of the department for that wonderful work and for providing that detail back to the committee. I can guarantee them that we will not cut their entitlements—that is for sure.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Kelly): Before I call the next speaker, I remind the House of those members who are on a warning. They are the members for Sandgate, Buderim, Maryborough, Toowoomba South, Chatsworth, Kawana and Toowoomba North. Member for Bundaberg, I had given you several indications that the line of debate you were pursuing was not within the bounds of relevance and you deliberately chose to ignore that. I warn you under the standing orders. The member for Bundaberg is added to the list.

 **Mr ANDREW** (Mirani—PHON) (11.45 am): I rise to speak on the Water Legislation Amendment Bill 2022. The primary objective of the bill is to implement a strengthened non-urban water measurement policy that will significantly enhance the extent to which water take is measured, monitored and reported across Queensland. The bill creates a framework, or a starting point, for a whole transformative reform of the state's non-urban water management system.

In 2009, all Australian states and territories agreed to the national framework for non-urban water meters which committed governments to the Australian Standard for non-urban water meters, AS4747. Since then, the national and state governments have pushed the states to progressively deploy a number of high-tech regulatory technology solutions geared towards greater levels of centralisation and integration. All of these 'reg tech' solutions will require a much greater use of telemetry, sensors and software for remote water monitoring to provide authorities with the real-time data that they need to drive efficiency and compliance. It will help bridge the significant information gap which government officials, like the ACCC commissioner, say is impeding the efficiency and profitability of Australia's water markets. In his report on the water markets in the Murray-Darling Basin, the commissioner wrote that 'interzone trade remains difficult' due to the 'lack of timely and fit-for-purpose time-of-use information, stemming from the limited rollout of telemetry, poor interoperability between systems and inconsistencies in metering between states'.

The strengthened water measurement policies contained in the bill form a crucial component of Queensland's Rural Water Futures program, a program squarely aimed at transforming the state's whole water systems. The bill provides that standards can be made for meters, measurement plans and other measurement devices like telemetry. Starting with Queensland's Murray-Darling Basin—QMDB—catchment areas, those with volumetric surface or underground water entitlements would now be required to attach an Australian Standard AS4747 meter to their pump, along with cloud-based remote-access telemetry systems. The use of telemetry allows for real-time recording and transmission of data, with information from local intelligence devices, LIDs, managed by government agencies and their data-sharing partners. The new metering and telemetry systems are to be implemented in stages, starting with the extreme high-risk catchments in the QMDB.

The bill is broadly drafted to provide plenty of scope to this to be extended much more widely across Queensland. In fact, it is clear from the mountain of policy documentation generated at both state and federal levels that the aim is to eventually take all non-urban water take including bore water, dams and any other form of man-made water storage. The explanatory notes say virtually nothing about the enormous compliance costs this will mean for the farmers, let alone any plan to properly compensate them for those costs. According to the ACCC commissioner's report, Queensland estimates that the installation costs for smaller meters are from \$8,000 for meters below 200 millimetres, with very large meters of around 1,200 millimetres costing up to \$100,000. This would mean a compliance cost in the order of \$40,000 to \$75,000 for a grower with five or six pumps on a relatively small farm of approximately 100 hectares. For larger growers, the cost could jump to well over a million dollars.

The bill amends the Water Act to enable the chief executive to apply discretion in deciding water licence dealings if they are judged to be in the public interest. This gives the chief executive enormous discretionary powers when it comes to considering applications and deciding whether to refuse or approve applications. Under the Water Act's current provisions, unless the application has some kind of impact on the water resource then it is dealt with via the non-discretionary process. This was a measure introduced in 2016 to eliminate red tape for straightforward dealings such as a simple transfer of ownership. The bill's amendment to section 130 of the act could even mean that all farmers must



reapply for their licence on a yearly basis, even where there has been no change in circumstance. Being forced to apply for a water licence renewal each year without any change in circumstance is unreasonable. Not only will this lessen the value of their water licence and create enormous uncertainty in relation to a farm's access to water; it could make compliance commercially non-viable. Moreover, it will add substantial red tape and negatively impact investment in crops, farms and agriculture.

I also note that the bill's changes are being made without any regulatory impact statement or cost-benefit analysis. While regulation and compliance are important, they can also create an environment of anger and mistrust. There is a lot of concern that all of this increased surveillance of on-farm activities could be used against farmers, and we see this with the fishing industry and its logbooks. It is becoming more and more clear that the federal and state governments are planning to meter all non-urban water storages and eventually to fully automate and centralise the whole system. These new controls will inevitably change cultivation practices across the state, with the potential to greatly constrict the state's food production and supply.

The ACCC report also contained a number of worrying references to the use of 'water rationing' in connection with these new telemetry devices. Transitioning the grid to an electronic, AI and sensor-driven system will mean that government regulators can pretty much manage the whole system remotely using its many levers of control to dictate when farmers can pump and when they cannot—or whether they can pump at all. Farmers need to be able to plan their fields well in advance and there is little doubt that a fully automated and micromanaged water grid will significantly limit their ability to produce food. The mountain of policy documents, plans and strategies that I have waded through over the past two months has made one thing abundantly clear—that the measures being legislated in this bill are only stage 1 of a much bigger agenda for water management in Queensland. The government has been far from transparent about the staggered rollout of these telemetry devices across the state, as well as the use that all of the data generated will be put to. As this will all occur outside the parliamentary process, I want to state here that any expansion of these remote access telemetry systems outside the Murray-Darling Basin is unjustified and will result in significant cost impacts.

The bill's explanatory notes state that the full details of these new measurement requirements will be set out in the Water Regulation 2016. This bill will simply enact a set of overarching policies, with all the nitty-gritty details of these policies written into a regulation at a later date. Such bills are a new type of legislation referred to as 'framework' or 'umbrella legislation' which lay down the basic principles but make no attempt to codify how the laws will operate at ground level. This is not how parliamentary democracy or the making of good legislation is supposed to work. It is all quite deliberate. Why does the government love these types of bills? It understands that the most powerful tool is to arm the executive branch with the widest discretion to rule compliance. The looser its terms, the wider the scope for the executive government to rule.

The whole national policy framework for water is geared towards creating a fully integrated set of networks within one large fully automated and centralised system—a system in which the management options for farmers and other users will be strictly limited. Many hardworking, ordinary people will have their livelihoods destroyed by such a system, and the vast majority of them will be small family farmers. Under the MDB Plan, the amount of water diverted for agriculture, towns and industry has already been reduced to around 28 per cent of inflows. The majority of water in the basin is now transferred to the environment, government agencies and other groups. If the intent of the basin plan was to reduce diversions, then it has succeeded and we have reduced them. In terms of what the basin plan set out to achieve, it is achieving it. Piling on more regulations, restrictions and control will only increase the price of water and cause irrigators to grow less food.

Water governance has a direct impact on the availability and affordability of food in our supermarkets. The Murray-Darling Basin region is the home of cheap produce. It produces around 90 per cent of Australia's fruit, nuts and grains; 76 per cent of the vegetables; 100 per cent of our rice; and more than 50 per cent of our dairy and sugar. If we look at an average shopping basket filled with produce from the basin, you have onions, potatoes, carrots, pears and apples. It will be those who are on low incomes and pensions who suffer the most if affordable produce from the Murray-Darling Basin is disrupted. Right now farmers are facing significant challenges with energy costs, critical shortages and supply chain disruptions. Most are worried sick about how much longer they can keep the lights on or keep producing food, so now is not the time for turning the regulatory screws on a sector that is so absolutely crucial to the availability and affordability of food in this state and in Australia.



**Hon. SJ STEWART** (Townsville—ALP) (Minister for Resources) (11.54 am): I rise to support the Water Legislation Amendment Bill 2022. We know that water security is incredibly important for communities and cities throughout Queensland. It is a valuable commodity that needs to be managed

properly, which is what this bill will do. Making sure the community and all water users have confidence in how our rural water resources are used is important, which is why this bill is about improving the measurement of that precious resource. The Palaszczuk government has a proven track record when it comes to investing in and managing water in the regions, and I am proud to give an example of this in the House today. This is a government that is investing more than \$400 million in stages 1 and 2 of the Haughton pipeline. The project recognises Townsville's importance as a growing hub for industry and defence, providing more good regional jobs and attracting more people into our city. Townsville is also a city that prides itself on its livability, and a secure water supply that serves future needs is essential as that city grows.

We stepped up when the former Morrison government stepped away from funding stage 2 of the Haughton pipeline project. The federal member for Herbert and his mates in Canberra would not give Townsville its fair share of funding despite it being an election commitment. It was the Palaszczuk government that took on the responsibility of delivering the project for the people of Townsville after Phil Thompson broke his promise to deliver the \$195 million stage 2 of that project. As I said, this was Phil Thompson's cornerstone election commitment of 2019. When it came time to deliver that funding—that vital funding for stage 2 to secure that pipeline—he squibbed it. He absolutely squibbed it. It was not until the Treasurer fronted him and said that we would fund stage 2 that he then came out and said, 'I promised to keep that \$195 million in Townsville.' That is another porky-pie from Phil Thompson, the member for Herbert, because he has not been able to—

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order on relevance to the bill that we are debating at the moment.


**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Kelly): I will take some advice, and I will take that in silence thanks. Minister, I will get you to come back to the long title of the bill.

**Mr STEWART:** The Palaszczuk government knows the value of delivering better services when it comes to water for our regions, unlike Phil Thompson. All communities want their water resources managed effectively, and that is why this bill is important. As part of the bill the first stage of regulation amendments is focused on measurement devices like meters and telemetry, with the second phase to concentrate on the requirements for measurement plans. This is important for accountability and will help encourage better and more efficient use of water from our regional water consumers. It will be beneficial for water users in places like the Burdekin, where our farmers continue to support good jobs by producing world-class produce.

This is also probably a good opportunity to say that we are raising the Burdekin Falls Dam as well, unlike Phil Thompson. Farmers know the value of water as it is their lifeblood. What this legislation will do is encourage them and everyone to use water more wisely. Everyone wants water resources managed effectively and expects us as the government to have appropriate systems and processes in place to ensure all water users can access their fair share. I note that consultation has indicated broad community support for improved measurement.

Another part of the bill that I would like to talk to relates to dam safety, which is incredibly important for the 114 referable dams throughout Queensland. The bill includes an amendment to ensure emergency action plans for those referable dams are reviewed and approved well ahead of the start of each wet season. In 2019 our community in Townsville saw the devastating impact of an unpredictable wet weather event during a monster monsoon. The Ross River Dam, which is one of Queensland's referable dams, was at more than 200 per cent capacity. Sadly, that meant parts of Townsville were impacted by devastating floods, including down the street from where I live. Dam releases had to be done during periods of low tide to mitigate the impact of flooding as much as possible.

It is for such reasons that this amendment is important. It will define the required date a review must be completed by and expand that to allow for the date to be prescribed by the regulator via a notice. This will provide for preparedness ahead of a wet season and allow for rapid responses to unforeseen circumstances by dam owners and operators and by government agencies. Sadly, as we know, Queensland is not immune to natural disasters but, regardless of whether it is a dam operator or a local household, the key is to get ready, which is what these amendments will do. We will ensure that we are ready for what nature throws at us. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr LANGBROEK** (Surfers Paradise—LNP) (12.00 pm): I rise to speak on the Water Legislation Amendment Bill 2022. As we know, Queensland's agricultural industry is a vital contributor to the state's economy, exporting over \$12.5 billion worth of agricultural and food products in 2022-23. It is matter of great pride that I sit with the member for Nanango and the member for Condamine. The member for Theodore is here too, but I do not think agricultural matters are necessarily as relevant in his electorate

as in that of the member for Gympie. However, I do know he takes a great personal interest in agriculture. As I have said, last month we attended the Ekka and had the great privilege of meeting with passionate farmers who play an important role in our state.

The Water Legislation Amendment Bill aims to amend the existing Water Act 2000 in Queensland to establish a regulatory framework for measuring the take of non-urban water. I have to stress that the shadow minister has vetted my speech to make sure that it is relevant. Questions may be raised in Surfers Paradise as to why I would be speaking on this bill. I like to support the shadow minister so here I am. Amendments to this bill are aimed at enhancing the scope and quality of metering for directly measuring water extraction in non-urban areas—

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr LANGBROEK:** I am not taking any interjections—enabling the measurement of overland flow water extraction at the scale of individual farms, acquiring precise and punctual data regarding water extraction and establishing effective compliance and enforcement mechanisms to ensure appropriate water measurement practices. In addition, the bill proposes to expand the scope of equipment and devices used for water measurement and allows for the installation of telemetry in certain areas.

The cost of implementing the proposed regulations is a major concern for landholders. Stakeholder feedback suggests that government funding will not be sufficient to cover the expenses and will lead to increased prices for fruit and vegetables due to increased overheads. This is at odds with the government's recent budget, which claims to be tackling the cost of living.


As mentioned, whilst generally supportive of the legislation, stakeholder feedback has identified some areas the government has not adequately addressed. The Queensland Farmers' Federation, the QFF, warned that the proposed implementation of farm-scale measurement for overland flow water extraction has raised considerable apprehension, particularly concerning its practical implementation. A point of contention revolves around whether that measurement requirement pertains exclusively to the Queensland Murray-Darling Basin catchment or extends its scope to encompass all dams throughout Queensland, including those designated for stock and domestic usage.

In their submission, the QFF highlighted these uncertainties, emphasising the lack of clarity regarding the rollout of this implementation across the broader Queensland region, especially concerning the evaluation of metering prerequisites. Additionally, the QFF expressed significant concerns about the actual measurement process—and I heard the shadow minister commenting on this—as many dams could simultaneously store captured overland flow, Sunwater allocations and spring water. These concerns underscore the urgent need for a more coherent and comprehensive approach to address overland flow measurement within Queensland's diverse agricultural landscape.

According to AgForce, the cost of meters can range from \$2,000 to \$30,000 and there is genuine concern from industry groups that those costs may render some agricultural businesses non-viable. AgForce also raised issues relating to the implementation costs; consultation with affected stakeholders; the limited number of registered professional engineers of Queensland, RPEQ engineers, to support the implementation; the fees associated with services; and the cost of replacing a measurement plan every five years. The opposition supports the utilisation of local contractors for installing approved meters to bolster local businesses and stimulate local economies.

As is common with this government's consultative style, stakeholders raised concerns about the consultation process during the bill's development and believe that there is insufficient detail on how stakeholder feedback has been incorporated into the regulations. I note the concern of the shadow minister, the member for Nanango, in this regard.

Water used for stock and domestic purposes carries minimal risk and should be exempt from metering requirements. The opposition has proposed an amendment to exclude this type of water use from mandatory metering, as monitoring these types of water uses will be burdensome without significant benefits.

 **Mr SAUNDERS** (Maryborough—ALP) (12.05 pm): I rise to support the Water Legislation Amendment Bill 2022. The bill delivers a key government commitment by strengthening water measurement in Queensland. Improving water measurement will strengthen transparency and community confidence in how Queensland's rural water resources are managed. Balancing the need for strengthened measurement against managing impacts on water users has been a key consideration in developing measurement policy and framework. I congratulate the minister on doing such a good job. He is very concerned about water in regional Queensland for growers and for industry. I highlight

that the minister is very mindful of making sure there is enough water for industry in my electorate. We know that balancing the need for strengthened measurement against impacts on water users has been a key consideration. Water users in the community want their water resources managed effectively.

We have heard from the member for Mirani. I was waiting for the earth to fall in. I was waiting for a hole to open up in this place into which we would all fall. When I was a young man growing up in Longreach, my father was on the Longreach Regional Council. They talked about bringing in water meters and making sure that we had enough water in the community for future use. There were town hall meetings. While the member for Mirani was speaking I sat here and closed my eyes and I thought I was back in the Longreach town hall because he was saying exactly what I heard when I was a young man and my father was on the Longreach council.

Now in regional areas they are talking about how water meters and the proper use of water have saved the Longreach community following the influx of tourists. I was talking to the mayor, Tony Rayner. He is a great mayor and a school friend of mine. He was talking about how great it has been to work with the minister and his office on raising the weirs on the Thomson River. He spoke about how supportive—I say that again, how supportive—the minister has been in working with the Longreach Regional Council to make sure that their water supply is adequate for the future and that they preserve water. As an old Longreach boy, I thank the minister personally because I know how important water is for regional communities such as Longreach.

I just heard the member for Gregory speak. I thank the member for Gregory for saying what a great mayor Tony Rayner is. He is a really good bloke. I also acknowledge the nice words he said about the minister making sure that there is water available for the Longreach community for years to come.

Water users in the community want their water managed effectively. They expect the government to have appropriate systems and processes in place to ensure all water users can access their fair share and that our water resources are sustainably managed. I talked about sitting in the Longreach town hall many years ago and hearing people say exactly what the member for Mirani was saying about how there would be no food, no yellow belly in the Thomson River and things like that. However, it has all been managed very well.

Consultation has indicated community support for improved measurement and I cannot see why not. Accurately measuring water take will benefit communities, industry and the environment. It will provide transparency and assurance that water is being appropriately shared and managed. It is very important that we make sure that it is managed because we know that water has to be managed for regional and rural communities to survive. Water is the backbone of a lot of employment and industries in regional communities.

Implementation of strengthened measurement will occur progressively through staged regulation amendments. It is not coming in straightaway. We are staging it. We are thinking about the user. We are thinking about the farmers. We are thinking about the industry people. We are thinking about the whole community. First-stage regulation amendments will focus on measurement devices such as meters. Second-stage amendments will focus on requirements for measurement plans which are important to overland flow measurements. This is pretty basic common sense and very good policy from the water minister. These amendments are part of a suite of initiatives being introduced to improve water management in the regional development, manufacturing and water portfolios. Other improvements being progressively introduced include refinements to water business functions, operations and data systems. These are being introduced to improve sustainable water resource management across the state.

Yesterday we heard the member for Burleigh speak about water meter manufacturing. Fancy them talking about manufacturing! That is all I will say. We know how good the LNP were with manufacturing and we know what happened with the trains. If I start talking about trains I will be louder than the CFMEU out the front.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** My Deputy Speaker, I rise on a point of order on relevance—again—to the legislation that is before the House.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Lister): Member for Maryborough, I would ask you to confine your contribution to the long title of the bill.

**Mr SAUNDERS:** In terms of relevance, you need water to make trains. It is part of the train-manufacturing process. We need water for the 800 workers in a factory who are manufacturing trains in my electorate. Water is very important. That is why we have to meter it. We have to make sure we are getting the right flows. We do not want too much water going to the train factory; we could have

problems. We do not want to waste water, either. We have to make sure there is a balance. This legislation gives us the balance in terms of the train factory. I thank the member for Nanango for her interjection because she knows that I love talking about trains. If she likes, I will keep talking about water and trains.

We are talking about water meters. We could manufacture water meters in Queensland. We have a great water and manufacturing minister who will be working on this, to ensure these meters are manufactured in Queensland. He will talk to industry. I know that last night the minister was talking to a lot of manufacturers in our community. I know that the minister has already been up to my electorate quite a few times and has been talking to the Fraser Coast Regional Council. He has discussed water with the Fraser Coast Regional Council.

The Fraser Coast Regional Council is one of the councils to roll out smart meters. I know that the last time the minister was in town, he and the mayor had a conversation. His department has also been working with Wide Bay Water about future water use for the Fraser Coast and about a water grid et cetera. I know that he cares about regional Queensland. I know that he cares about water for our state. He is supporting councils and our manufacturers. A good government gets out and talks about regional Queensland and makes sure there is water.

**Mr Harper:** The Haughton pipeline in Townsville.

**Mr SAUNDERS:** I take that interjection from the member for Thuringowa. He was talking about the pipeline.

**Mr Harper:** The Haughton pipeline.


**Mr SAUNDERS:** I know that the Haughton pipeline is absolutely crucial to the people of Townsville.

**Mr Harper:** \$400 million.

**Mr SAUNDERS:** There is \$400 million in investment from the Palaszczuk Labor government, investment from the water—

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Maryborough, you have had a really good crack. The bill is concerned with the metering of non-urban supplies. The House will thank you for confining yourself to the long title of the bill.

**Mr SAUNDERS:** Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. I know there is an opportunity here for water across the state. I would like to personally congratulate the minister, because I know he has been talking not only to my council but also to stakeholders right around Queensland. As I travel around regional Queensland, they tell me that they talk to the minister about water usage and the future of water for our state. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr MILLAR** (Gregory—LNP) (12.13 pm): I rise to make a contribution to this bill, which will amend and modernise the Water Act 2000. When it comes to the Labor Party and managing water, I do not have trust. Nearly 22 years ago, in a first interaction between the Labor Party and irrigators from the Central Highlands—without consultation, without a letter to us or anything—the Labor Party of the Beattie era put a moratorium on overland flow in the Fitzroy Basin. That was absolutely devastating. When it comes to water and the Labor Party, I do not have trust. By the sound of those blokes outside, I do not think they are happy with it either!

Arrangements around water management are vital to the prosperity of regional Queensland and, indeed, the productivity of Queensland's agriculture and horticulture industries. They have always been and will continue to be a pillar of this state's economy. It is therefore a concern to see the key submissions to the committee inquiry point to the lack of detailed consultation with stakeholders. What happened to us 22 years ago continues to happen today when it comes to water legislation with the Labor Party, be it the Kalamia Cane Growers' concerns about the potential yearly renewals creating changes to water licence conditions—even when there have been no changes in circumstances—the Queensland Farmers' Federation's concerns that the cost of the installation and maintenance of the new meters might send some enterprises to the wall or AgForce's concerns around the lack of detail when it comes to the development of regulations. Dr Dale Miller 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.

This lack of clarity and transparency is of great concern when it affects an essential input for all agriculture. Having said that, I will always support fair and efficient arrangements to manage the most vital of our natural resources. Water must be carefully managed and must be used in the most beneficial way, socially and economically. Transparency and accountability are key, because we do not want to see corruption in either water management or water use.

As many members will know, I grew up on an irrigation farm in the Nogoa MacKenzie irrigation area and I also spent time working with the Fitzroy Basin Food & Fibre Association when work to better map and understand the vital river basin was really just gaining momentum. That of course continues, but I must say that we have come a long way since those days. We have come a long way in our understanding of the need to have whole-of-basin knowledge of our river systems and good data on the impacts of human activities on river systems. This knowledge, at both a macro and a micro level, should be the foundation of effective, fair and efficient water management plans. The advances in this field have been greatly assisted by the huge advances in internet access and the Internet of Things in the last 15 years or so.

We are amending the Water Act 2000. That was the year everyone was in a lather about Y2K. While we had mobile phones, they were not yet smartphones as we know them today, when we walk around carrying a connection to the internet in our hand. Parallel to that has been the creation of the so-called Internet of Things. In natural resource management, for example, it has given us the ability to introduce digital measurement on both electricity and water. These are key inputs for our primary producers. It is vital to maintain fair and equitable access to them if Queensland is to prosper. Queensland agriculture has always been at the forefront of adapting to change. The digital management of farms and agricultural enterprises is widespread in a way that would surprise many non-farmers. All in all, it is pleasing to see the minister bringing to the House amendments which will allow Queensland's Water Act to reflect these technology advances, even though it has taken three years to get us here.

My first concern is always to see rural Queenslanders treated as fairly as urban Queenslanders. This act does not ensure that. In the suburbs of South-East Queensland you can install as many rainwater tanks as you wish and harvest as much rainwater as you can. You do not have to account to anyone for taking this water. Indeed, the state government makes no attempt to measure how much water is being harvested in this way; nor does it attempt to assess the impact of this harvest on the river systems in South-East Queensland. Because it concerns quantities for domestic use, this is seen as both unnecessary and impractical but, under these amendments, licences which provide water allocations for domestic and stock use by rural householders could be exposed to unnecessary costs and red tape. I have many such licence holders in my electorate. We often enjoy a chat with our neighbours at the local water pumping station such as the one on Talafa Road in Emerald. This is where clusters of rural householders come to pump water to their homes. Other more remote households will pump from bores or ring tanks to collect overland flow on their individual properties.

Stock and domestic water licences have traditionally been viewed by the Queensland government as a way of ensuring all Queensland households have access to water for domestic use, even if they are too rural or remote to have access to an urban treated water supply. Such water entitlements have traditionally been considered as extremely low risk in terms of exceeding their entitlements. The minister has given no indication as to why this assessment has changed. I would argue that they are not just a low risk, they are essential to ensuring all Queensland households have adequate access to water. The LNP will move an amendment which seeks to exempt water allocations for stock and domestic uses from being metered. I urge all members to support that amendment.

This brings me to the matter of meters. While I am pleased to see the modernisation of water metering, the cost of these modern meters can range up to \$30,000. This represents a considerable investment. Furthermore, these advanced stations need to be maintained, recalibrated from time to time and are vulnerable to the dangers of weather events such as flood damage. I have real concerns that the proposed subsidy does not reflect the true costs which will be borne by producers. For domestic consumers of our produce, this can only lead to an increase in prices at a time of inflation and cost-of-living concerns. For our exporters, it will be a disadvantage for our Queensland producers operating in international markets. As the old saying goes, we are price takers not price makers.

Lastly, I would urge the minister to ensure that local contractors can install and maintain this system as this is the only way to ensure the robustness of the regime. Skilling the regions makes us more resilient so let us see a local approach right from the commencement of this bill. Like AgForce, I urge the minister to commit to a full review after five years to ensure the amendments are working as intended without serious impacts on our primary production.



**Mr MELLISH** (Aspley—ALP) (12.21 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Water Legislation Amendment Bill 2022. Improving water measurement will strengthen transparency and community confidence in how Queensland's rural water resources are managed. Water users and the community want their water resources managed effectively. They expect the government to have appropriate systems and processes in place to ensure all water users can access their fair share and that our water resources are sustainably managed. Consultation has indicated broad community support for improved measurement.

In a past life, many years ago, I was involved in water resource management in the South-West Queensland and the Murray-Darling Basin catchments. I could see back then that one of the key pillars of proper water management is the accurate and efficient management of the take where possible. Otherwise the suspicions primary producers might have of the users upstream and how much water they are taking can be never ending. When we are talking about volumetric entitlements, accurate measurement can go a long way to creating somewhat more harmonious relationships locally. If people cannot be sure how much water their neighbours are taking from a watercourse and if it is not properly managed, sadly sometimes a rule of thumb used is that the bloke upstream takes more than he should and the bloke downstream is a bit of a whinger. I certainly saw a wide variety of relationships between neighbouring producers during my time in South-West Queensland which, of course, almost always concerned water.

Accurately measuring water take will benefit communities, industry and the environment. It will provide transparency and an assurance that water is being appropriately shared and managed. It will provide water entitlement holders with reliable evidence that they are meeting their regulatory obligations. It will support the operation of water markets and trading so water can be used where it is needed most.

Implementation of strengthened measurement will occur progressively through staged amendments. The regulations will provide the detailed requirements, including for installing, maintaining, validating and reading meters. First stage amendments will focus on measurement devices such as meters and telemetry. Second stage amendments will focus on requirements for measurement plans which are important for overland flow measurement.

I note the committee's comments regarding the recommendations they have made and the government's response to those. They are broadly supporting the bill. That is good to see. Of course this all comes down to the cost and the rollout of measuring devices and telemetry. I can see where the deputy chair, the member for Lockyer is coming from, with regard to their comments. I extend my sincere sympathies to the member for Lockyer and his family as well.

These amendments are part of a suite of initiatives being introduced to improve water management in the regional development, manufacturing and water portfolio. I know the topic of stock and domestic water use is something raised in submissions to the inquiry. Under the policy which sits under the legislation, the statewide minimum threshold of five megalitres has been established, below which a meter will not be required. Entitlements to take water for the following low-risk activities will not need to be metered: stock and domestic; public amenities; and educational facilities. It is clear in the policy that metering will not be required for 'entitlements to take water for following low-risk activities: stock and domestic, public amenities and educational facilities'. I am not sure where the member for Nanango's amendment is coming from if this is already covered in the policy and addressed in the bill.

The bill also includes amendments to the Water Supply (Safety and Reliability) Act 2008 and the South-East Queensland Water (Distribution and Retail Restructuring) Act 2009. Whilst these amendments are generally minor, technical or operational in nature, they clarify existing provisions and requirements and improve the operational efficiency of these acts.



**Mr PERRETT** (Gympie—LNP) (12.25 pm): I rise to speak on the Water Legislation Amendment Bill. The primary objective of this bill is to establish a regulatory framework regarding measuring the take of non-urban water. It will also make amendments to other pieces of water legislation to improve their operational efficiency. According to the explanatory notes, it will broaden the type of equipment and devices to measure the water take, including of overland flow, and a management plan for the measurement system to be used. The bill also allows for the installation of telemetry in some areas.

Amendments that increase the coverage and standard of metering for the direct measurement of non-urban water take provide for the farm scale measurement of overland flow water take, improved data quality and timeliness and ensure fit-for-purpose compliance and enforcement for the measurement of water take. The bill also makes a range of amendments to improve the operational efficiencies of a number of acts, including the Seqwater act.

The Mary Basin water plan, which falls in South-East Queensland, supports a variety of industries, including agricultural production and fishing. Gympie's primary producers and farmers have a natural interest in issues regarding the management of water. They provide me with regular feedback—and probably the minister as well—about how the government administers and reviews water legislation.

**Mr Butcher** interjected.

**Mr PERRETT:** You know him very well and so do I. Stakeholders and the LNP have concerns about a number of issues with the bill including the cost to implement measure, the level of consultation and wherever possible to use local contractors to install approved meters. They are reasonable concerns that some measures will be particularly unfavourable to rural and regional communities.

Feedback from stakeholders suggests that government funding will be insufficient with some estimates of up to \$30,000 for some of the larger meters. AgForce water policy spokesperson Kim Bremner told the committee—

Depending on the type of meter you purchase, it can be anything between \$2,000 and \$30,000 for some of the larger patented meters.

It is reasonable to expect that, because of increased overheads from this government, out-of-pocket expenses will be passed on to consumers, resulting in increased fruit and vegetable prices. This is a burden that will impact everyday Queenslanders who are already struggling with the increased cost of living.

Primary producers are already operating in an environment with high input costs and the effects of natural disasters. The LNP is concerned that the telemetry subsidy will not fully cover the costs of implementation. It is not as if primary producers can choose to do without water. Water is critical to the entire agricultural sector and is a vital part of running a farm. Farmers and the entire agricultural sector value water as a precious commodity and as such are the key stewards of our water resources.

While AgForce sees potential in improved water use measurements, they have several concerns. These include additional costs for the delivery, that water used for low-risk purposes should be exempt from measures and that the government should conduct a review after five years to ensure that the public policy outcomes were being achieved. AgForce General Manager of Policy Dr Dale Miller told the committee—

In delivering more information it is essential that the added costs are less than the benefits to be gained by the users and the wider community.

Many of the sectors represented by the Queensland Farmers' Federation are intensive farming which use water to generate world-leading, high-quality produce. It represents sectors such as sugarcane, cotton, horticulture, nursery and garden. The QFF also raised concerns about the cost of implementation, with the QFF Water Policy Adviser, Sharon McIntosh, telling the committee that 'the cost of compliance should not result in agricultural businesses becoming unviable'. The Kalamia Cane Growers Organisation said in its submission—

It is sufficiently important to reiterate that onerous legislation is not required if the Bill is likely to duplicate the collection of data that is already available to the Queensland Government. There is sufficient evidence to establish that the likely compliance costs will be substantial, without achieving any substantive improvement in the understanding of usage of water.

Dr Miller told the committee that to achieve the desired outcome water users need to be strongly engaged in implementation and there needs to be 'ongoing monitoring and review steps, ensuring any requirements remain reasonable and in proportion to any risks to the resource'.

Landholders who use water for low risk takes are unlikely to cause water entitlements to be exceeded, yet those using water for stock or domestic use could be exposed to unnecessary costs from these amendments. One objective of the bill regarding overland water flow says it will 'provide for farm scale measurement of overland flow water take'. The opposition has serious concerns about how this will be implemented and the ambiguity of how extensive the reach.

The bill is ambiguous about whether the measurement of overland flow only relates to the Queensland Murray-Darling Basin catchment or whether it includes dams, including stock and domestic dams, across the state. The Queensland Farmers' Federation submission warned—

There is considerable concern around how this may be measured, as a number of dams are likely to store captured overland flow, Sunwater allocations and/or spring water.

The configuration of metering to avoid double counting of water moving in and out of the system has the potential to become cost prohibitive.



Furthermore, it said—

... how this will be implemented throughout the remainder of Queensland has yet to be identified in relation to the evaluation for metering requirements.

That is why the LNP will move an amendment to clause 39 to exclude the measurement of overland flow for stock and domestic use across the entirety of the state.

Across the entire government it seems to be continually reluctant to undertake meaningful consultation. AgForce has supported steps to focus requirements and minimise costs on agricultural water users. Dr Dale Miller told the committee—

This includes support for taking a risk-based approach such as focusing on higher use catchments like the Murray-Darling Basin, including volumetric entitlements. Also providing exemptions for low-risk takes such as of low volumes and, importantly, including for livestock and domestic access. Further, also including transitional provisions such as grandfathering of operating meters, having staged introduction across the state and funding support, including for telemetry requirements, and, very importantly, strong engagement and communication directly with affected water users.

However, there are significant gaps and details about the development of regulations. Dr Miller of AgForce told the committee—

... it is these details which will set the balance which will see the success or failure of the framework ...

Unfortunately, as he said—

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.


The Kalamia Cane Growers Organisation submission noted that they had not been involved in any consultation process. They said—

... there cannot be proper consideration of the Bill ... unless there is proper consultation, including holding public hearings in regional Queensland (being the areas most likely impacted by the Bill) and hearings open to agricultural producers and representative organisations ... to properly understand the practical implications ... on growers/licence holders.

In addition to these concerns, they also raised concerns about the need for yearly renewals of a water licence, even when there have been no changes in circumstances. This may result in changes to the conditions of a water licence. They also raised practical issues with the installation of water meters.

The recommendations of the committee reinforced the suspicion that the minister is out of his depth regarding water policy. It is recommended the department continue to monitor cost implications and transition time needed to implement strengthened requirements as supporting regulations and guidelines are finalised and rolled out.

It is recommended to provide the Water Engagement Forum with the 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. It recommended to develop and publish a clear framework that specifies how reported data will be collected, used, distributed and published. Those recommendations support the suspicion that the legislation is being rushed through in a desperate attempt to hide the minister's poor performance regarding water management. I support the LNP's amendments.

 **Mr O'ROURKE** (Rockhampton—ALP) (12.34 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Water Legislation Amendment Bill. This bill will amend the South-East Queensland Water (Distribution and Retail Restructuring Act) 2009, Water Act 2000 and the Water Supply (Safety and Reliability) Act 2008 and other legislation as per schedule 1. As we all know, water is the lifeblood of Queensland's regional and rural communities. Central Queensland boasts a diverse range of agricultural industries. The region is known for its fertile soils, favourable climate and water resources, particularly as we have seen the Palaszczuk government invest in water infrastructure like Rookwood Weir which makes it an ideal location for agricultural production.

One of the key agricultural industries in Central Queensland is beef. The region is home to some of the largest cattle producers, with the industry playing a significant role in the local economy. The region's beef cattle are known for the high-quality meat which is used for domestic and international markets.

**Mr Perrett:** You're wearing your beef tie.

**Mr O'ROURKE:** I have my beef tie on, yes. It is this year's! Rockhampton has two meatworks that employ quite a few hundred people. We have Teys and JBS which is really great.

**Ms Boyd:** Great places.

**Mr O'ROURKE:** It was wonderful to have you up there just recently. 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 updated measurement policy was developed in consultation with water entitlement holders, industry and community. There was broad support for better measurement and accountability for water use in Queensland. Having accurate information about how much water is taken from our river catchments and aquifers is crucial to sustainable water resource management. This ensures everyone can access their fair share of this precious resource.

The framework will apply to water users who have a volumetric surface water or underground water entitlement. For water users who take water directly from a river or stream or an aquifer, this will mean having a meter attached to their pump to record how much water they have taken, and the vast majority of landholders already have this in place.

The development of these important measurement systems has occurred in consultation with stakeholders and industry bodies. This has been important in getting the balance right, ensuring that irrigators have measurement systems in place that work for them and that properly measure water taken so that our water resources are managed for the benefit of all irrigation stakeholders and the community more broadly.

Strengthened water measurement enabled by this bill is critical to the Rural Water Futures program, which is driving more transparent and sustainable water resource management here in Queensland. The Rural Water Futures program is a significant initiative by the Queensland government that aims to provide sustainable water solutions to rural and regional communities in the state. The program has been designed to address the challenges faced by these communities in terms of water security and supply, which is critical to their livelihoods, economic growth and social wellbeing. The Rural Water Futures program has several objectives including improving the water supply infrastructure, increasing the efficiency of water use and supporting innovation in water management.

One of the key focuses of this program is to enhance the resilience of rural communities to droughts and other extreme weather events. Queensland is known for its unpredictable climate. The state has faced severe droughts in recent years which have had a devastating impact on rural communities. The program aims to provide drought-proofing solutions that will help these communities better cope with future droughts.

Another significant objective of the program is to improve the efficiency of water use in the agricultural sector. Agriculture is a critical industry in Queensland and water is a vital resource for farmers. The program will provide funding for projects that aim to improve water use efficiency in agriculture such as the use of precise irrigation systems, water recycling and the adoption of drought-resistant crops. The program also supports innovation in water management, with a particular focus on new technologies and approaches that can improve water security and sustainability. This includes: the development of new water storage technologies, the use of renewable energy in water supply systems and the adoption of water-efficient technologies in households and businesses.

The Rural Water Futures program will have a significant impact on Queensland's rural and regional communities, providing them with the tools and resources they need to manage their water supply and build a more sustainable future. The program will create new jobs in the water sector and support economic growth in rural areas. The Rural Water Futures program is a critical initiative of the Queensland government that addresses the critical water supply issues facing the state's rural and regional communities. The program's objectives include: improving water supply infrastructure; increasing water use efficiency; supporting innovation in water management; and enhancing the resilience of rural communities to droughts and extreme weather events. With funding from both state and federal governments, the program will create new opportunities for economic growth and support the long-term sustainability of Queensland's water resources. I commend the bill to the House.



**Mr BENNETT** (Burnett—LNP) (12.41 pm): The committee made four recommendations, the first being that the bill be passed. At its core this bill is about strengthening water measurement across Queensland. We have heard that the bill reportedly establishes a clear and transparent framework to implement Queensland's strengthened non-urban water management policy. The committee's second recommendation was that the department monitor costs and transition times as the regulations and guidelines are rolled out.

In his second reading debate the minister wanted to assure stakeholders that at its very core the strengthened measurement policy was intended to strike the important balance between improving water measurement and minimising costs for water users. The minister further stated that the department will carefully look at costs and the availability of suitable measurement devices as part of the rollout of the measurement policy annually. The minister also stated he would like to make sure that the industry's ability to meet the increased demand for measurement devices and validation services is monitored and that it gives as many Queensland businesses as possible a chance to play their part in this process along the way. We also learned that the Palaszczuk and Albanese governments have come together to subsidise the cost of installing telemetry equipment for water users in the Queensland Murray-Darling Basin.

The committee's third recommendation is that the department provide the Water Engagement Forum with exposure drafts of supporting regulations and those standards in advance of this implementation and that a review of the regulations be conducted after a period of no more than five years. The committee's fourth recommendation is that the department develop and publish a clear framework that specifies how reported data will be collected, used, distributed and published.

The bill also amends the water supply act to clarify dam safety and drinking water provisions. Dam safety amendments will ensure that the emergency action plans for Queensland's 114 referable dams are reviewed and approved well ahead of the start of the wet season.

This bill allows me to highlight a local issue to the House and the minister. The Queensland government first introduced regulatory arrangements in the Burnett basin by declaring the Bundaberg subartesian area in 1970. Groundwater entitlements were licensed and extractions were managed under an announced allocation system. At that time the Bundaberg District Groundwater Area Advisory Group, BDGAAG, was established by the department to provide advice on appropriate announced allocations. Today the Coastal Burnett Groundwater Management Area Advisory Committee, CBGMAAC, remains an active autonomous group that represents all industry sectors and geographical areas of the Coastal Burnett Groundwater Management Area and continues to play a vital role in the department's planning processes. The group consists of peak body representatives and long-term water users with a vast collective knowledge and understanding of local groundwater-related issues.

The departmental groundwater team attends each CBGMAAC meeting and discusses all key policy issues and likely options relevant to the CBGMAA. Discussions are frank and transparent, and the group has had a major influence on key water resource planning outcomes, including: water sharing rules; the control of seawater intrusion; specification of groundwater entitlements; groundwater monitoring; and improved water use efficiency and sustainability. The management of this resource is often reported by the department as being best practice and world class.

Mr Allan Dingle is the current chair of the CBGMAA committee. To put some context into how seriously we take the announced allocation take and rules, I have copied an excerpt of correspondence from the department below. It states—

Following water accounting of groundwater use in the Coastal Burnett GMA for the 2021-22 water year, the department has identified a very low level (0.2%) of non-compliance of take of groundwater with authorised entitlement.

There was also a very low level (0.6%) of non-compliance with Meter Reading Notices issued to groundwater entitlement holders by the department under Section 113 of the Water Regulation 2016.

The department will continue to address non-compliances with groundwater use in the South region, in line with the department's Regulatory Strategy and Annual Compliance Plan.

The CBGMAA committee appreciates the difference between certifying that a meter is accurate and intentional water theft, given that the meter revalidation issue has been driven because of supposed theft of water in the Murray-Darling Basin area. We do not think it is relevant to our area, as we have operational meters that met the standard of the day at time of installation. Up until now the CBGMAA committee has been supportive of meters. It is agreeable to Australian Standard 4747 compliance and it has been involved with this process for quite a while.

After extended discussions and advice from local departmental officers over the past year, the committee has come to the consensus that most of the 640 water meters requiring validation this year would meet specifications as they were installed around 2012. They met Australian Standard 4747 at that time. The cost of installation was in the vicinity of \$800 per bore—some would be more; some would be less—and irrigators were reluctantly agreeable to the process. Irrigators are now facing further changes to irrigation metering requirements and revalidation of their meters, and this is at their cost. The deadline for validation is set for November 2023.

One of our committee members had Sunfam, which is one of two local companies that has authorised meter validators, provide quotes for his bores to meet the new Australian Standard. The quotes were more than \$45,000 across nine bores. Similarly, Bundaberg Sugar has advised that they have had six of their 40 meters validated, and to date the average cost is \$2,518 each. Apart from the cost, it is also highly unlikely that all meters will be validated by the deadline of November 2023.

The team has met with representatives from the department and requested an extension to the deadline. They were advised that, because the metering requirement has been legislated, there is little scope for anything other than an undertaking from the department that irrigators who have demonstrated they have made legitimate attempts to comply with the revalidation will not be directed to cease pumping should they go over the deadline. That is a good outcome and I guess they just want reassurance that will be the case. They have suggested that the department undertake the validation process and any meter amendments and/or infrastructure required and recover the costs by way of an annual charge. This was the procedure used in 2013 when the existing meters were upgraded. We were advised that the department has insufficient staff capable of doing the assessment and did not have any accredited meter validators.

A complete rethink and amending of the regulation is warranted, given that the exercise will cost more than \$2 million and achieve very little, if anything. Growers are not disputing the fact that metering is required with updated meters. What they are disputing is the arbitrary and completely unattainable deadline of November 2023. Another question that needs to be answered is why the department will not employ their own validators. There are serious conflicts of interest, as current validators in the region are only employed by the same suppliers of meters. The committee is requesting that, for those irrigators who will be faced with costs of more than \$800, the Queensland government fund the entire cost of compliance—as they are doing in the Murray-Darling Basin—and recoup it via an annual meter fee amortised over five years at four per cent.

I need to address the media releases and the attempts to get this on the public record some months ago when the shadow minister for water came to Bundaberg. The address by the minister, trying to blame the LNP government for this outcome—

**Ms BOYD:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I ask for your guidance in relation to 118(b), relevance. While the member has been going on for some six minutes around a local issue, I query whether it would be better addressed to the minister in correspondence, rather than taking up the time of debate in this House.


**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Lister): That is enough, member for Pine Rivers. I believe the member has been broadly relevant and as relevant as other contributors have been allowed to be by Speakers before me. Are you dissenting from my ruling, member for Pine Rivers?

**Ms BOYD:** No.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Are you sure of that?

**Ms BOYD:** Yes, Mr Deputy Speaker. I am sure of that. I was reacting to the member for Nanango's interjections.

**Mr BENNETT:** I did not think water meters were that emotive. They are an emotive issue for the local growers. I want to be very clear. The Queensland non-urban water measurement policy, as set out in the new metering and meter revalidation timeframes 2023 to 2027, is the trigger for this government's crisis that we have in the Burnett area. On behalf of those irrigators, I hope these sensible reforms can be considered. More importantly, we have to acknowledge that the growers around the state have preservation of water at their heart. I think we can all work together to make sure this valuable resource can be made available into the future.

 **Ms BOYD** (Pine Rivers—ALP) (12.51 pm): Water is the driving force of all nature. To my mind, it is most starkly apparent in our state's west. We see the absence of the driving force of water with dire consequences. Recent years have seen almost 70 per cent of Queensland in the throes of drought that were extremely damaging. A changing climate means extreme weather events are more common. As we see changes to water availability, then water use and management of that water become even more important. The Murray-Darling Basin Authority capture the key points of the challenges when they state—

Changes in global and local climate patterns are likely to reduce the amount of water available for communities and the environment in many parts of the Murray-Darling Basin. While it is hard to predict the exact effects and when they will happen, it is likely there will be less rainfall, more frequent and severe droughts, as well as more frequent heavy rainfall events.

Many of us will still recall the stark images in 2018 and 2019 where it was estimated that a million fish may have died in a 40-kilometre stretch of the Darling River. These instances are a compelling reminder of the fragility of our ecosystem and how important it is to have plans in place that help to improve the health of our rivers well into the future.

Our water planning framework needs to be strong enough to accommodate the boom-bust cycle of water availability in river systems—balancing agriculture, cultures, industry, environment and our communities. That is why these reforms are so critical. They strengthen the policies and frameworks, and in doing so provide enormous benefits across the board. They include better resource management, protection and water security. I have seen firsthand how the implementation of real-time reporting had enormous benefits on farm. I have seen how this allows for instant intelligence and a responsiveness that would not have otherwise been available. This committee report provides a rare occurrence—where you have the agriculture, resource and environment stakeholders all in agreement when it comes to measuring water take.

The Murray-Darling Basin is such a valuable resource, whether you look at it from an economic, environmental or cultural perspective. More than 2.3 million people live in the basin. It is the source of around 40 per cent of Australia's agricultural produce, including 100 per cent of our rice, 74 per cent of our grapes and 30 per cent of our dairy. It is home to 40 different First Nation groups. There are 16 internationally significant wetlands, 35 endangered species and 120 different species of waterbirds that call it home. The basin attracts visitors from around the world, with tourism earning around \$11 billion each year. With a volatile climate, technological advancements and an ever-increasing consciousness of our natural resources, this bill delivers the reforms that will allow for protection, responsiveness and best practice to strike a good balance for our secure water future.

I turn to the committee report. Unlike the shadow minister, I have actually read the committee report, not just glossed over its details. I take a moment to commend the hardworking committee and the parliamentary team supporting them. I now always look with interest at the work of the committee and the images, pictures and infographics they include in their reports. They set a very high bar indeed. I look forward to seeing many more reports and much more of their fine work into the future.

I want to clarify some of the points that have been raised in this debate over the last couple of days. I understand that this bill has been subject to consultation with industry and stakeholders for years. These are not new concepts and they are not new proposals. These amendments in this bill have been subject to consultation with industry and stakeholders for years. The member for Nanango likes to gloss over that bit of detail in the committee report when she makes her contributions in this place. She has form for glossing over detail. We saw that when it came to Paradise Dam. She liked to gloss over the detail with Paradise Dam. She promised to fix Paradise Dam for \$25 million. Why have the engineering experts when you have got the member for Nanango? We did not need to hear from the engineering experts, according to the member for Nanango. She glossed over the detail of the fake Bradfield scheme, posed for photos with a dam marked 'not for construction'—

**Ms LEAHY:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. This particular legislation is in relation to the Murray-Darling Basin. I ask you to request the member to come back to the long title of the bill.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Lister): Member for Pine Rivers, the dams and the water situations you are speaking of are not covered in this bill. Would you please come back to the long title of the bill?

**Ms BOYD:** Thank you for your guidance, Mr Deputy Speaker. I think it is worthwhile concentrating on the record of those opposite when it comes to their contributions in this place. The member for Nanango made a dated contribution yesterday when she talked about the water situation in Yarrabah. I would have thought she would have cast an eye over her notes before she decided to make a very public and animated contribution around this particular thing that she is the shadow minister for. It just goes to show how much the member for Nanango is not across her brief—whether it is the topics previously mentioned or this bill that is before the House. When she was updating the House on where we are right now, the member for Nanango even said that we were in 2022. I think it is proven by the record that the member for Nanango is at least one year behind the rest of us in terms of where we are debating these particular reforms.

On this side of the House, we do the work and we listen to the experts. We make sure that we have consultation with industry and with stakeholders around this reform. That is why I commend this reform and this bill to the House. We know that these reforms will make a significant difference right across the board. I commend not only the committee but the Minister for Water for the work he and his team have done in bringing these reforms before the House.

I have been out to the Murray-Darling Basin. I have been on farms around the Murray-Darling Basin. I have had conversations with both pastoralists and people who are on suburban lots in those areas. One of the things that I have heard absolutely from those stakeholders is that water is the most precious resource to them. It is the most valuable commodity they have and it is something they are committed to protecting. I have never had those conversations or those grumbles around the price or the installer or any of those things that have been raised by members opposite. They have not been raised with me when I have been standing on the farms. When I am talking to people, they are not the conversations they are having with me. The conversation they are having with me is how much they hold in high regard the protection and these reforms in terms of resource management and water security because they know that their livelihood is very much dependent upon it.


When it comes to these reforms, they are good Palaszczuk government reforms. They are reforms that I know the sector has been waiting for for some time, and they are supported reforms as well. I am pleased to commend them to the House because I know they will make a big difference.

Debate, on motion of Ms Boyd, adjourned.

Sitting suspended from 1.00 pm to 2.00 pm.

## PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENTS

### Member for Burleigh

 **Mr HART** (Burleigh—LNP) (2.00 pm): This will be old news to some, but in October next year, I will have had the privilege of being the member for Burleigh for 12½ years, and it is time. I decided two years ago that this would be my last term, and I thought I would make this announcement about a year out to give the LNP time to find a new candidate for Burleigh and someone to assist David, Jarrod and the frontbench team to form government at the next election and end the chaos and crisis that is this government. For the next 12 months, there are a number of things I want to focus on. There are a number of things that I want to see happen in my electorate; there are a number of things that I do not want to see happen in my electorate, and I will continue to advocate for both of those things.


I would like to say thank you to my colleagues who have expressed the opinion that they may miss me, even some in the Labor Party, which may surprise a lot of people. I just hope, given I am here for another 12 months, that those people still feel that way in 12 months time. I will have more to say next year when I get to the end of our term, but I want to thank my long-term staff—Renee, Anna and now Karen. Karen is filling in while Anna is away on maternity leave.

Sometimes being a member of parliament impacts on our family more than it impacts on us, so I want to return to being a full-time husband for Sally—she deserves it; I want to return to being a full-time father for Tim, Jess and Hayden, and their partners, Aimee, Simon and Anna; and mainly I want to return to being a full-time poppy to Joshua, Isla, Cameron, Boston and our new Aurora.

I am looking forward to the next 12 months. I am looking forward to the big decisions that I will make after October next year. I am looking forward to those big decisions being between board shorts or golf shoes rather than what colour tie I will wear or what colour suit I will wear. Thank you to all of those who have talked to me in the last week since I have made this announcement. I look forward to working with you all over the next 12 months. Thank you.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Kelly): Thank you, member. Can I say it has been a pleasure to work with you on the Panel of Temporary Speakers and I certainly enjoyed our parliamentary delegation to Taiwan and I wish you all the best.

### Liberal National Party, Performance

 **Hon. ML FURNER** (Ferny Grove—ALP) (Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries and Minister for Rural Communities) (2.03 pm): That is a hard act to follow. I wish the member for Burleigh all the very best. Recently, I had the pleasure to visit Longreach with the Premier where there is some great work going on. Our drought preparedness grants will make a real difference in getting ready for the next drought. I also visited Rockhampton where I attended the News Limited Bush Summit where there was great support for the Queensland government's regional support to date, and there will be more announcements on that to come.

The LNP sometimes has to face the music. One of my favourite bands is AC/DC, yet here in Queensland we just have the DC. Where is the lead singer of the LNP band, which really could be renamed the Dirty Deeds Done Dirt Cheap? The opposition thinks that they have the comeback tour planned for next year. Maybe it will be the LNP Abandons the Bush Tour. Their sound checks on policies ring flat. The backup vocals are screamers without having any real pitch. Everyone in Queensland remembers their greatest hits, back when the member for Broadwater was part of the line-up rather than the lead man: the Cut, Sack and Sell Tour, the 14,000 Cuts to Jobs Tour, and the Campbell Newman Experience. The great AC/DC had Bon Scott; those opposite had Scott Morrison, yet the greatest laugh is that the LNP think they are singing from the same song sheet. They cannot even work out whether they are Liberal or National, and they have been a blended band for 15 years. They do not even know what they believe in, however what we know is they still are playing their past tracks.

To stay on the AC/DC theme, Queenslanders do not want to be put on the LNP 'highway to hell' and for them, with 13 months still to go, 'it's a long way to the top', especially when we on this side have the budget 'back in black'. There are still too many Queenslanders who are still 'thunderstruck' from the last time the LNP were in. 'Hells bells,' they would say to any more LNP plans to cut, prune or otherwise discombobulate the public service.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr FURNER:** I know that would be difficult to understand for those opposite. But, in all seriousness, the government of Queensland needs more than the slogans of the LNP, a party that will look after the bush and not leave it off the tour map.

**Mr Millar** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Martin): Pause the clock. Member for Gregory, you are warned.

**Mr FURNER:** The party that will look after the bush and not leave it off the tour map—that is the Australian Labor Party—the Queensland branch will do that every day of the week, every month of the year from here on forever. We are a government that will put Queenslanders first rather than letting them get scalped by their shadowy mates.

### **Metro North Health, Injured Patient Compensation**



**Ms BATES** (Mudgeeraba—LNP) (2.06 pm): I rise to address reporting today in relation to the Caboolture Hospital. There has been no shortage of issues at the Caboolture Hospital over the past two years, and the opposition has consistently raised them on behalf of brave whistleblowers and patients. These Queenslanders are not making up stories. This is real. This is legitimate.

I want to talk about Kaitlin Bruce whose story was reported today. Kaitlin has suffered ongoing complications after a caesarean section to deliver her beautiful baby boy. After suffering for years, Kaitlin required a hysterectomy. Tragically, Kaitlin will not have children again. Despite suffering these life-changing complications, Kaitlin was offered just \$6,000. She has never gone public until today. Her life has been turned upside down. Her story is harrowing.

How did we get to a point where the level of compensation a patient is afforded is based on whether they are willing to bear their deeply personal story publicly? That is wrong. To those courageous patients who have shared their experiences, like Brittany McDaniel, you are incredibly brave. To Kaitlin Bruce, so are you. Neither of them should have to do what they have done to be appropriately compensated. Compensation should be based on the recognition of someone's loss, suffering or injury. It should not be based on how much damage media reports cause to the curated political image of the Minister for Health. That is disgusting, that is reprehensible, but that appears to have happened.


The health minister now has some very serious questions to answer. How at the same hospital could there be such a huge discrepancy between what two women were afforded in compensation? One got \$6,000; the other got hundreds of thousands—why? How is that allowed to happen? What involvement did the minister or her office have in all of this? We know that on the same day the LNP held its town hall meeting at the Caboolture Hospital a phone call was made by the minister's chief of staff to the McDaniel family. That call aired publicly on the news, a source of great embarrassment to the minister, no doubt. That same evening, allegedly only a matter of hours after the call with the minister's chief of staff, we understand an offer of compensation was made to the McDaniel family, an offer allegedly in the order of hundreds of thousands of dollars.

Any sensible person would reasonably conclude these events which transpired were not a coincidence. Who was involved? Was due process followed? Were protocols in awarding compensation breached? Was this done in a hurry without the right checks and balances to try to quash a political headache for the minister? Was the level of compensation altered because it was aired in the media? The minister should answer these questions in this House here today. Something is not right about this.

To Kaitlin, Brittany and anyone else who has been wronged, you deserve appropriate compensation. But all Queenslanders should know this: it should not be based on how much political damage has been done to the minister's reputation.

*(Time expired)*

### **R U OK? Day; Palaszczuk Labor Government, Investment**


 **Mr WALKER** (Mundingburra—ALP) (2.09 pm): Firstly I want to acknowledge R U OK? Day today. I want people across the state to ask that question of those around them and the ones they love and care for: are you okay? If they look a little uncomfortable or show signs of uncertainty, I want them to double-check and ask the question again, 'Are you okay?' Let them know you are there for them. It is important we all do this and be there for each other. It is very important.

I also wish to speak about the Palaszczuk Labor government's excellent record-breaking investment in frontline health services, education, housing and the clean and green energy future through our Energy and Jobs Plan. The \$20.3 billion Big Build program for the people of Queensland is history making. Moreover, we have the excellent rebates on energy bills and the cash incentives to purchase energy efficient appliances. It clearly demonstrates we are tackling the cost-of-living challenges head-on. We also have low unemployment and good paying jobs for all Queenslanders. That is what a good Labor government does.

This has been achieved here in Queensland through good planning by the Palaszczuk Labor government and excellent training opportunities across the state. This has been demonstrated daily through our free TAFE courses and investing in more training infrastructure in our TAFE colleges across the Sunshine Coast. TAFE Queensland's Bohle campus is undergoing a \$17.2 million expansion including the construction of a \$12.45 million hydrogen and renewable energy training facility and a \$4.74 million advanced manufacturing skills lab which will allow the TAFE to offer more than 20 new qualifications in renewable and advanced manufacturing industries. This investment provides 45 good jobs during construction, and construction is expected to be completed in the second half of 2023.

These projects are part of a \$100 million Equipping TAFE for Our Future Program which focuses on providing Queenslanders with access to modern infrastructure to support high-quality training which meets the ever-growing sustainable, clean energy future. It is important to make sure we have highly qualified and well-trained workers and tradies for the emerging jobs that this government has created with the Energy and Jobs Plan, investing in new hospitals and upgrading and expanding existing hospitals. It is only the Palaszczuk Labor government that has a plan for Queensland's future.

### **Crime and Corruption Commission**

 **Mr NICHOLLS** (Clayfield—LNP) (2.12 pm): Yesterday was judgement day for integrity in Queensland. Yesterday was judgement day for the Palaszczuk Labor government. When the High Court delivered its decision in the Carne matter it sent a clear message that this Labor government needs to act to ensure the essence of the Fitzgerald report is not lost in Queensland. What did Fitzgerald say? He said—

Therefore, inquiries such as this, which the disaffected can impugn as "political", must remain one of the options which the community reserves to itself in order to supervise and control public administration and the exercise of power.

This was also highlighted by Mr Barbour, the chair of the CCC, in his statement yesterday when he said—

Having the ability to report on matters relating to its investigations is vital so the public, the public sector and elected officials can understand the reasons for and outcomes of CCC investigations.

The inability to report on matters uncovered in such investigations reduces transparency and is clearly not in the public interest.

I repeat: it is not in the public interest, and it is not the first time either. That was said by Mr MacSporran in his submission to the subsequent Fitzgerald inquiry when he said—

This will most often translate to the outcome of an investigation leading to charges being brought or if not, a public report which transparently details the nature of the investigation ...



What is happening here in Queensland? Why will the Premier and the Attorney-General not commit to change the legislation to allow the CCC to report on its investigations that are vital to public confidence in Queensland's public sector? They have been given every opportunity over the last two days to commit to making the changes, whatever they might be and however complex they might be, so people can have confidence in the public sector. Why are they refusing to do so? Is it because these two investigations are reports into two Labor luminaries? Why has this Palaszczuk Labor government been so uncharacteristically quiet on these matters?

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

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

**Mr BAILEY:** The honourable member in his contribution is alleging things the government has not done. The government has said that we will seek legal advice and that is all. He ought not to mislead the House.


**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I will seek some advice. That is not a point of order. There is a process to address that.

**Mr NICHOLLS:** As I say, the reports are into two Labor luminaries, one of whom is a very, very good friend of the minister who just took the point of order. Why has the government failed to do so? Honourable members should remember this government is funding former deputy premier Trad's legal action and it is not a defence, it is an attack. It is trying to stop the presentation of a report by the state's Integrity Commission, a report into the appointment of an under treasurer. That is funding that this government has hidden for the last two years despite extensive questions. There has been no explanation, just deceit and ducking and weaving. It is a protection racket.

It is this government that knows it is doing the wrong thing. It is the chaos and crisis of Labor that is causing the loss of confidence in the integrity of the public sector in the state of Queensland.

*(Time expired)*

### Centenary Motorway

 **Mrs MULLEN** (Jordan—ALP) (2.16 pm): Recently and with little fanfare two full lanes opened near the Centenary Motorway and Logan Motorway interchange. That stretch of the Centenary Motorway near Carole Park has been a notorious congestion hotspot for many years. I am pleased to report that traffic is now flowing. The upgrade of the Centenary Motorway and Logan Motorway interchange is a project for which I have strongly advocated, even before my election as the member for Jordan. It is a project I am proud to have delivered as part of the Palaszczuk Labor government, and I wish to thank Minister Bailey for his support and the \$15 million commitment to see this interchange upgraded.

I was frequently asked, 'Who in their right mind thought it was a great idea to have a road that went from two lanes, merged into one lane and then split again into two highway ramps?' It was certainly before my time, but I did not need to search too hard to find the answer. It was the LNP Newman government. In 2012 the then LNP minister for transport and main roads touted a rescope of upgrades to the Centenary Motorway. Some of this new scope of works made good sense, and I am not one to be unfair. However, it never made any sense to have a road go from two lanes into one and back into two. The LNP simply cut costs and did not finish the job, something I am pleased to say we have now done.


In the same media release of 10 October 2012 in which the minister was spruiking his rescope, he also referenced removing Labor's 'gold plating' and finding savings. We all know what this means: cuts. In this instance it was a big cut, seven kilometres of a proposed bikeway connecting the Centenary cycleway to Springfield. When it comes to the cycleway, I recognise its importance and I am working closely with the minister and the Department of Transport and Main Roads on getting it back into our planning.

At this time we have a number of projects underway on the Centenary Motorway: the almost \$300 million on the Centenary Bridge upgrade at Jindalee; the \$6.5 million upgrade of exit 32 at Springfield Central; the \$10 million for a master plan for the Centenary Highway from Darra to Toowong; and the \$1 million planning study currently underway on the Centenary Motorway from Darra to Yamanto. It concerns me greatly that all of these important projects for the Centenary Highway will be under threat if the LNP are elected. The shadow transport and main roads minister has made it very

clear that they have already identified a couple of billion dollars worth of savings. The Leader of the Opposition has already said he has a debt reduction strategy—\$10 billion of cuts—and the people of Queensland and my electorate deserve to know what they will be cutting.

The Leader of the Opposition is also refusing to say whether he will support ongoing progressive royalties beyond the forwards. He can call it 'prune back', but it is simply cuts. The LNP clearly have a plan to slash funding from crucial road projects and I fear what it will mean for the significant projects that our Labor government has committed and that are underway for the Centenary Motorway.

### **Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services**

 **Mr BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (2.19 pm): There are serious questions arising from question time this morning in terms of the police minister and the potential breaches of the separation of powers with respect to the police minister and the Queensland Police Commissioner. At the Economics and Governance Committee on 1 August, the member for Coomera raised serious issues and allegations with respect to the police minister's office involving one of his staff members. In the days following the issue being raised, the member for Coomera received confidential private phone calls and communications from the Queensland Police Service over a number of days. Then, on 9 August the Minister for Police was asked similar questions in budget estimates. He said—

The advice I have is that when a colleague of the member for Burdekin used this forum last week to make similar remarks the Queensland Police Service immediately contacted the member and asked if the member had any further evidence. The advice I have is that the member did not even come back to the Queensland Police Service ...

The question is: how did the police minister know the intricate details of private communications between the member for Coomera and the Queensland Police Service—matters that were not in the public domain, matters that were not raised in estimates. These were private telephone communications between QPS and the member for Coomera. The member for Maroochydore, Fiona Simpson, wrote to the Police Commissioner and asked. In her reply the Police Commissioner said—

With respect to Minister Ryan, I am advised that Deputy Commissioner Tracy Linford simply advised him that a complaint had been received and would be investigated. No further details or confidential information was provided to the Minister from the QPS.

I table a copy of the reply from the Police Commissioner.


*Tabled paper:* Letter, dated 15 August 2023, from the member for Maroochydore, Ms Fiona Simpson MP, to the Commissioner of the Queensland Police Service, Ms Katarina Carroll APM, regarding concerns raised during budget estimates hearings [1339].

*Tabled paper:* Letter, dated 25 August 2023, from the Commissioner of the Queensland Police Service, Ms Katarina Carroll APM, to the member for Maroochydore, Ms Fiona Simpson MP, regarding concerns raised during budget estimates hearings [1340].

The question is again: who told the police minister? Didn't the police minister throw the Premier under one of the 150 new diesel buses they are making? Didn't he throw the Premier under the proverbial bus? The Minister for Police advised this morning that it was DPC that advised his office. The question to the Police Commissioner and to the police minister then is: why was the Department of the Premier and Cabinet advised about these confidential communications between the member for Coomera and the police in this state?

The Department of the Premier and Cabinet director-general was handpicked by the Premier. The Premier's department is being privately advised of matters that should have remained confidential. We will be further writing to the Police Commissioner now to ask: if the Police Commissioner did not tell the police minister's office, why then did they tell the Department of the Premier and Cabinet? It is unacceptable, it is wrong and it is a breach of the separation of powers in this state.

### **Prince Charles Hospital, The Common Good**

 **Mr SULLIVAN** (Stafford—ALP) (2.22 pm): Being lectured to about the separation of powers and the appropriate operation of the Public Service by the member for Kawana is how I like my irony served! Thank you very much. It is with great pride that I inform the House that within the next week we will be turning the first sod for the new multistorey car park at the Prince Charles Hospital. This delivers on our election commitment from 2020 and will be of huge benefit to the local community. Importantly, the car park will remain under the ownership of the HHS, meaning that prices can be minimised for staff and patients and that the driving motivation will be care for our community rather than maximising profit.

This is great news for staff. I know how hard our local health staff work and the various hours throughout the week that their work demands. This new parking is not only at good cost; it also supports the safety of the staff who arrive at or leave the hospital at all hours of the day and night. It is great

news for patients and their family and friends. When people are facing serious injury or treatment for diseases and when family and friends spend significant time visiting loved ones undergoing treatment, the last thing they should worry about is having to face exorbitant parking costs, so it is good news for them. Of course, it is a win for local residents in Chermside and Kedron—neighbours of the hospital—because it will take cars off local streets, making the surrounding area more accessible to local residents.

This is in addition to other initiatives progressing at the Prince Charles Hospital and the Common Good, which is the research and charity arm of the hospital. We have the ICU of the Future, creating world-leading design for making health care at what is the most distressing end of the health system spectrum just that little bit easier on patients, family and staff. We have the tradie hub researching solutions for the scourge of lung diseases that have reared their head from manufactured stone benchtops. It also has significant possibilities for the resources and agriculture industries.

It is not just research. The close collaboration between the research arm of the hospital and the HHS means that patients are actually being treated right now. This is on top of us delivering \$300 million for 93 new beds at the Prince Charles Hospital. To the south there are 150 new beds, with \$750 million at the RBWH for a specialist cancer centre. We are putting our money where our mouth is.

Let us compare that to the record of those opposite. They disgracefully closed the Barrett Adolescent Centre without a replacement. We know of the serious harm that was caused. I am proud that Jacaranda House is co-located with the Prince Charles Hospital—

**Mr Crisafulli** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Martin): Order! Member for Broadwater.

**Mr SULLIVAN:** Those opposite sacked 1,500 health workers in Metro North alone. The Leader of the Opposition, who is very loud now, has not apologised—700 nurses on the north side alone.

### Gregory Electorate, Renal Dialysis



**Mr MILLAR** (Gregory—LNP) (2.25 pm): I rise to express the outrage felt by my constituents at the continuing lack of renal dialysis services in Gregory. The situation is rightly viewed as scandalous. It has a devastating impact on people's lives as they require this treatment to sustain their life and they are required to have dialysis multiple times each week. This means that they either leave their communities for good or are forced to lock up their homes and businesses and 'temporarily relocate' to receive treatment in centres such as Mackay, Rockhampton or Brisbane. For people like Darren of Ilfracombe, this temporary relocation has continued over many years and now has put his life in limbo. In fact, the Leader of the Opposition met with Darren's partner in Rockhampton recently. I cannot tell you what they said, because it would be too heartbreaking for this House to hear what Darren is going through. For people like Wendy McPhee, it will mean leaving Emerald. The loss of Wendy and her husband, Adjunct Professor Dr Ewen McPhee, will be a huge blow to the entire Central Highlands, as they are a mainstay in providing primary health care.


Petitions, questions, written representations—nothing seems to be getting through. We thought we had made progress in 2020 when in the election campaign the Palaszczuk government committed \$27.7 million for rural and regional renal dialysis programs. In May 2021, the minister announced that Longreach would receive two nurse assisted dialysis chairs to be operational in the second half of 2022. Construction has not even begun, and we hear excuse after excuse. Meanwhile, an operational unit for the Emerald Hospital has not even been mooted.

Locals have raised nearly \$200,000 in donations to help secure even one chair, but government red tape means that it cannot be used. Meanwhile, the rural and regional dialysis programs have put chairs in Ingham, Charters Towers and Bowen. Without begrudging anyone's access to these services, the people of Gregory are right to ask: why are we being ignored? These three centres have been chosen by the government for the service, despite the fact that all three are closer to Townsville Base Hospital—90 minutes. The nearest base hospital to Emerald, which is Rockhampton, is three-plus hours away, and Longreach is a long way from any base hospital.

The government's priorities become even more puzzling when you look at the population figures. The town of Emerald had a population of nearly 15,000 in 2021 and services a population of 28,000 across the Central Highlands. In contrast, Bowen has a population of 9,360, Charters Towers has a population of 7,979 and Ingham has a population of 6,304. I do not begrudge those towns' access to

renal dialysis—they deserve it—but the people of Gregory, Longreach and Emerald, are wondering, 'Why do we continue to be ignored?' It has gone on for far too long. We have made petitions; we have written. It is about time this government put renal dialysis in Longreach and Emerald.

### **Women's Health Week; Cairns, Maternity Services**

 **Mr HEALY** (Cairns—ALP) (2.28 pm): Women's Health Week was celebrated from 4 to 8 September, with the theme for 2023 being 'Grow Your Knowledge'. Women's Health Week is about supporting women to make informed decisions about their health and providing information that is not only accessible but, most importantly, easy to understand.


With the announcement that private maternity services will cease operations in Cairns—a decision by a private hospital—I was very happy to hear that the Palaszczuk government will invest an additional \$16 million to boost maternity services in regional, rural and remote communities. The Cairns and Hinterland Hospital and Health Service is working together with Ramsay Health. I am very happy to say that I have been sitting in those meetings, with the health minister and representatives from Ramsay Health, to ensure the transition of all women across to the fantastic public system that we have in Cairns. Each and every patient transitioning from Ramsay Health will have their care plans handed over to the capable team at Cairns Hospital.

Last year alone more than 2,000 babies were birthed at the Cairns Hospital to families right across the Far North region, as it already serves as a major referral hospital for women from the Tablelands, Cassowary Coast and Torres Strait who develop complications during pregnancy. Queensland Health leads the way nationally on midwifery group practice delivery and this additional investment of \$16 million across regional and remote Queensland to strengthen maternity services further demonstrates that families are at the forefront of the Palaszczuk government's priorities when it comes to health.

The midwifery group practice model allows mums to engage with the same midwife from the start of their second trimester right through to birth and beyond, with midwives able to conduct home visits throughout pregnancy and, just as importantly, through the postnatal care. As well as providing gold standard pregnancy care, a midwife might be the only person that an expectant mother can confide in and share concerns with about stresses in the home that could impact on the pregnancy, delivery and, more importantly, the care of a new baby. Part of the midwifery group practice model provides options for midwives to visit expectant mothers in their homes. In this more personal and comfortable setting, midwives can assess any other opportunities that may assist the family unit adjust post delivery and this is absolutely fundamental, particularly in regional areas where at some stages some of these families do not get the strong support of their family or other family members, so it is so vitally important.

It is pleasing to see the Cairns community embracing the holistic model of midwifery group practice by supporting the fundraising efforts of the great work done by the Far North Queensland Hospital Foundation to deliver a separate room for families that have experienced the trauma of early pregnancy loss. I am proud to be part of a government that gets the importance of midwifery services, unlike those opposite who cut them.

### **Ipswich, Odour Issues**

 **Mr O'CONNOR** (Bonney—LNP) (2.31 pm): Almost a quarter of a million people call Ipswich home. It is a great place. It is where I grew up and it is where much of my family still lives. However, under this government, Ipswich has been forgotten. Its lack of interest in this community literally hangs around like a bad stench. It takes it for granted. Data from 2019 shows that Ipswich takes 42 per cent of Queensland's waste—nearly half. It is a huge proportion for a region with less than five per cent of our state's population. Its concentration of landfills and industries makes it even more important for government to be on the front foot when it comes to the regulation and enforcement of waste management. Instead, we have seen operators let off the hook with delay after delay in enforcement activities from the state government. Over 25,000 complaints from locals have been made about the odour and over a thousand of those have been in the last month alone. That is 34 complaints a day. People in the area tell me that the Labor MPs for Bundamba and Ipswich have stopped listening. The stories over many years of what residents are living through daily are horrific.

**Ms HOWARD:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I take personal offence and ask the member to withdraw.

**Mr O'CONNOR:** I withdraw. If the member for Ipswich wants to listen, she can come to the community forum this weekend.

**Government members** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Martin): Order! Member for Bonney, I will ask you to again withdraw unreservedly.

**Mr O'CONNOR:** I withdraw. The stories are about not just the smell but the rashes and the nausea that are all being experienced by people in their own homes. Here is just one example the opposition received this week—


My husband and I built a home at Redbank Plains in 2016. Almost overnight when we moved in, we have had health issues due to the ongoing pollution from Swanbank. I have headaches, a chronic cough that is so bad it makes me vomit, sore and itchy eyes. My husband has developed the same cough (although not quite so extreme), sore eyes and headaches. We now have a toddler and are extremely worried for her health as she is showing signs of the same cough.

The minister said that she had had advocacy on this issue, but what is the outcome? More talk about inspections, monitoring, site visits but no improvement for locals. Operators will not change their behaviour if the government response has no teeth. We have seen EPO after EPO put in place with extension after extension, but operators have not shown a commitment to change their behaviours. Some of these companies are clearly factoring in these fines and their legal fees as just the cost of doing business in Ipswich. That is not the case for every waste operator. Most are doing the right thing and they are sick of getting painted with the same brush as the ones that are not.

As I mentioned before, this Sunday I will be attending the community meeting in Redbank Plains. The minister and the local MPs should be there too, and I urge them to attend. The environment minister needs to do better. The residents of this community deserve her attention. Visit the area, see it and smell it for yourself and stop the cycle of inaction.


### National Week of Deaf People

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Martin): Before I call the member for Macalister, I advise the House that the member will use Auslan sign language for her speech, as approved by the Speaker. This will be done in silence followed by the member reading the speech aloud.

 **Mrs McMAHON** (Macalister—ALP) (2.35 pm): *The member for Macalister gave her speech using Auslan, Australian sign language.*

Next week is National Week of Deaf People. This week includes the International Day of Sign Languages. It is an opportunity for deaf people to celebrate their community and their language, culture and history and it is also a chance to make you all aware of your local deaf community. The theme for 2023 is a world where deaf people can sign anywhere. This is my second attempt at signing a speech in this place, but I am not deaf. However, over 20,000 people in Australia use Auslan. This includes the children and parents of deaf people. It is only fair that this place should be one where deaf people can sign and I look forward to a time when someone who uses Auslan as their first language can take a seat in this place. I thank the Speaker and members for their patience and, more importantly, I thank the deaf community for its patience during my speech.

### Minister for Transport and Main Roads

 **Mr MINNIKIN** (Chatsworth—LNP) (2.37 pm): Very well done to the previous speaker. After growing up in the early seventies, I can recall a famous UK comedy series called *On the Buses*. It had Reg Varney starring in it as a bus driver and then there was Blakey—a rather tall, lanky character—who was the bus depot inspector. Yesterday when I sat here listening to the member for Miller yet again get up with another classic blunder, I wondered if he might have thought about how he might sneak this one through. However, it is a bit difficult when he is doing it as a ministerial statement and he gets up and talks about his—

**Mr BAILEY:** Mr Deputy Speaker Martin, I rise to a point of order. I find the analogy used by the member personally offensive and I ask that he withdraw.

**Mr MINNIKIN:** I withdraw. The fact of the matter remains though that it was probably more a tragedy than a comedy, because there is a real price to be paid when we on this side of the chamber absolutely know—moreover, it is pretty much known no matter where you go now—about the member for Miller, the transport and main roads minister, and the moniker that is associated with everything he touches, and that is budget blowouts.

For completeness, I will remind the House of a couple of them. Before I get to Cross River Rail there are the blowouts of \$2.4 billion for train manufacturing, \$600 million for the Coomera Connector and half a billion dollars for Gold Coast Light Rail Stage 3A. Imagine being a fly on the wall between the left and the right. You have the member for Miller and the member for Woodridge. The problem when you are continually not on top of your game is that there will come a point when it comes back to bite you.

What of the 200 green buses? Yesterday the minister had the hide to say, 'Congratulations! There will be a green revolution with bus transport.' There is only one problem: of the 200 buses, 150 will be dirty diesels. Why is that? It is because we have a situation whereby the Brisbane City Council, despite their best efforts to work with the member for Miller—as the member for Miller knows—have made a commitment to go on this journey. However, due to the incompetence—there is no other word for it—of the way that this program has been managed—

**Mr BAILEY:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. Again I find his use of that particular word personally offensive and I ask that he withdraw.

**Mrs GERBER:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The minister was not referenced in that comment. He said he finds it offensive but it was the way the program has been run.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Martin): Thank you, member. I think it was reasonably clear that it was referring to the member. Member for Chatsworth, will you withdraw?

**Mr MINNIKIN:** I withdraw and will move along. We need to look at something that is pretty damning here, which is the minister's own departmental brief dated May 2023. The industry engagement findings for the Zero Emission Bus Program state that on one of the manufacturing key terms—this is about the whole program—the 'program timeline was seen as overly ambitious, and may not support the objective of establishing sustainable local manufacturing.' We support Queensland manufacturing but we do not support the incompetence of this minister who is costing this economy billions.

### Ipswich, Health Services



**Ms HOWARD** (Ipswich—ALP) (2.41 pm): Queensland Labor is the only party that will put the health of Queenslanders first. Since the Palaszczuk government was elected in 2015, we have been busy building new hospitals across Queensland and restoring the health workforce after it was decimated by the Newman LNP government. The Ripley Valley is one of the fastest growing areas in Australia. Therefore, when we announced in 2020 that one of the seven new satellite hospitals would be built in Ripley it made sense. That is why I was proud to join my colleagues the members for Jordan and Bundamba in welcoming the Premier and the Minister for Health to Ripley to cut the ribbon on the new Ripley Satellite Hospital on 13 August.

The Ripley Satellite Hospital has been open for around two weeks and already it has been a great success. West Moreton Health has reported that patient presentations to the hospital's Minor Injury and Illness Clinic have grown to up to 50 a day. Both the new Medicare Urgent Care Clinic, recently opened at North Ipswich, and the Ripley Satellite Hospital will greatly reduce pressure on Ipswich Hospital's emergency department, allowing it to focus on life-threatening injuries and illnesses. When it comes to health, the Palaszczuk government has delivered. Since 2015, Ipswich has received a windfall of investment to expand health services. This investment would not be forthcoming under an LNP government.


I am proud to announce that in the next few months we are going to open the doors to Ipswich Hospital's new 64-bed mental health unit, which will provide patient centred care for local people experiencing acute mental health concerns. The new mental health unit would not have been possible without the \$146 million delivered by the Palaszczuk government for stage 1 of the Ipswich Hospital expansion. Last year, a further \$710 million was committed for stage 2 of the expansion, which will deliver 200 new beds for Ipswich Hospital. It does not stop there. Planning is well underway for the new 90-bed subacute care facility to be built next to the Ripley Satellite Hospital.

We have provided this health investment for Ipswich because it is vital that local Ipswich people can access good public health care close to home when they need it. We know that the LNP will not deliver this health investment and we now know that they have a secret plan to slash health workers' wages. The Queensland LNP were in government for only one term but in that short time they did much

damage to Ipswich health services. They slashed \$21 million from our local health budget and they sacked 86 health staff. The Newman LNP government put zero investment into the expansion of Ipswich Hospital. They put zero investment into delivering health services for the rapidly growing Ripley Valley area.

Meanwhile, the Palaszczuk government has already built and opened the new Ripley Satellite Hospital. We have commenced planning for the new Ripley subacute care facility. Stage 1 of the hospital expansion will be fully delivered once we open the new acute mental health unit this November. When it comes to delivering health investment for the City of Ipswich, the only government that will deliver is a Queensland Labor government.

### Children, Gender Dysphoria Treatment

 **Mr KATTER** (Traeger—KAP) (2.44 pm): I rise to touch on a subject that I raised in question time today, which is how in Queensland the medical fraternity is being influenced in way that they apply their professional judgement in so far as it impacts kids who are being treated for gender dysphoria. In 2016, the Queensland Children's Gender Service was set up and funded as part of the Queensland Children's Hospital. There is no doubt it does some good for kids suffering with gender dysphoria or severe mental health issues. A lot of good work gets done there, I am sure.


The problem arises when an order comes down from the board, overseen by the government, that says, 'You must treat using the new affirmation model.' However, the only studies confirming that treatment are two studies out of Holland, the viability of which has been questioned. Professionals say that it is not consistent with all of the other evidence that says the better pathway may be to not use puberty blockers at that point. The affirmation model would say they cannot practice that way but must be corralled into using the one tool to deal with those kids.

In some cases, that model might be the right thing, but doctors should be able to use their professional discretion. We train doctors to use their judgement and their professional skills, looking at all of the evidence. Queensland Health will not always have the mortgage on what is the best outcome. They will give their best judgement based on the evidence, but this is not the best evidence because we are relying on only two studies from Holland.

We know there is a political agenda here. We cannot have political agendas encroaching on professional judgement. In Queensland there are 75 doctors involved. A pretty scary environment is developing around this stuff now. If you want to make a statement on this you can be branded a bigot or characterised similarly, as I am sure I will be for saying this today. Despite that, 75 doctors have spoken up. Dr Jillian Spencer has said, 'I don't have any religious beliefs. I'm not political. It is just my professional opinion that the careful watch-and-wait approach has produced better outcomes for people reaching adolescence.' There is no evidence at all to say the affirmation model prevents suicide.

The minister talked about R U OK? Day. I hope we are okay. The whole point is that we want those kids to have the best outcome, not just for now but right through adolescence and adulthood. We cannot encroach on our doctors in this space. I cannot impose my ideologies. I might want to but I cannot and nor can those opposite. However, that is exactly what is happening, evidenced by the fact that Dr Jillian Spencer is no longer able to practise here by virtue of the fact that she expressed her professional opinion on what was best for patients, which was not accepted by or consistent with the agenda or the ideology of the government of the day.

### Ipswich West Electorate, Projects

 **Mr MADDEN** (Ipswich West—ALP) (2.47 pm): On 8 September I had the honour of representing the Minister for Education, Grace Grace, at the turning of the first sod for the new learning centre at Rosewood State High School, which is scheduled to be open by June 2024. Also in attendance were Acting Principal Neil Lloyd; P&C President Jen McLellan; Business Services Manager Narelle Niemeyer; deputy principals Michelle Pryor-Ball and Darren Lovey; school captains Levi Hartigan, Lara Munday and Ethan Ingledew; Jack Hutchinson Jnr, director at Hutchinson Builders; Jackson Munn, a second-year apprentice with Hutchinson Builders; and Laurence Taylor, the senior project coordinator ISD.


The new learning centre will include six learning spaces, a staffroom and associated spaces, staff and student amenities, storage areas, a lift and an undercroft with capacity for future infill. In addition to the new learning centre, the project includes upgrades to the school's bus bay and the

construction of a new car park for students, staff and visitors. The 2023-24 state budget allocated \$14.5 million for the project, with a total estimated expenditure of \$16 million. However, the new Rosewood State High School learning centre is just one of three major projects planned or under construction in the Rosewood area.

Not far away from Rosewood State High School is the Rosewood Police Station. Tenders have been called for a new police station. The 2023-24 state budget provided funding of \$1,875,000 for 2023, with a total expenditure of \$4 million. The proposed works include demolition of the existing police station, relocation of the police residence, the construction of a new single-storey police station building, new vehicle crossovers, car parking and landscaping. Importantly, the new police station will accommodate the transition to a 24-hour station in the future. It is fantastic to see this critical project moving forward. Our Queensland Police Service personnel spend their days protecting our community, and they deserve the very best facilities. I thank the Minister for Police, Mark Ryan, for backing this project as well as Deputy Premier Steven Miles for recently giving the project ministerial infrastructure designation.

Not far away from Rosewood, at Walloon State School work has begun for a new learning centre, with funding of \$4,519,000 in 2023 and a total spend of \$5,200,000. The proposed works include refurbishment of existing buildings, construction of a new two-storey general learning area building, a single-storey administration building and outdoor sports courts and playing areas. Importantly, the works will increase the school student enrolment capacity by 169 students—from 284 students to 453 students. This is fantastic news for the Walloon community.

### Seafood Industry

 **Mr PERRETT** (Gympie—LNP) (2.50 pm): The agriculture and fisheries minister's incompetence is crippling Queensland's iconic seafood industry. The pain is being inflicted on not just commercial fishers, the businesses they support, their families and communities; it will be felt by every Queenslanders. The detrimental flow-on will impact our tourism and hospitality sectors. Queenslanders will pay the price at the check-out because the government is consumed by a culture of chaos and crisis, hiding from scrutiny, obsession with media management and self-congratulations.

For several years the minister has undermined the fishing industry with drastic regulatory decisions which lack transparency around stock assessment processes, lack supporting evidence around scientific reasons and biomass assessments and lack fairness regarding compensation packages. There is a refusal to consider regulatory impact statements. The minister ignores the pleas of industry for genuine consultation and a seat at the table as these decisions are being made.

The government fears the truth. The government's obsession with trashing Queensland's fishing industry will result in massive increases in the price of our fresh local seafood. Good, clean, fresh Queensland fish will be substituted with imported fish from countries where sustainable practices are not even followed. Substitution is the goal. The minister loves a self-appointed title. Others have bestowed on him the 'Friend of the Fire Ant' and, with the obsession with substitution, yesterday he was anointed 'Mark "Fine Cotton" Furner'.

Gillnet fishing will be phased out by the end of this year, in just over three months time. The government is so consumed by its own chaos and crisis that no-one consulted fishers about these sweeping changes to gillnet fishing zones. They learned about it in news reports and were given no opportunity to provide feedback. The minister has form—this is not the first time he has hidden from commercial fishers. Their industry association, the QSIA, has been completely blindsided and left without a seat at the table. The minister's botched decisions are exacerbated by his continual refusal to complete regulatory impact statements.

The latest devastation is being wreaked on gulf communities such as Karumba and Normanton—areas my colleague the member for Nanango recently visited and heard directly from. The proposed changes lack meaningful consultation. They will have significant impacts on small and family businesses in the gulf and will cripple gulf communities. This has absolutely nothing to do with protecting the Great Barrier Reef; it is in the gulf. Queenslanders and industry recognise the need for sustainable fishing practices to ensure protection of our iconic fish species. It makes sense for commercial fishers. If the practices are not sustainable, they will be out of a job. It is clear that this minister is out of his depth. The failure to stand up for an industry he is supposed to represent is incompetence at best.



### Pumicestone Electorate, Satellite Hospitals



**Ms KING** (Pumicestone—ALP) (2.53 pm): Every single day people in Pumicestone tell me that our Caboolture Satellite Hospital is just what the doctor ordered for our community. In the first month alone, over 1,800 people received urgent care for fractures, falls, infections and eye injuries among other things. Most of them are in and out again in under two hours. Glenn from Elimbah said—

Last night I ended up at the new Caboolture Satellite Hospital. The staff were amazing and the entire process was seamless from triage right through to treatment and departure. Can't recommend enough.

Our satellite hospitals are bringing care closer to home and taking pressure off our busy EDs. I cannot wait for our Bribie Island satellite hospital to open next year. I am proud to be part of a government that invests in the health infrastructure and the health workers that Queenslanders need most.

What a contrast to the LNP. Right from the start, the LNP in Pumicestone criticised our Satellite Hospitals Program. The very day that the Premier and I stood up together to announce our Bribie Island satellite hospital, a prominent local LNP member phoned me to attack it. What was her complaint? Instead of a 100 per cent free public hospital, the Pumicestone LNP member wanted us to fund a private hospital that only people with private health insurance would be able to access. As a proud Labor member, I will stand up for our community getting a 100 per cent free public satellite hospital over a private hospital every single day of the week.

What do the LNP stand for when it comes to health? We know their dirty plans because they have shown us, and now they have told us over and over again. We have heard the LNP shadow minister for health, the member for Mudgeeraba, call our regional health workers duds. We have heard the LNP shadow minister for transport describe sacking 14,000 health workers as the tough love Queenslanders needed. Now we have heard their secret plan to cut health worker wages with the LNP's shadow assistant minister, the member for Burnett, saying 'it's time we broke the back of unrealistic employee entitlements'.

The leader of the LNP needs to come clean on which health workers he plans to break the back of. Will the LNP break the backs of our hardworking nurses, like the 732 local nurses they sacked from my area the last time they were in government? Will they break the backs of our paramedics all over again? Will the LNP cut the wages and conditions of our doctors and get them marching in the streets like they did last time? The LNP's only plan for health is to cut, sack and sell. They have told Queenslanders what they will do, and Queenslanders need to believe them. The LNP hate our Satellite Hospitals Program, and if they are elected to government our Bribie Island satellite hospital will be the very first on the chopping block to cut, sack and sell.

### Bushfire Preparedness



**Mr LAST** (Burdekin—LNP) (2.56 pm): Prepare, do not procrastinate. That is the warning from the Australian Fire and Emergency Services Authorities Council, a warning that is supposedly shared by state governments. It is a fear that should be shared because, according to AFAC, an increased risk of bushfire has been identified for large areas of Queensland—and don't we know that?—as I speak. In response to terrorism and even the pandemic we were told to be alert, not alarmed. Anyone who has stared down a natural disaster knows the value of warnings. The value of those warnings is also recognised by the Royal Commission into National Natural Disaster Arrangements and in this government's 2019 Queensland Bushfires Review.

The value of warnings is well recognised by all except the Minister for Fire and Emergency Services. Across Queensland, fire danger signs alert locals and visitors to the threat of bushfire. Correction: they did. In the face of what is expected to be a catastrophic fire season, this government has ripped down 300 fire warning signs across Queensland and replaced them with just 64 electronic signs. When asked why, it was reported that planning, consultation and risk assessments were required—work that should have been underway for over a year now.

While the risk assessment for this bushfire season shows increased risk, Queenslanders are being denied life-saving warnings due to the inaction and incompetence of the Minister for Fire and Emergency Services. While the sharing of warnings via the media and social media is important, what must be remembered is that many areas of Queensland suffer from inadequate or non-existent telecommunications. Even Labor acknowledges this, given that its state policy platform commits Labor

to improving access to digital capability for Queenslanders, particularly those in regional and remote communities. When facing the threat of bushfires, Queenslanders in regional and remote areas should not be left uninformed. For any government, the highest priority should be ensuring the safety of Queenslanders, but that is clearly not the case when it comes to this mob.

The threat that Queenslanders face from bushfires is being amplified by the inaction of the Minister for Fire and Emergency Services. We know that under this minister rural fire brigades have taken their vehicles off the road because they are noncompliant. We know that under this minister life-saving equipment was not provided to Rural Fire Service volunteers, and now we know that this minister has allowed critical warning signs to be removed. Queensland and Queenslanders face a real threat this fire season. While Queenslanders still will stand shoulder to shoulder and act to defend their communities, they know that this minister has failed to act in their time of need. It is our Rural Fire Service and our QFES workers who will bear the brunt of this.

### Mount Ommaney Electorate, Rotary Changeover



**Ms PUGH** (Mount Ommaney—ALP) (2.59 pm): Recently we had the Rotary changeover season, and let me tell members that it has been a busy time—as everyone has been saying—in my community because I have not one, not two, not three, but four fabulous Rotary clubs in my community. They have recently been the beneficiaries of some government largess, which I will get to shortly.

At the Jindalee changeover, president Irene handed over to Cameron Webb. She did a fantastic speech, despite the recent bereavement in her family with the sad loss of her sister just a few days before. Her speech was heartfelt and hysterical, as only she can be. In the speeches at the Jindalee changeover polio eradication was a key theme. I am sure members of this House are familiar with this, but it is important to note that it was Rotary that started the drive to eradicate polio all over the world—a cause that has now been taken up by our hardworking health professionals. It is amazing to think that today they have nearly achieved that. It is incredible to think that a group of community-minded volunteers from around the world have almost eradicated this scourge. I place on the record my personal thanks for their work in this place.

**Mr Madden:** Hear, hear!

**Ms PUGH:** I will take that interjection from my colleague the member for Ipswich West.

The Centenary Rotary changeover was a bittersweet night, as just hours earlier valued club member Glen Palmer had passed away at Canossa. I was privileged to attend her funeral the following week and learned about her incredible life. She taught in remote communities all over the world and later worked as an academic at Griffith University in the education space. She joined Rotary to gain support for her wonderful kindy programs in Fiji. Her passion and drive for her work as an early childhood educator was evident. Glen was one of a kind. Her name was Glen; it was not Glenys or anything else. She lived life on her own terms with her loving husband, Bob.

A beautiful Sunday morning breakfast was a perfect way to celebrate the Walter Taylor changeover. They have recently received a Community Gambling Benefit Fund grant. It was there I met the delightful Cody from Borderline and his brilliant team.

**Mr Lister:** Hear, hear!

**Ms PUGH:** I take that interjection. They run camps in the Southern Downs region to support young people, many of whom have mental health challenges. It is great to see that bipartisan support.


**Mr Lister:** I sponsor them.

**Ms PUGH:** Fantastic. The camp aims to provide, as the member for Southern Downs is so enthusiastically saying, a positive experience to the attendees as well as equipping them with the resilience and coping strategies to navigate the challenges of modern life. He did the welcome and spoke at the Centenary changeover. That is a fantastic organisation.

Finally, the Sumner Park Rotary celebrated a milestone—their 30th birthday—and promoted their Rotary reading assistance program. It operates in Charleville, Roma, St George and Mitchell. Congratulations, Rotary.

## COMMITTEE OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

### Portfolio Committees, Reporting Dates


 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Leader of the House) (3.02 pm): I seek to advise the House of the determinations made by the Committee of the Legislative Assembly at its meeting today. The committee has resolved, pursuant to standing order 136, that the Economics and Governance Committee report on the Emblems of Queensland and Other Legislation Amendment Bill by 27 October 2023 and the State Development and Regional Industries Committee report on the Local Government (Councillor Conduct) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill by 27 October 2023.

## TRANSPORT AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

### Report, Motion to Take Note

Resumed from 24 August (see p. 2435), on motion of Mr King—

That the House take note of the Transport and Resources Committee Report No. 26, 57th Parliament, *Examination of Auditor-General Report 5: 2021-22—Managing Queensland's transition to renewable energy*, tabled on 5 December 2022.

 **Mr WEIR** (Condamine—LNP) (3.03 pm), continuing: I take up where I left off at the last sitting. If my memory serves me correctly, we were talking about how energy generation is reported. The Auditor-General's report made comment that while the department's Service Delivery Statements for 2020-21 showed an estimated actual of 20 per cent, the Audit Office thought it was more in the vicinity of 19 per cent. It stated that the department—


... does not include all non-renewable energy, for example diesel generation, that is generated outside the national market. Around 1,000 GWh of this type of energy was produced in Queensland in 2020

That is also valid today. Since New South Wales closed Liddell Power Station, we are exporting about 700 megawatts of energy into New South Wales as we speak. That is not being included in the figures for energy generation in Queensland, according to the Audit Office. That is a significant amount. That has increased dramatically since Liddell has closed down. That is almost a daily occurrence. The report goes on to say that the main generator in this state at the time of the report—which, as I stated, is getting quite old now—is rooftop solar at 40 per cent. I would say that it is considerably higher than 40 per cent now because rooftop solar continues to grow.

We attempted to prosecute this issue at estimates. The department is saying renewable energy generation is at 20 per cent and, if I recall correctly, the minister said at estimates it is 25 per cent, but over what period is that? Is that over a three-month period? Is that over a four-month period? Is it a snapshot in time? In the middle of the day we are generating a lot of renewable energy, but once the sun sets we are at about 65 per cent coal and gas. The Audit Office made comment on those figures. I think that is fair enough.

The emails I am getting regarding energy at the moment are mainly about the impact on landowners of some of the renewable energy projects. I remember well when the coal seam gas industry was rolled out in this state and the impact that had on landowners. There had to be a number of guidelines and checks and balances put in place around that. The GasFields Commission was put in place. The regional plans were done. The Office of Groundwater Impact Assessment was established. This was done to try to give some certainty for landowners that they would have skin in the game when the projects came onto their land. I think we are fast approaching that time in Queensland with renewable energy projects. The impact is going to be significant and, once again, it is going to be in regional Queensland. They are not just impacting landowners. We are seeing that a large wind farm in North Queensland is going to have a significant environmental impact. That also needs to be taken into account.

The targets at the moment also do not include what we are going to need to produce green hydrogen. That is going to put our generation through the roof. We need firm figures around the impact of that.

 **Hon. MC BAILEY** (Miller—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads and Minister for Digital Services) (3.07 pm): We know that reducing transport emissions will play a key role in achieving net zero by 2050. There are now more than 28,000 fully electric vehicles on Queensland roads, with numbers increasing considerably in the last 12 months. For instance, there has been an 885 per cent increase in electric vehicle ownership in the state over the last three years.

Since we were elected in 2015, the Palaszczuk Labor government has been committed to supporting more Queenslanders to take up electric vehicles. Queensland was the first state in Australia to release an electric vehicle strategy. At the centre of the strategy was our electric vehicle superhighway. We have already invested over \$8 million in charging stations from Coolangatta to Port Douglas and Brisbane to Toowoomba, including recently Mount Isa. Once finalised, the electric vehicle superhighway will provide a fast-charging infrastructure network of 55 locations across our vast state and will be the longest electric vehicle highway of any single state anywhere in the world.

The Palaszczuk Labor government will partner with Yurika, which is a publicly owned electric vehicle charging company, to deliver the latest phase, which will use 75-kilowatt Tritium fast chargers, manufactured here in Queensland, like our buses and trains. Tritium is a local-based, Brisbane company, which this government financially supported in its early days. It is exciting to see our local manufacturing capabilities grow in our state as Tritium exports to more than 25 nations.


Earlier this year I announced the successful applicants of our \$10 million co-contribution electric vehicle charging fund. The government will partner with Evie Networks, Engie, NRMA, RACQ and Tesla to roll out more than 44 fast charging sites across Queensland, resulting in an overall investment of \$24.5 million. Motorists thinking about making the switch to an electric vehicle need to have confidence that the charging infrastructure they need is easily found across our state, and by doubling the existing network we are doing exactly that.

We know that one of the barriers to the uptake of electric vehicles is the up-front purchase price. To assist in making electric vehicles more affordable for Queenslanders, we announced a \$45 million rebate program. This means you can claim \$3,000 on any eligible electric vehicle with the dutiable value of \$58,000. More recently, we expanded the program, increasing the threshold to \$68,000 to include more models under the threshold. We also doubled the rebate amount to \$6,000 to eligible households earning up to a capped total income of \$180,000.

While new electric vehicle sales are now positive, Australia's uptake has been anaemic compared to the rest of the developed world due to the lost decade of LNP governments in Canberra blocking action on climate change and telling us that electric vehicles would ruin the weekend. Thankfully, we now have the Albanese federal Labor government to work with to drive the uptake of electric vehicles across the country—and what a tremendous amount of progress we have made over the last 12 months!

It does not stop there. We want to see our buses and heavy vehicles moving into lower emissions and to clean energy. All new TransLink buses in South-East Queensland will be zero emission from 2025 and across regional Queensland from 2025 to 2030. There are already 64 zero-emission buses on our roads, with more to come online this year. We are already seeing that plan in action, with electric buses hitting the road in Brisbane, the bayside, the Gold Coast, the Sunshine Coast and Cairns. There will also be plenty of opportunities to supercharge our local manufacturing capabilities through the Zero Emission Bus Program. Moving towards a more sustainable fleet in Queensland will assist in delivering on one of our key objectives in terms of acting on climate change but also the 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games, where a strong focus on sustainability is part of the games' ethos.

In terms of electric trucks, I can report that Transport and Main Roads are working closely with Volvo to trial electric heavy vehicles across South-East Queensland. These vehicles will have the latest battery technology, and the information obtained from these trials will assist in promoting the uptake across the industry. Obviously with a country as vast as ours and with such a spread out population as ours, getting heavy vehicles on to clean and zero-emission technology is a high priority for us in this country, and we are working with one of the big manufacturers to do exactly that. That is why, especially with help from growing industry support and through innovation, we are committed to ensuring Queenslanders can travel in a sustainable way increasingly into the future, no matter what their mode of travel.

 **Mr HART** (Burleigh—LNP) (3.12 pm): I rise to speak on the *Examination of Auditor-General Report 5: 2021-22—Managing Queensland's transition to renewable energy*. What a hoax we have heard from the Minister for Transport! This is the guy who tells us that we are going to have zero-emission buses by 2025 and then he goes and orders a whole lot of diesel buses. He spruiked straightaway about others buying electric buses.

**Mr BAILEY:** Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. This is the guy who said transport would be obsolete in five to 10 years! What credibility has he got?

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms Lui): Members, order! I will get some advice. That is not a point of order.

**Mr HART:** Thank you for your protection, Madam Deputy Speaker—like I need protection from the minister! The minister spruiks about the Gold Coast having electric buses and Brisbane having electric buses. Everybody else except this government is making electric buses. Electric buses are being made on the Gold Coast. Does this government want to order electric buses? No. Who led the way on electric vehicles in this place? The member for Logan and I were the first two members to have electric vehicles here.

**Mr Power:** I don't want to be associated with you!

**Mr HART:** Okay. We will leave that one alone. The whole transition to renewable energy is a hoax. The government keeps telling us that the more renewable energy we put into the system the cheaper electricity prices will become. What has been happening? The exact reverse—the more renewable energy that has been put into the system, forced into the system by the ideological position of this government, the higher electricity prices have gone. This year alone we have had a 56 per cent increase in electricity prices in Queensland. The government can come in here and say that we have the lowest electricity prices in Queensland because they are subsidising it. That is not forcing down the price of electricity; that is only fixing the problem for a minute and a half. What happens next year after the sugar hit that has been provided this year disappears? Who is going to pay the subsidy next year?


**Mr Head:** Queensland taxpayers.

**Mr HART:** I take that interjection. It will be consumers who are faced with higher electricity bills. What we have seen in this transition is privatisation by stealth. The government does not own any renewable energy. It does not own any wind farms. It does not own any solar panels. It does not own anything. It has a power uptake agreement from a whole lot of privately owned companies. Members opposite need to understand that all of this renewable energy costs money. These are private companies that are building renewable energy and then selling it to the government at an inflated price, which of course pushes up the price of electricity.

Then we have their great plan to firm this up. Without firming, renewable energy does not work. Unfortunately, if this government had transitioned in a proper way, thought it through and did it slowly, then we may have had a good outcome. Instead, they rushed it. They rushed in the amount of renewable energy, so much so that our electricity grid is completely unstable. It is unstable. We are going to see brownouts. We are going to see blackouts. We are going to see all sorts of problems. Mark my words!

To fix this, the government say they are going to provide hydro power. They are going to build dams. When was the last time this government ever built a dam? At estimates we heard about these grand plans for dams in the Pioneer-Burdekin area. SunWater have not even looked at these dams. SunWater is responsible for putting together business cases for dams in Queensland. They have been doing this for 30 years. They have dams planned all over Queensland. They are ready to go. All they need is funding. They have not even looked at this! We know from people on the ground there that these dams cannot and will not be built. This is a farce.

How is this government ever going to transition to the renewable energy targets that they expect to without that firming? I can tell you right now that they cannot rely on batteries. They will be way too expensive. All of this ideological stupidity that is going on inside the Labor Party is just leading to higher electricity prices.

 **Mr PERRETT** (Gympie—LNP) (3.18 pm): I rise to speak on the *Examination of Auditor-General Report 5: 2021-22—Managing Queensland's transition to renewable energy*. It examined how the government managed the planned transition to a 50 per cent renewable energy target by 2030 and considered progress towards the target and possible future challenges. The Auditor-General noted, 'There are limited locations with sufficient network conditions for new generation projects across Queensland.'

Gympie has plenty of existing and proposed renewable projects, with solar farms, wind farms and hydro. To meet the government's target, prime agricultural land and valuable forests will be transitioned into renewable projects. Many in the community feel that the government has ridden roughshod over their concerns. Locals claim that they are being ignored about powerlines running through people's backyards, solar farms which are a visual and environmental eyesore, and wind turbines replacing forests becoming the new view from the Great Sandy Strait.

These projects create years of stress and strain and communities should not be dismissed with lip-service consultation. The Auditor-General stated—

... renewable projects take time to plan and build. With only nine years remaining, effective program management is needed to sustain industry momentum.

Those nine years are now less than seven. For three years the government conducted secret discussions about the Forest Wind Farm in the Toolara and Tuan forests. It said nothing until six days before Christmas 2019.

To connect to the Wooroonga substation means more transmission lines running across properties. Consultation was conducted during COVID-19 restrictions over the summer holidays. There was short notice for community meetings. There will be 226 large windmill turbine structures erected in an area with a current plantation licence that was sold in an asset sale by the Bligh Labor government to HQPlantations in 2010 for \$603 million. Those turbines will be clearly visible from the Great Sandy Strait. The government only made an in principle commitment to no net loss of forest production. I am advised that project owners now aim to replace the loss of trees elsewhere. People are sceptical about too many government claims justifying these projects. Parliament was told that the project 'marked the successful completion of the detailed assessment stage' when four days were still left to comment on the developer's EPBC Act submission. The EPBC is why the Traveston Dam failed.

In June I asked the Deputy Premier about the time line and whether planning and environmental assessments for the windfarm had been completed, including public consultation and the completion date. He said the project is still 'dependent on the outcome of environment and social assessments, which are due for completion in late 2024'. After regional mayors raised concerns that renewable energy projects do not deliver promised benefits to regional communities the Deputy Premier announced a review of the regulatory framework for windfarms. Let's hope it is not simply designed to silence community complaints.


Renewable projects need to connect to the grid, resulting in more transmission lines crossing the landscape. The projects in Gympie seem to exist to provide power for residents in the south-east corner who will not have their back yards changed. The Auditor-General told the committee that 'transmission creates challenges for the location of renewable energies because typically electricity depletes the greater the distances'.

The proposed Borumba pumped hydro scheme also causes angst. Many learned about information sessions after the event. People were justifiably worried about high-voltage powerlines running across their properties. Rural landholders were concerned about the spread of declared weeds because energy providers have a poor record of managing these serious issues. Small landholders were worried about the impact on property valuations. The government boasts about the project yet refuses to release the business case and knows it is still subject to state and federal government environmental approvals. Hundreds of hectares of solar panels are on good quality agricultural land simply because it is a convenient spot. The Auditor-General told the committee there needs to be more transparency about how the renewable target is calculated.

It was claimed that the Wooroonga solar farm would power 63,000 homes and save 350,000 tonnes of carbon a year. Some suggested its power would run pumps for the hydro scheme. Yet on behalf of two private companies, earlier this year the government announced that 138,000 tonnes, or 40 per cent of total output, will go towards producing beer. A major hailstorm last December destroyed thousands of solar panels. Their disposal created another serious environmental challenge. The Auditor-General said—

... the end-of-life ... is an issue at an entity level. They have to make good the land ... I am assuming it will come at a cost.

Corridors of transmission lines crisscrossing properties and losing prime agricultural land are the consequences of meeting the government's targets.

 **Mr BOOTHMAN** (Theodore—LNP) (3.23 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the debate on the examination into the Auditor-General's report titled *Managing Queensland's transition to renewable energy*. I would like to highlight the comments made by the members for Gympie and Toowoomba North with regard to the location of these massive solar and wind farms potentially in areas of high environmental significance and also, very importantly, farmlands which produce all of the food and fibre that we need to keep our economy going and feed our population.


Looking at population growth figures, over the next 40 years we expect our population to grow by at least 50 per cent, so the Australian population will be over 40 million people. To feed that massive population increase we need to ensure that prime agricultural land is protected and that it can be used for the strategic cropping of orchards and other such purposes. Therefore, it is critically important that we take necessary measures to ensure this land is protected for these purposes. As we all know, overall the world's population is growing and we are competing in a global market when it comes to valuable food sources. Australia is one of the leading nations in the world when it comes to these food sources, and protecting them from unnecessary solar farms over top of those deep blacksoil plains is certainly very important. I would like to highlight South Australia's environment and food protection areas, which were introduced to protect the vital agricultural land surrounding metropolitan Adelaide from urban encroachment. That could also be emphasised when it comes to solar farms.

I was on the wind turbine committee in the Gympie region, and one of my concerns during that process was the migratory birds in that area. As you know, wind turbines can travel at over 100 kilometres an hour, and a migratory bird flying through one of those will certainly get the raw end of the turbine, so to speak.

**An honourable member** interjected.

**Mr BOOTHMAN:** I take that interjection. It just shows you that we need to be very careful where we place these turbines to ensure these issues do not happen in the future. I would also like to address some of the findings in the committee report. The Auditor-General made five recommendations. In reading the report, one of the interesting things is that diesel generation is not included. In Queensland we have about 1,000 gigawatts of diesel generation, and I find it quite interesting that it has not been included in renewables. That is a major oversight, especially with regard to the debate today about diesel buses that were promised to be EV buses. It emphasises that we need to be a lot smarter when it comes to how we deal with this.

I would like to leave my comments dealing mainly with protecting prime agricultural land. We need to be strategic about this. If we are going to install windfarms and solar panels then we should make sure they are in areas where they will have less of an impact on the environment while, most importantly, protecting our prime agricultural land.

 **Mr POWER** (Logan—ALP) (3.27 pm): It is interesting to hear this debate because it seems like we have lost all of the old Nationals who used to support electricity and industrial development in this state. They used to support the jobs that came with it and they used to support new technology. You can imagine if we were building the new Callide Power Station now they would be saying, 'No, stop the wires! Stop it!' They are actually betraying the communities they claim to represent. They are letting those communities down.

I want to highlight a situation that has been described as a win-win. In a solar farm trial in western New South Wales they collocated solar panels with flocks of merino sheep. The sheep farmers described it as a complete win-win. Why did they do that? It was a win for the solar panels and the sheep, because the sheep kept the grass and weeds between the panels down so as not to obscure the panels, and at the same time the solar panels provided shade for the sheep and grass and helped prevent the soil from drying out.

This will be interesting for these Luddites here who are actually anti-country. They are anti-innovation in farming. The sheep farmer said—

It is actually quite astonishing. Some of the sheep look fantastic.

**Mr Millar:** Where is this from?

**Mr POWER:** Member for Gregory, it is near Parkes. It is good sheep country. The farmer said—

They're growing exponentially and the wool cuts are in the top 5 per cent in the district.

**Ms Leahy** interjected.

**Mr POWER:** That is right. I said it was in New South Wales in my first sentence. Those over there do not want to listen. They are Luddites who are anti-country. They are letting their people down in the country. This article is interesting. Compared to paddocks without panels on them, the stock of sheep was somewhat lighter, but that was made up for with the fact that the merino ewes and wethers that were grazing among the 54 hectares among the solar panels actually had a heavier wool clip.

**Mr HEAD:** Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I ask you to draw the member back to the relevance of this debate.

**Mr POWER:** I certainly will get back to the relevance of the debate. We have been debating the impact of renewable energy, such as solar panels, on agricultural industries, which we have heard repeatedly. Perhaps the good member has not been listening to the debate. It is important that I rebut the issues that were brought up. As I was saying, the farmer said there was a heavier wool clip. He said—

It's relatively clean, without burrs, without dust. There's very, very little contamination of the wool and they're protected from the sun as well.

The capacity of the land meant the wool clip had increased by 25 per cent. That is a great result. As the House knows, I am the grandson of a sheep farmer and we spent lots of time on the sheep farm. This industry is very important to me. We saw that commitment to the wild dog fencing. If we did not have those who were fighting against this tooth and nail, irrationally playing politics with this, we could see agricultural innovation like this in a win-win for agricultural industries. Instead, we have those who are actually not looking to innovation for the future. They are destructive of the very communities they pretend to represent. It is truly only Labor that represents regional areas, and it is certainly only Labor that will deliver a renewable energy future.

When we look at the front bench to my left and the front bench to my right, there is one thing they have in common—that is, there is nobody from the National Party on them. They have absolutely betrayed the National Party and their identity. They are no longer—

**Mr MILLAR:** Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order on relevance. Can you draw the member back to what he is supposed to be talking about?


**Mr POWER:** That is a very good point. I thank the member for Gregory, and I will come back to the point. The point is that only Labor will deliver a renewable future and only Labor is committed to the bush.

**Mr HART:** Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The member for Gregory raised a point of order and I did not hear you rule on that.

**Mr POWER:** My apologies. I conceded.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms Lui): Member for Logan, I ask that you come back to being relevant.

**Mr POWER:** I conceded that I should come back to the point. I was just getting excited. Only Labor will deliver renewable energy for Queensland. Only Labor wants to work with farmers to do innovative things for their industry. I notice the agriculture minister is here. He is the farmers' friend. He backs innovation in farming, unlike those over there who want to tear down the regions.

 **Ms LEAHY** (Warrego—LNP) (3.33 pm): I will be very interested to take that contribution by the member for Logan out to my electorate tomorrow. They will be very interested in Roma to read about what he has said in relation to this transitional renewable energy. Cows do not fit too well underneath solar panels.

**Mr POWER:** Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. This is completely misleading. I said sheep and the trial is about sheep. I am willing to provide details to the member, who is completely ignorant about this. I find it personally insulting and I ask her to withdraw.

**Mr HART:** Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The member for Warrego did not mention the member for Logan. In fact she said that cows do not fit under solar panels, which is true.

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms Lui): I will get advice in silence. Member for Logan, there is no point of order.

**Mr POWER:** Madam Deputy Speaker, I found the member's comments about me personally insulting and I would like them to be withdrawn.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Warrego, the member takes offence. Do you withdraw?

**Ms LEAHY:** I withdraw. I rise to contribute to the debate on report No. 26 of the Transport and Resources Committee titled *Examination of Auditor-General Report 5: 2021-22—Managing Queensland's transition to renewable energy*. I thank the committee members for their consideration of



the Auditor-General's report. The Auditor-General's report made a number of observations about the shortcomings of the government's targets and measures. In June 2017, the Queensland government committed to the renewable energy target that 50 per cent of all energy consumed in Queensland must come from renewable sources, such as sunlight, wind and water, by 2030. The Department of Energy and Public Works is responsible for managing Queensland's energy policy.

The Auditor-General examined the department's management of the transition to renewable energy. The Auditor-General's report outlines the failings of the Palaszczuk Labor government to manage this transition. With all the crisis and chaos coming from the Labor government, they have lost focus on their management of this transition. When it came to measuring the target set by the department, the Auditor-General's report states there is limited information on how the target is measured. The department sets out the renewable energy target and its estimated performance in its annual service delivery statements, but these do not describe how the department treats various elements of this calculation. For example, they do not define how the department includes energy imports or exports or energy from domestic solar and other small-scale renewable generators in the renewable energy calculations. We see some of those small-scale renewable energy generators across regional Queensland.

Most of Queensland's renewable generation is from solar; it is from rooftops. The report states that, when rooftops are combined with large-scale solar generation, this represents about 67 per cent of all renewable generation in Queensland. The timing of that generation from solar does not align with when demand for energy is at its highest.

As per usual, this Labor government like to talk big but they are very scant on detail and delivery. Their big talk does not take into account the impact on local governments and their communities—the roads, the water supplies, the prime agricultural land, the housing pressures and the labour shortages. What will become of this infrastructure at the end of its life? Will it be the responsibility of the landowner? Will it be the responsibility of the actual proponent? Will it be the responsibility of the community? It does not deal with what happens to these projects at the end of their life.

Just last week I was with the member for Callide meeting with the Banana Shire Council and talking to them about how they are managing the impacts of solar and wind projects in their council area. When there is a hail storm or a lightning strike, what happens to the disposal of the solar panels?

**Mr Head:** They'll recycle them in Callide.

**Ms LEAHY:** I will take that interjection. They will recycle them and they are certainly looking at that in Callide because they cannot go to local government landfills. These landfills are not equipped to handle that waste, nor should the ratepayers have to bear the cost of this disposal. They are quite susceptible in many areas to lightning strikes and they are also susceptible to hail storms. They should not go into council landfill. Like the member for Callide said, there should be some way of recycling them. In my electorate tomorrow there is a public information session on how wind projects may affect landholders in the Maranoa Regional Council. At this public meeting there will be discussion on how wind farm approvals are made and how wind farming affects land and council rates. That is going to be a very interesting discussion with that community.

Prior to this meeting, a concerned landholder, Jack, who has been seeking some answers from the state Labor government in relation to the wind and solar projects, wrote that, as a taxpayer, he is entitled to answers. He would like to know how much money does the Queensland state government pay in subsidies to the renewable energy projects each year? More specifically, how much do they pay in subsidies to the wind farm companies per turbine or per megawatt each year, and how much in subsidies does the state government pay to the solar farm companies per megawatt each year?

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

## STATE DEVELOPMENT AND REGIONAL INDUSTRIES COMMITTEE

### Report, Motion to Take Note



**Mr WHITING** (Bancroft—ALP) (3.40 pm): I move—

That the House take note of the State Development and Regional Industries Committee Report No. 33, 57th Parliament, *Examination of Auditor-General Report 9: 2021-22—Regulating dam safety*, tabled on 5 December 2022.

This report is around regulating dam safety. There are a couple of things I want to speak to. Firstly, I commend the report. I commend what the Department of Regional Development, Manufacturing and Water has done as outlined in this report. I will quickly go over how we arrived at this point. This report is a follow-up from the 2021-2022 Auditor-General's report. It looked a year on after some recommendations were made to the department on how they can better improve their processes. It is well worthy to read this out. Originally, the Auditor-General made nine recommendations to the department. The committee found that—

One year on, all 9 recommendations have been implemented in a comprehensive and timely manner. It is clear that the department embraced the opportunity to improve the regulatory framework for dam safety to ensure that public safety risks are being appropriately managed and should be complemented for their diligence.

That sums up what the committee found. Continuing on with the conclusion, we stated—

... the manner in which the department has addressed the Auditor-General's report is to be commended.


One year on, the committee is satisfied that all 9 recommendations have been implemented in a comprehensive and timely manner. It is clear that the department embraced the opportunity to improve the implementation of the regulatory framework ...

I think that really sums up why there should be congratulations given to the department. As we said, they embraced what needed to be done. I will quickly go over some of the specific recommendations they addressed. For example, recommendation 1 was to improve the implementation and application of the regulatory framework—that was completed. Recommendation 2 was to revise the acceptable flood capacity guidelines—that was completed. Recommendation 3 was to review frequencies for conducting risk assessments—that was completed. Recommendation 4 was to maximise the engineering expertise available—that was completed. Recommendation 5 was to revise and document its process for selecting the number and priority of dam site audits. It goes on. As all of these recommendations have been addressed, as I said, I think we should compliment the department. We will ask the minister to pass on the compliments to the department for what they have achieved.

The important matter we should take from this—and it is very clear, after witnessing the events in Libya this week and the failure of the two dams in Derna and the impact it has had on that particular city all the way over on the other side of the world—is that it is very clear that the world is entering an unimagined time of change from climate change and climate risk. It is very clear we are entering a phase of extended dry periods to come. However, when the rain events come, they can be quite large and catastrophic. This places huge stress on the dams we have in place. Certainly, our thinking needs to involve a re-engineering or a re-imagining of what we do with dams and apply that to Queensland.

As is said in the report, there are 101 dams that are regulated by the department. A lot of those are private and there are many to oversee. What is very clear from this report is that the department is committed to that oversight.

I will conclude by saying that we talk about water planning a lot in this place. Reading through this report again, it is very clear that water planning now is inextricably linked with climate change planning. We cannot plan for water security without planning for the effects of climate change. It is really important. Where will the water fall? How often will it fall? How much water are we looking at coming through? Basically, can we catch it and can we catch it safely? These are really important matters, I believe, to water planning for the future, but you cannot look at water planning for the future without fully embracing climate change science and climate change predictions. To safely manage dams and water into the future, we need to ensure climate change planning is at the centre of everything we do in this particular field. I commend the report to the House.


 **Mr HART** (Burleigh—LNP) (3.45 pm): I rise to speak to the Auditor-General's report No. 9 of 2021-22, *Regulating dam safety*. The committee looked at this in December 2022 and we are now, in September 2023, only getting to talk to this report now, so I had to go back and actually read this report again to see exactly what it was that we were looking at here, which is dam safety. As the chair of the committee has already said, the Auditor-General did raise nine recommendations. I think the chair of the committee skimmed over those nine recommendations that the Auditor-General raised. To the department's credit, they have implemented those recommendations and fixed some of the problems. However, when you read the Auditor-General's nine recommendations, there were some pretty serious recommendations in there that need to be fixed.

I have been on an iteration of this committee since 2012 with a short break in between. I am back on it again now, and we keep seeing the same Auditor-General reports. You can keep hearing the same speeches from me about us seeing the same Auditor-General reports over and over again. I am glad to see that the department has addressed those nine very important recommendations that the Auditor-General made.

The committee did make one recommendation, and that is that the bulk water providers and relevant local governments add independent audit and risk management committees. We have talked recently about other Auditor-General reports that highlighted this issue; that a lot of local governments and some of our utilities do not in fact have a risk and audit committee in place and therefore they are not looking at the problems that could exist in the future and implementing ways of fixing those in advance.

The other big issue that I have seen in our water entities over a number of years now is that they are possibly somewhat vulnerable to cyber attacks. That is something that we all need to keep a very close eye on. I know from personal experience, I am seeing more and more cyber attacks on my iPhone every day, so I can imagine how our utilities are having to deal with these sorts of matters on a larger and larger scale. It is a major issue that these utilities need to look at and get right, I must say.

With that, I would like to thank our committee for the work that it has done here and especially praise our secretariat because they are the ones that do the majority of the leg work in this and pull all the reports together. Margaret Telford has joined our committee now and she has been doing a fantastic job for the last couple of months while Stephanie is taking a seat up the front there at the table. I really praise them. They do a wonderful job. Without them, we could not do the work that we do. Thank you.

 **Mr MADDEN** (Ipswich West—ALP) (3.49 pm): I wish to make a contribution with regard to report No. 33 of the State Development and Regional Industries Committee titled *Examination of Auditor-General Report 9: 2021-22—Regulating dam safety*, tabled in December 2022. The committee's report details the State Development and Regional Industries Committee's examination of the department's response to the Auditor-General's report No. 9 of 2021-22 titled *Regulating dam safety*. The committee found that the Department of Regional Development, Manufacturing and Water needs to improve its regulatory approach to ensure that Queensland dams owners are monitoring, assessing and responding to dam safety risks in line with their legislated responsibilities.

The Auditor-General's report contained nine recommendations and all nine recommendations have been implemented by the department. These recommendations put in place a regulatory framework for dam safety to ensure that public safety risks are being appropriately managed. The committee made one recommendation, however, which was that government entities such as bulk water providers and relevant local governments be required to add independent audit and risk management committees to their governance structures.

Water security is the key to the prosperity of the Queensland economy, but this requires regulation of dam safety, which in Queensland is regulated by the Water Supply (Safety and Reliability) Act. The purpose of this regulatory framework is to minimise the risk to the public living and working downstream of dams resulting from dam failure. In Queensland there are 111 referable dams regulated by the Water Supply (Safety and Reliability) Act. Referable dams are dams where two or more people would be at risk if the dam were to fail. Dam owners of the 111 referable dams include state owned entities like Seqwater and Sunwater—which own around half of the referable dams—as well as local government councils, mining companies and large pastoral companies.

The Queensland dam safety regulatory framework places the responsibility for monitoring, assessing and responding to potential dam safety risks on the dam owner. This regulatory framework created by the Water Supply (Safety and Reliability) Act is enforced by the Department of Regional Development, Manufacturing and Water to ensure dam owners are properly undertaking their requirements as set out in the legislation. The department also sets dam safety conditions for each of the 111 referable dams. To enforce the act, the department uses a range of regulatory tools to achieve compliance including education and informal and formal warnings. Penalty infringement notices and prosecutions are also available. However, the Auditor-General's report found that, while the department has the key design elements of an effective regulatory framework in place, it is not effectively or consistently applying some important elements of this framework.


The audit focused on three areas of compliance: collecting dam safety information from owners, identifying and managing risks, and dealing with noncompliance. As I have indicated, the Auditor-General made nine recommendations which have now been implemented in full by the department. The Department of Regional Development, Manufacturing and Water provided a detailed response to the committee on each of the nine recommendations and stated its ongoing commitment to the regulatory safety framework.

In closing, I would like to thank my fellow members of the State Development and Regional Industries Committee. I particularly thank Margaret Telford, the chief of the secretariat. I also thank the other members of the committee secretariat, Hansard and the submitters. I commend the report titled *Examination of Auditor-General Report 9: 2021-22—Regulating dam safety* to the House.

**Mr SMITH:** Madam Deputy Speaker—

**Mr PERRETT:** Madam Deputy Speaker—

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms Lui): I call the member for Bundaberg.

 **Mr SMITH** (Bundaberg—ALP) (3.54 pm): Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker. That is one for yesterday. I am very happy to rise to my feet rather swiftly to contribute to—

**Mr Perrett:** I hope it is worthwhile.

**Mr SMITH:** It is always more worthwhile hearing from a member of the Palaszczuk Labor government than a member of the LNP opposition. It is always better to hear from a member of the government—a government that is making sure we are investing in water infrastructure and water security and a government that is investing in the future of our growers and the future safety of our people.

**Mr Head** interjected.

**Mr SMITH:** How wonderful is it to hear that the member for Callide has dragged his knuckles into the chamber today to interject. Here he is. He wants to talk about Paradise Dam, which does sit in his electorate. However, members opposite have never once actually stood up and fought for the safety of people in the lower catchment of Paradise Dam or the people of Bundaberg. It is very clear because it has come about through the Auditor-General's report. I am very happy to talk about restoring Paradise Dam and rebuilding it because, as we know, the Auditor-General report made it very clear that over 40,000 people could be in danger if that dam were to fail. I repeat: 40,000 people. Maybe the LNP does not value the lives of Queenslanders. We know that because when it comes to their health policy it has been revealed they will cut entitlements and sack nurses. We know that. However, should Paradise Dam fail 40,000 lives would be at risk.

Let's talk about what the LNP's plan was to fix it. Back on 14 April 2020 they were saying they could fix Paradise Dam for \$25 million. This is a project that we are restoring at a cost of \$1.2 billion.

**Mr Head** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms Lui): Member for Callide, order.

**Mr SMITH:** I would be embarrassed if I was the member for Callide not just because I was the member for Callide but because he is making ridiculous statements. They think that spending only \$25 million could restore a water infrastructure project that holds 300,000 megalitres of water.

**Mr Head** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. Member for Callide, I have given you numerous warnings throughout the day. You are now warned under the standing orders.

**Mr SMITH:** You need \$25 million to fix the problems that the member for Callide has going on. Let me tell honourable members that—

**Mr HEAD:** Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I take personal offence and I ask the member to withdraw.

**Mr SMITH:** I withdraw. This was a press release on 14 April 2020 when the then leader of the LNP, Deb Frecklington, said—

It makes no sense for the Labor Government to spend a \$100 million to lower the Paradise Dam wall when we have independent experts saying it can be fixed for \$25 million ...

Of course that was not right, because that \$25 million was actually for singular materials when multiples were needed to stabilise the dam. It was actually \$25 million times the number of anchors needed in the spillway. Also—and this is the best part—when you go through and read the figures, it was actually US\$25 million, so it was a little bit more. That is okay; the LNP do not want to talk about that just like they do not want to talk about the 2020 election. We all know that.

What is very important is that we do have strong regulations around dam safety. It is very important because there are a number of government owned dams monitored by Sunwater. I believe there are about 22 dams or water infrastructure projects that are monitored by Sunwater and also a number by Seqwater. It is important to ensure that our departments are checking up on their emergency action plans and that those emergency action plans are being submitted.

During our committee briefings with the department I asked questions about Lenthalls Dam, Fraser Coast Regional Council, Cloncurry Shire Council and also Brisbane City Council and delayed the submission of their emergency action plans. In fact, the Brisbane City Council's submission for the Forest Lake Dam was two years, two months and 27 days overdue.

That is exactly what you get when you have an LNP council. This is why everyone in regional Queensland knows that you cannot trust the LNP when it comes to water safety or water infrastructure projects. The Brisbane City Council is two years, two months and 27 days overdue on its emergency action plan. It is absolutely outrageous. It is only Labor that is going to look after the bush and all of Queensland.


Debate, on motion of Mr Smith, adjourned.

## WATER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

### Second Reading

Resumed from p. 2728, on motion of Mr Butcher—

That the bill be now read a second time.

 **Ms LEAHY** (Warrego—LNP) (4.00 pm): I rise to contribute to the debate on the Water Legislation Amendment Bill 2022. I thank the members of the State Development and Regional Industries Committee for their consideration of the bill. The primary objective of the bill is to amend the Water Act to establish a regulatory framework for implementing Queensland's strengthened policy for measuring the take of non-urban water. The bill includes amendments to the Water Act, the Water Supply (Safety and Reliability) Act, and the South-East Queensland Water (Distribution and Retail Restructuring) Act to improve the operational efficiency of these acts.

The bill will amend the Water Act to make minor operational and technical amendments to the framework for the managing of underground water which is administered by the Department of Environment and Science. I place on record that I support the amendments proposed by the shadow minister for water, Deb Frecklington. These amendments will clarify that stock and domestic use from overland flow is excluded from metering across the entirety of the state. This is because there are significant costs to these water users; however, their water take is low and, therefore, they are very low-risk users.

I seek the minister's advice regarding his assurances around stock and domestic entitlements. Will these assurances extend to local governments, who often have water supply entitlements for domestic supply? Will they have to have telemetry and water metering for their domestic supply? Many do have licences for that—even in the Murray-Darling Basin—and it is particularly important that they have access to that water.

The bill proposes to expand existing arrangements to broaden the type of equipment and devices that may be required to ensure takes of water can be measured. This includes overland flow. The bill allows for the installation of telemetry in some areas. In most situations it is a simple thing to measure and a measurement device, such as a meter, can be used to measure the volume of water taken—for example, where the water is pumped directly from a river or an aquifer. In other situations, measuring the take is more complex and requires a combination of different measurement devices or methods to calculate the amount of water that is taken as part of the measurement system.

New section 217E, 'Using measurement devices', clarifies the measurement requirements that apply to a holder of the relevant authorisation in relation to using a measurement device. The measurement device, for example, a water meter, must be attached to the works through which the water is being taken under the authorisation. Depending on the specific set-up of the works and how the information about the water will be reported, this requirement may mean that both a meter and a telemetry device will need to be attached to the works. There are considerable areas in my electorate that have overland flow which water harvesters use and harvest into storages. I would be interested if the minister can advise how many water entitlement holders will have to have multiple devices—meters and additional telemetry devices—in the Murray-Darling Basin section of Queensland. Has the government done any modelling on how many devices will be needed, given the government understands that there are a little more than 100 overland flow entitlements in Queensland? Further, can the government advise how many devices a Commonwealth water entitlement holder will have to install in the Queensland section of the Murray-Darling Basin? That is particularly important not only to the water management plan but also to the entire Murray-Darling Basin.

I wish to bring to the attention of the House important concerns raised in the Border Rivers Food & Fibre submission to the bill. They are very aware of particularly complex licensing arrangements, both in Queensland and in New South Wales, because they deal with two different sets of water entitlements. They state that, in their experience, they would like to highlight some of the risks to the current implementation plan in the practical delivery of metering in the proposed time frames. In the New South Wales experience, there physically are not enough approved meters available on the market to be installed, with a significant number on long-term backorder in New South Wales—before we add in the new demand from Queensland.

There is also a shortage of qualified people to install what meters do become available. Those people are required to travel out to remote areas because the Murray-Darling Basin in Queensland is not a small area; it is a very large geographical area. Due to the ongoing flooding issues—we would love a few of those at the moment—there are also physical constraints involved in accessing some of the pump sites to install the meters.

They would flag that there is a risk to the telemetry requirement. Border Rivers Food & Fibre explained that in New South Wales they have had the experience that telemetry just will not work in some locations because there is no connection to the telecommunications that are required. That happens quite regularly, unfortunately, across the Queensland Murray-Darling Basin area. A straightforward exemption process should be instituted as part of any policy. I ask the minister: in circumstances where telemetry will not work, has an exemption been considered as part of this legislation?

The amendment to section 23A refers to the reviewing and changing of service provider registration details. Clause 57 amends section 23A of the Water Supply (Safety and Reliability) Act to make it clear that service providers must give the regulator notice of a review conducted of their registration details, including whether or not the details have changed, to ensure information is kept up to date, within reasonable time frames.

I note that the submission of the Central Highlands Regional Council raises concerns with clause 57. In their view, it proposes to require all service providers—including local government service providers—to provide the regulator with an annual notice even if there has been no change to their service provider registration details. This creates an unnecessary administrative burden on the local government workforce, who at this time in that sector are experiencing a 35 per cent vacancy rate. Councils submit that it introduces unnecessary red tape. Perhaps the minister may be able to explain to the House and to all councils in Queensland the purpose of this additional red tape and how Queensland local governments were consulted in relation to this change. Does increasing this red tape increase operational efficiency?


I now turn to some other aspects of operational efficiency. I have been contacted by one of my constituents who is trying to build a ring tank in the Maranoa Regional Council area of the Queensland Murray-Darling Basin. After what he has gone through, I did not have the heart to tell him that this legislation will probably increase his costs a bit more. His ring tank will be 1,000 megalitres and will supply centre pivots so that the family business can become drought resilient by growing their own stockfeed. Keep in mind that all this family is trying to do is droughtproof their business. Unfortunately, due to the Labor government, they will not get any drought freight subsidy, which is why they are so keen to do their own on-farm droughtproofing and grow their own stockfeed.

First, they put in an application to the State Assessment and Referral Agency, SARA. After taking \$14,000, SARA told them to go to the Maranoa Regional Council. The council then told them to go back to SARA. Now they are on their way back to SARA, and it will cost them another \$25,000 just to re-lodge their application. Nearly \$40,000 later, they still do not even have an approval to build their ring tank, let alone the chance to droughtproof their property. When family businesses are trying to droughtproof they should be encouraged. The process should be streamlined. Governments should not be trying to clip the ticket to this extent, when family farming businesses are simply trying to establish their drought resilience.

This bill deals a lot with the Queensland section of the Murray-Darling Basin. I have some further questions, given the announcement from the federal Labor government about their ambitious world-leading initiative for water across Australia. I table for the interest of the House a media release from the federal Labor government.

*Tabled paper:* Media release, dated 27 April 2023, from the Minister for Indigenous Australians, Hon. Linda Burney MP, titled 'Delivering water ownership for First Nations' [\[1341\]](#).

In the Queensland section of the Murray-Darling we are dealing with a water system that is fully allocated and one that will now be fully measured. Given the proposals from the federal government, can the minister advise if First Nations will have ownership, access and management rights to existing allocated water and will they have these rights to the Commonwealth water entitlement held in the Murray-Darling Basin? Can the minister advise how communities in the Queensland portion of the basin will be consulted in relation to these proposals by the federal government? These are important questions that the state government must answer given the intentions of its federal government counterparts. In fact, the legislation that we are debating today relates to the Murray-Darling Basin and the minister needs to put on record very clearly what the intentions are and what the consultation will be, because my constituents in the Murray-Darling Basin and my water users, which encompass most of the Queensland portion of the Murray-Darling Basin, would like to know answers to these questions. I look forward to the minister's responses in his summing-up.

 **Mr McCALLUM** (Bundamba—ALP) (4.10 pm): Madam Deputy Speaker Lui, I seek the indulgence of both you and the House for a moment in relation to a relatively urgent matter that I have only just become aware of. It relates to the debate of committee report No. 26 of this parliament where in my contribution I referenced the nuclear energy policy in Queensland. I have subsequently become aware of material, including a media report, that I was unaware of at the time of my contribution. I want to now make it clear that I was referencing Queensland LNP federal members—something that I mentioned during my contribution to that debate but want to reiterate now to avoid any misinterpretation and to remove any possible doubt. Thank you.

Turning to the Water Legislation Amendment Bill 2022, a thorough and modern water measurement policy to improve the way that water is measured and reported in Queensland is absolutely essential in ensuring that our precious water resources are well managed not only now but into the future. The amendments in this bill focus mainly on three key areas around amendments to the Water Act in relation to water measurement policy. There are also some amendments to the Water Act around streamlining administration and amendments to the Water Supply (Safety and Reliability) Act and the South-East Queensland Water (Distribution and Retail Restructuring) Act.

Access to water is a key economic driver that delivers growth and delivers jobs, particularly for our regional communities. Knowing how much water is taken is essential for sustainable water resource management and ensures that water users receive their fair share and in accordance with their entitlements. We need to have appropriate systems and processes in place to ensure that water users can access their water resources and that they can manage the use of their water resources in a sustainable way for the benefit of Queensland and them as users. Accurately measuring water take will benefit communities, industry and the environment through transparency and increase the assurance that water is being appropriately shared and managed. It will provide entitlement holders with reliable evidence to assist in meeting any regulatory obligations. These are all part of the amendments which are being introduced as part of this bill which will deliver improved sustainable water resource management right across Queensland.


I will turn to the section of the bill that relates to dam safety. The bill contains amendments to ensure emergency action plans for our 114 referable dams are reviewed and approved well ahead of the start of each wet season. The changes define the required date a review must be completed by and expands and allows for this date to be prescribed by a regulator via a notice. This supports better preparedness ahead of the wet season to allow for a rapid response to unforeseen circumstances such as extreme weather events by dam owners and operators and by governments. On behalf of a community that was absolutely devastated by the 2022 floods, we know all too well that you cannot be too prepared for extreme weather events. You cannot be too prepared for the impacts of these extreme weather events. I want to pay tribute to the resilience and strength of the Bundamba community, particularly the residents and flood victims in suburbs such as Goodna and Bundamba for the strength and resilience that they have shown since the devastation that was wrought on our local community at the beginning of last year. We have come a long way and a lot of that has happened under the Resilient Homes Fund, but it will stay with so many for a lifetime but we walk forward together.

In preparation for last summer's forecast La Nina, Wivenhoe Dam's temporary full supply level was lowered temporarily to 80 per cent and in doing so the Palaszczuk Labor government reduced water bills for all South-East Queensland households connected to the SEQ water grid by \$55. That is a key help when it comes to providing cost-of-living relief for water users in South-East Queensland. That assistance equated to the use of 13,200 litres of free water for approximately 1.38 million homes. Queenslanders can rely on Labor governments and can rely on the Palaszczuk Labor government to deliver secure and sustainable water supplies right throughout Queensland, because it was Labor that

delivered the South East Queensland Water Grid in response to the millennium drought. We delivered climate resilient infrastructure like the Gold Coast Desalination Plant and the Western Corridor Recycled Water Scheme. These are vital assets that have provided and will continue to provide water security in South-East Queensland.

Importantly, we have kept these assets in public hands. We also have billions in new water infrastructure projects underway like the Toowoomba to Warwick pipeline, the Fitzroy to Gladstone pipeline and the Paradise Dam rebuild. With regard to the Paradise Dam rebuild, I want to pay tribute to the advocacy of the member for Bundaberg, who is doing an absolutely brilliant job on behalf of his community. That is a project that is being delivered in partnership between two Labor governments. That is in stark contrast to those opposite. When last in government, the only thing that those opposite did when it came to water infrastructure was to can a dam—the Connors River Dam—and prepare publicly owned dams for sale. In opposition the LNP at the last election tried to pull a bit of a swiftie—a water infrastructure hoax—on Queenslanders through its notorious fake Bradfield scheme—a \$15 billion unfunded hoax that was ultimately rejected by the people of Queensland. Indeed, an expert panel that was led by Professor Ross Garnaut conducted a year-long study into the Bradfield scheme and last year made its final report, which concluded that the scheme was not feasible. The expert panel included former Farmers' Federation CEO Dr Georgina Davis and James Cook University's Professor Allan Dale. This independent panel found that the scheme's costs far exceeded its benefits, so it recommended exploring better options for using water to contribute to regional development.

It was a thorough investigation that provided conclusive and sound explanations of why there are better options than the fake Bradfield scheme. There we have it. The LNP's signature water policy had a couple of problems: it had no money, it did not work and hardly anybody voted for it. The Palaszczuk Labor government will keep on delivering water security throughout Queensland. The measures that are contained in this bill, like improved water measurement, will deliver reliable and sustainable water right across Queensland. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr HEAD** (Callide—LNP) (4.19 pm): In his contribution, the member for Bundamba spoke about a \$15 billion unfunded hoax. I was a bit confused because I thought the multibillion dollar unfunded hoax was the Pioneer pumped hydro project, which is his government's policy. Unfortunately, when it comes to water security and dams, the dams that the Labor government propose do not even help water security because they are for energy storage.

I thank the committee for their work on the report on the bill. I especially thank the deputy chair and good member for Lockyer, Jim McDonald, and the member for Burleigh for their contributions. I appreciate it when metro members such as the member for Burleigh really try hard to understand the plight of people in the bush and how tough it can get. Those members ask a lot of questions in the committee process when it comes to legislation such as this because not only do they want to understand; they ask so many questions that they do get to understand a lot of the issues facing rural and regional Queensland. I wish I could say that about the member for Bundaberg who is also a committee member. From parts of his contribution it is clear that he does not want to understand the issues that people in rural and regional communities are facing. He certainly is a blight on the people of Bundaberg and I know they cannot wait to sack him at the next election.

When I am talking about a lot of rural issues I note the blank looks I get from those opposite. In their contributions on this bill they have talked about the LNP and our commitment to the bush. The LNP is absolutely committed to the bush. We back the bush every day of the week. Time and time again, we see a failure from the Palaszczuk Labor government when it comes to the bush, when it comes to rural issues and certainly when it comes to water security.

**Mr Fumer** interjected.

**Mr HEAD:** I take the interjection from the minister for agriculture. Maybe he should spend less time interjecting and more time fixing the problem that is fire ants. Maybe along the way he could learn how to hold a fishing rod.

We know that water security is incredibly important in Queensland. The LNP certainly knows that and I know the shadow minister for water, the member for Nanango, knows it as well. This bill relates to changes that are required under the Murray-Darling Basin Plan. I want to talk about the history I have learned from talking to farmers and from not only living and growing up in the Murray-Darling Basin but also having ventured out to communities such as Dirranbandi and Saint George, and of course communities in the electorate of Warrego. The member for Warrego made a great contribution to the debate on this bill in support of her community.



Under the water buyback scheme, in communities such as Dirranbandi the government of the day compensated the farmers from whom they were buying the water. The problem with a water buyback scheme is that when you pay the farmer to stop irrigating you get less production on that agricultural land. When a farmer is producing less, they buy less stuff and they employ fewer people. In communities such as Dirranbandi and Saint George, as well as other irrigation communities involved in the water buyback scheme, overnight businesses in town lost half their business but they did not receive a single cent from the government. This is incredibly important when the federal government is talking about more water buybacks. It is clear that this will hurt our communities and it needs to be done right. If you are going to buy water back from a community, do not just compensate the farmer, compensate the contractors who are losing their jobs, the rural suppliers, the cafes and everyone else who will miss out.

This bill is intended to assist in ensuring that we have water security in Queensland and, of course, I have been talking about the importance of water security. One thing that we do have concerns about is the cost of the implementation of the changes outlined in the bill. We already know how the government has stripped away property rights in this state, without adequate compensation in a lot of instances. Again, unfortunately this adds to that. If we genuinely want to improve water security in Queensland, let's look at building more dams to provide water security in Queensland and let's add Nathan dam to the list. Across Callide we could build plenty of weirs that would significantly improve water security in the state.

I note that this bill has taken a fair while to draft. I believe it was questions from the member for Nanango in estimates last year that prompted this bill coming before the House because, as I understand it, the Minister for Water has been the minister for some time but this is the first time he has decided to bring a water bill to the House. It is great to see that the member for Gladstone has finally drafted a bill on water and put it before the House. However, it has taken a long time. It has taken the LNP shadow minister kicking them into gear. That is what we see time and time again with this government. They refuse to act until they are forced to do so.

**Mr Butcher** interjected.

**Mr HEAD:** We saw that with the Gladstone maternity ward bypass. I take that interjection from the member for Gladstone. Maybe he did not bring a water bill before the House sooner because he was under a bit of pressure due to his own government's failings with the Gladstone maternity ward.

I note that, during her contribution to the debate, the member for Pine Rivers had a good go at the member for Nanango. The funny thing about that is that the shadow water minister was talking about how long the bill has taken to come into the House. It miraculously appeared only after she asked questions at estimates last year. The member for Pine Rivers said words to the effect that estimates was 'only a couple of months ago'. I encourage the member for Pine Rivers to read *Hansard* and check her facts before she comes in here and tries to make fun of members inside this chamber. She said that the member for Nanango needs to catch up. It was clear from her interjections that she is the one who needed to catch up.

**Ms BOYD:** Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise on a matter of privilege suddenly arising. The member for Callide is directly misrepresenting my statements. I will be writing to you—

**Mrs Frecklington:** Well, write to the Speaker.

**Ms BOYD:** As is appropriate, member for Nanango, I am flagging it with the Deputy Speaker right now. I will be writing to you on these matters and seek your further guidance.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Lui):** Member, you have the call.

**Mr HEAD:** I now turn to some of the submissions made on the bill. I note that in 2020-21 farmers in Queensland generated around \$8.4 billion in on-farm value of production. Just imagine how much better those figures would be if we had better water security and farmers were not having to fight biosecurity pests such as fire ants because of the failures of this government.

In their submission, AgForce stated—

AgForce are concerned about the costs involved in the proposed measurement requirements—these must be feasible within the context of the affected business and the outcome intended to be delivered

They also noted that there is a limited number of registered professional hydrologists in Queensland and this is a limit to cost and time effective implementation.

QFF represents more than 13,000 primary producers throughout Queensland through their member organisations. A significant number of farmers in Callide are represented by the QFF through industries such as cotton, pork and cane. They note—


Water is an all-critical input for the agricultural sector. QFF recognises that water metering is a necessity for the fair and equitable use of a high valued resource, and that the efficient management of water use should reduce costs to water users and suppliers and result in sustainable management of the water resource. However, it is also essential that the agricultural sector be able to reasonably comply with any regulatory requirements associated with the management and measurement of water. In particular, the cost of compliance should not result in agricultural businesses becoming non-viable.

The bill contains some changes to dam safety spillways. One thing that I note that is absolutely ludicrous is that, under dam safety laws in this country, you can have a dam in Queensland with absolutely no catchment so it only gets topped up by direct rainfall over the surface area of the dam yet it is required to have a spillway. That adds a significant cost to dams. It is something that even pumped hydro dams have to abide by. Let's look at some good legislation to get that fixed.

The shadow water minister, the member for Nanango, has foreshadowed some amendments to this bill to ensure stock and domestic water from overland flow is exempt from all of this legislation.

**Mr Butcher** interjected.

**Mr HEAD:** Even though we have been told that it is—I take that interjection from the Minister for Water—the best way to ensure something is exempt is to put it in legislation and not just say that it is. I encourage government members to support our foreshadowed amendments. On another note, we call on the minister to commit to a full review of this legislation after five years to ensure these measures are working and are not ineffective and costly. I urge everyone to support the member for Nanango's foreshadowed amendments.

 **Mr POWER** (Logan—ALP) (4.30 pm): I am glad that the Minister for the Olympics is in the chamber, because at least the last three minutes of that speech was a serious pitch. If we were to create a new Olympic event for boring the crowd, this bloke would be a gold medallist! I do not know whether we want to create new Olympic events, but we could boost the medal tally with the member for Callide!

I wish to speak to the Water Legislation Amendment Bill because water is vitally important all over our state. We obviously live in the driest continent on earth, so the careful management of our water is vitally important. As many members know, my grandfather's cousins worked on irrigated land. They were really vital members of their local water boards and knew how important it was to get water management right. They especially valued equity in the distribution of water. So often we would be going along the irrigation canals and come across a farmer who had propped open their gates in order to get water that they were not genuinely measuring or paying for. That is why this is so important. We do not want to see that. We do not want to see a farmer taking from other farmers. We want to see it done right. That is what this legislation is about.

Another deep concern for farmers is the loss of water through concealed leaks. The loss of water in either urban or farming areas is a loss to us all in our economy. It is really important that concealed leaks are capped and contained. The recent changes put in place, with the foresight of the minister, to deal with the cost of living have meant that people with concealed leaks on their properties can take rectification action and be paid back if they did not know about it and the proper process is followed. I mention a constituent of mine, Margaret. Margaret had been quite sick, so she had been away from her house. There was a leak on her property that was draining straight into the creek. That meant she was losing quite a lot of water and incurring quite high costs. Through the new concealed leak policy we are able to make a difference for families like hers who are suddenly struck with a large, unexpected cost-of-living issue. This is the type of the thing that the Palaszczuk Labor government and the minister are focused on—reducing the cost of living for something unexpected and unable to be controlled.

I also want to speak about the vitally important Wyaralong Dam, built in 2011. At that point, many in the LNP said that it would never fill. They said with great certainty that this boondoggle would never be filled. Mark McArdle said it would never be filled. When the floods came in 2011—within three weeks of it being finished—it was completely filled to overflowing. As a resident downstream of the Teviot Brook, which feeds into the Logan River, I can say that the dam probably paid for itself in the first three weeks in terms of flood mitigation.

Of course, the Liberal National Party has never built a dam. Neither the Liberals nor the Nationals have probably built a dam since Fairbairn. They hate dams. They talk a lot about dams but do they actually build them? Further, when we were building Wyaralong they complained and fought against it. The first thing they said was that it would never fill. The second thing they said was that the water would never be useable for drinking.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order on relevance to the bill before the House which talks about non-urban overland flow of water in the Murray-Darling Basin catchment.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Kelly): Member, I will listen carefully. I would like you to demonstrate that the point you are making is relevant to the long title of the bill.

**Mrs Frecklington:** Do you want me to hand you the green?

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** No, but I want you to stop interjecting.

**Mr POWER:** I wanted to lead into that in terms of the principles in this bill about measuring water and about how important it is, wherever you are—in this case in this catchment but in all catchments—to have the right science about water metering and to understand where overland flow is and how much water is in our canals, channels and riparian areas. This is vital to understanding how our water system works.


I have an understanding of this because of the water that flows down the Teviot Brook and goes into the weir at Cedar Grove. Now we can do releases from Wyaralong into Cedar Grove Weir. We know that we have capacity, then, to put in a water treatment plant and for it to be part of our grid, because we have thought ahead. As I said, then minister McArdle fought against this at every single turn. He did not like the water meters that were put in place to measure the flow into those dams. He also said that it would never fill. He said that it would never be used. He said that it was impossible to be used because the water was too hard. We know now that there is a plan to have a water treatment plant to take water out of Cedar Grove Weir and use it in the South East Queensland Water Grid. It is ready for us because of the foresight we had in that period but also because we have a minister who is focused on our water needs.

As I said, water metering is a vitally important part of this bill—to understand our overland flow, the nature of those catchments and the use of irrigation. That reminds me of the floods we have endured. I want to recognise the people in my area, in both the Greater Logan catchment—that goes up to Boonah and Beaudesert—and the Albert River catchment, which goes into the Scenic Rim and Range national parks. Those floods create an enormous impact and we need the right science, just as we need it in the Channel Country and in other catchments, in order to understand how water works. That means that we are getting prepared. I urge all residents across the state, but especially in the Logan area, to get ready for floods and to google ‘get ready Queensland’. The department has prepared a checklist for households to be safe in the case of floods.

The metering we are putting in place through this legislation will give a whole group of residents a better understanding of overland flow, the impacts and the rain events and how that will affect their safety—just as the measuring on the Logan and Albert rivers and Teviot Brook makes an enormous difference for the residents of the Logan. That is one of the reasons I support this bill.

There is only one party that truly thinks ahead when it comes to Queensland’s water security, and that is the Australian Labor Party. We made a commitment to build Wyaralong Dam. Those opposite fought it at every turn. They fought to stop it because they said it would never fill. They fought to stop it because they said the water could never be used. They fought it at every turn. It is a vital part of our future water security. It is there ready to be tapped into. We invested in the Cedar Grove Weir. This is right next to Flagstone and Jimboomba. It is connected to the water grid to ensure water security. We had the foresight.

I personally think that the Nationals will never build another dam. They have not built one since the 1980s. They talk a lot about building dams, but they never build one. It is Labor that builds dams. Labor invests in both urban and rural water infrastructure. The Nationals will never build another dam because they have not built one this century.

 **Mr LISTER** (Southern Downs—LNP) (4.40 pm): I proudly represent the electorate of Southern Downs which is entirely within the northern basin of the Murray-Darling system. When I talk about this dam—I have dams on my mind; I will get to that. When I speak to this bill, I will be speaking with the authentic voice of people who have skin in the game when it comes to these things.

Southern Downs produces a great deal of food and fibre through irrigation from the MacIntyre, the Severn, the Condamine rivers and others. I was very pleased to see that the Border Rivers Food & Fibre group that represents many of the producers in my electorate and also our neighbours in New South on the other side of the MacIntyre and Dumaresq rivers made a submission. They, like others, had some complaints about this bill. They are broadly supportive—like AgForce and the opposition—

of the intention to, as properly as possible, manage this limited resource and do that through measuring the take of water from the system. But a lot comes down to the regulations which we have not seen at this stage.

One point AgForce made is that the bill will provide for the chief executive to use any means necessary to further the interests of the act. That is a very broad ranging authority that is granted to the CEO—a non-elected person. AgForce rightly took umbrage with that and said that there needs to be consultation along the lines of exactly how that will be used and what such a broad ranging power would be applied to.

A number of speakers, particularly on this side of the House, have expressed concern about metering and meters and some of the practical difficulties in establishing a metering system in the time that is available. We are supposed to see the validation of meters before the end of this year. I know that in my electorate of Southern Downs we simply do not have the availability of contractors and qualified personnel to conduct a full-scale rollout across so many different properties in order to embrace metering as required by this bill. I am obviously very keen to see that looked at. I would ask the government to be realistic about that. I will have more to say about timings and rollouts and my experience with departments in the past as I get into my speech.

There is also the question of metering the stock and domestic usage of landholders. The reason we have always had stock and domestic usage unmetered is that it has always been seen as a relatively low-risk take of water. It has been broadly accepted that everybody is entitled to have water at their place and to water their animals. We are not talking about taking water for irrigating crops or for aquaculture or something like that. We are talking about water for flushing the toilet at home, for washing the car, for giving the cattle a drink. Like many of this bill's stakeholders, I object to the idea that that water would be metered. I suspect that the metering of it would lead to the obvious conclusion one day that it be charged for, and that is something that definitely scares the people in my neck of the woods. I will certainly be supporting the amendments to be introduced by my honourable friend the member for Nanango, the shadow minister for water.

When talking about implementation, consultation and so forth, I would like to inform the House of an experience that the irrigators in north-eastern part of my electorate, in the upper Condamine, had in 2019, under then minister, Dr Lynham. Dr Lynham was a good guy but he took a very long time to bring the department to heel after an event involving irrigators in the upper Condamine basalt and alluvial aquifers.

There were 900 irrigators in that system who received letters dated 26 June 2019 stating that by 1 July 2019 they must have meters on their bores. All these letters arrived after 1 July, which was a cartoonistic and comical bungle by the department. The department doubled down and said, 'We'll work with them' and so forth. I had to get on to the minister twice to get something done about that. To make matters worse, the letter that had been issued, with zero consultation with the irrigators in that system, said that until they had a water meter installed they could only take 80 per cent of their allocation and only on two days per week. There was a roster sent out to them for them to take it at night or during the day. It was an utterly ridiculous imposition because irrigators were irrigating onion crops or pasture for dairy. To have a restriction like that imposed on them with zero consultation and with negative three days notice—because these letters arrived on 3 July—showed just how badly some of these things can be done.


This minister is a good guy as well. Can I ask the minister and the department to make sure that the consultation is as flexible as possible when it comes to the rolling out of meters, noting the experience I had in my electorate was that we simply did not have the stock of meters and those who were qualified and capable of installing them just did not exist in the numbers necessary to comply in that space of time. I urge the government, the department and the minister to be flexible and understanding of users of water. This march to metering and telemetry, whilst on paper is a good thing, has to be done well. If it is not done well, it will be an impost on the individual irrigators who are just trying to make a buck. They are trying to feed their families and employ the people who work in their operations.

Lastly, I would like to respond to two things that the member for Logan just said. He said that the National Party has never built a dam. It is difficult to build a dam in Queensland without the consent of the Queensland government. Irrespective of how much money the federal government—I know Barnaby Joyce and after him David Littleproud have been in my electorate in their then ministerial capacities with huge wads of money available for the state to build Emu Swamp Dam—the state would not do it. Even paying almost nothing, the state would not do it. The state has the ability to build dams and the Commonwealth does not.

I say to this state government that blaming a federal government that has gone for their failure to build a dam is pretty rich. I know that it would be laughed at, at best, in my electorate of Southern Downs. I would say to my honourable friend the member for Logan that he would be most welcome to come to the Stanthorpe RSL and advance those views, but I think he would be tarred and feather—he might be honeyed and feathered or wine and feathered or something like, but he would not escape. He would know very well what the people of my electorate think.

I reiterate that the rollout of meters is a responsible and necessary thing. It is something that has been coming for a long time. Most users understand that this is coming. However, the rollout cannot be an automated process following a piece of legislation. It has to work with people who are the bedrock of our society—those producing our food and fibre, employing people and themselves in order to pay taxes, taxes so that politicians and public servants can have a job. If we do not look after the people who look after us when it comes to our food and fibre and we do not look after the economy upon which all of the services that we wish to deliver from this House depend, then we are going to go backwards.

As I say, I support the bill and I will definitely be supporting the amendments which will be moved by my honourable friend the member for Nanango.

 **Mr MARTIN** (Stretton—ALP) (4.49 pm): I rise to support the Water Legislation Amendment Bill. Water is the most vital resource we have, so it is important that it is well managed. Water preserves our environment, sustains our communities and is a vital input for the farming and mining industries which are the backbone of Queensland's rural economy.

The Palaszczuk government works closely with stakeholders across Queensland including landholders, irrigators, water service providers and First Nations people to ensure the sustainable management of our most vulnerable resource. Water is not just a key driver of economic growth in Queensland. It also provides many job opportunities that support regional and rural communities.

Like many other places around the globe, Queensland experiences changing weather patterns, ranging from severe droughts on one side to violent floods on the other. Good water management in both of these situations is fundamental to ensuring that our water network remains safe and reliable for all Queenslanders, whether they live in the city or in the country. This includes the safety of dam infrastructure, access to clean drinking water, efficient water markets that stimulate economic development, and planning that balances the needs of water users and the environment. This is achieved through high-quality data collection that is importantly visible and transparent.

I would also like to briefly recognise the magnificent work of local schools and kindergartens in the Stretton electorate that are doing their bit to conserve water and use it in a sustainable manner that benefits our environment. In particular, I would like to acknowledge the Stretton Early Years and Kindergarten and their Bush Kindy program which enables youngsters to learn about the experience of our natural environment. The kindy also has a fantastic community garden with a whole variety of fruits and plants that are watered and cared for by kids each day. I would like to give a shout-out to Cameron Turnbull and his team.

There are a number of other programs provided by the Queensland government and its agencies that educate students around our state about the importance of water. The School Water Conservation Program and the Waterwise Schools Program are great examples. I am very proud of the importance that our government has placed on educating young people about our most important resource.

The Water Legislation Amendment Bill delivers a key milestone of the Palaszczuk government's commitment to improving water management and ensuring that regulatory frameworks remain effective. The bill amends the South-East Queensland Water (Distribution and Retail Restructuring Act) 2009, Water Act 2000 and the Water Supply (Safety and Reliability) Act 2008. The bill also amends the Water Act to make minor operational and technical amendments to the framework for managing underground water.

The primary aim of the bill is to establish a clear and transparent framework for implementing Queensland's strengthened non-urban water measurement policy, which will improve the way water take is measured and reported across our state. Consultation was undertaken with entitlement holders, industry partners and the wider community for the updated measurement policy. I am pleased to say that the consultation process garnered broad support for better measurement and accountability for water use in Queensland.

One of the keys to sustainable water resource management is having accurate data on how much water is taken from river catchments and aquifers. By having precise information, everyone is able to access their fair share of water. The new framework applies to water users with a volumetric

surface water or underground water entitlement. For those who take water directly from a stream, river or aquifer, it will mean having a meter attached to their pump to record how much water is being taken. Provisions for measuring complex water take operations, such as when a water user collects and stores overland flow water on their property, are also part of the new framework.

In 2018, the Palaszczuk government made commitments in response to an Independent Audit of Queensland Non-Urban Water Measurement and Compliance and the Murray-Darling Basin Compliance Compact. Water from the Murray-Darling Basin sustains plants, animals, industries and communities around Australia. It is undoubtedly our most important water source and needs to be well managed.

This bill provides for measurement plans which will be required for overland flow water licences in the Queensland section of the Murray-Darling Basin. These measurement plans will detail how water take is measured on farm and will provide more accurate information about the amount of overland flow, as well as the water taken in the catchments. As a result, the impact on river flows and water availability of other users can be managed more effectively and also better understood. That goes back to having better data.

Consultation with stakeholders and industry bodies was essential to getting the balance right in ensuring that irrigators have measurement systems in place that work for them and properly measure the water take. Irrigators with overland flow water licences in the Murray-Darling were supportive of this new measurement approach because they know how precious water resources are and that, when managed better, both stakeholders and the broader community—every Queensland—benefit from it.

The new regulatory framework will also require more frequent reporting of metered information on water take from water users. In order to facilitate this, entitlement holders in the Queensland section of the Murray-Darling Basin will have telemetry devices installed on their meters. These devices transmit metered data in near real time to monitor water take. They are especially useful for time and event-based situations where water may only be taken when certain water flow conditions occur.

Irrigators will be supported by this technology as it allows them to manage their water resource more effectively with the ability to capture and transmit data more quickly and regularly. The information provided by the devices will make it easier to monitor water take against an entitlement. It supports compliance action as well against anyone taking more than their fair share and makes for easier and more efficient decisions about managing and allocating water. At the end of the day, that means that we are all in a better position to stimulate economic development in regional Queensland.

We already have strong standards for the design, installation and maintenance of water meters, but amendments in this bill will expand these standards and make them even stronger. To ensure that measurement requirements can be applied to both simple and also complex water takes, this bill provides that standards can be made for measurement plans and other measurement devices like telemetry.

It is important that all stakeholders involved have confidence that measuring equipment is operating at an acceptable level of performance throughout its working life—which is what this bill will deliver. It will also help the Rural Water Futures program, which is delivering projects to harness water data and make it readily available online. This program is driving more transparent and sustainable water resource management around Queensland by giving water users better information about their water use, their entitlements and the water that they can buy or sell on the water market. It will help numerous businesses and industry stakeholders to access information that they need to make important decisions about the best use of water to suit their business needs, their farm or their interests in those areas.

The bill will also amend the Water Act to improve and synchronise the administration of the water authority boards. Amendments will ensure that the chief executive can consider and decide water licence applications that may impact other water users, environmental water needs or the public interest. Minor operational amendments that improve underground water management will also be made.

Finally, I would like to commend the hard work of the Minister for Regional Development and Manufacturing and Minister for Water, as well as the State Development and Regional Industries Committee for their efforts in developing and reviewing this bill. I thank the secretariat, all of the staff and everyone involved. I support the bill and I commend the bill to the House.



**Mr MICKELBERG** (Buderim—LNP) (4.59 pm): I rise to address the Water Legislation Amendment Bill 2022. This is the first time we have heard from the Minister for Water. When you couple that with the fact and the knowledge that the state government has not built a single dam in nearly nine years it tells you everything that you need to know about where on the list of priorities water infrastructure falls for the Labor state government.

**A government member** interjected.

**Mr MICKELBERG:** Not a single dam. Despite Emu Swamp Dam probably being mentioned in this House more times than any other project in the state, funded and laid on a platter they could not bring themselves to build a dam. We have heard about the ALP's record when it comes to dams. We heard from the member for Bundamba earlier about how great Labor is at building dams. The member for Logan said it too. Who can forget the Traveston travesty? The Labor government absolutely destroyed the Mary Valley and those communities. People took their own lives as a consequence of the Labor government's incompetence. I acknowledge that many of those here were not in the House when that decision was made, but it is a decision whose legacy lives on. The Traveston travesty has destroyed the Mary Valley. It continues to be a problem to this day, and it is as a consequence of Labor's haphazard approach to building dams and resolving any issue at all. It is all about political spin rather than substance. I would dare say that this government's Pioneer Valley proposal will be Traveston mark 2.

**Mr BUTCHER:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order on relevance, 118(b). The member is way off the mark. He is not talking about this bill and he needs to get back to it.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Lister): Member for Buderim, you are straying somewhat from the long title of the bill. I urge you to come back.

**Mr MICKELBERG:** Thank you for your direction, Mr Deputy Speaker. For the minister's benefit, 118(b) is just for question time, mate.

As the shadow minister for water indicated in her contribution, there are aspects of this legislation that are reasonable and considered, and we support those provisions. Unfortunately, however, based on the track record of the Palaszczuk Labor government I personally have concerns about the vague reassurances from the minister that this bill will not result in the regulation of farm dams and captured overland flow outside the Murray-Darling basin; that is, water that is captured and used for stock and domestic purposes outside of the Murray-Darling Basin. I do not have confidence that this bill will not extend to the regulation of those areas in the future.

An expressed objective of this bill is to 'provide for farm scale measurements of overland flow water take'. I have serious concerns with that objective, particularly with regard to how it is going to be implemented. It is ambiguous whether the measurement of overland flow relates only to the Murray-Darling Basin catchment or whether it relates to all dams, including stock and domestic dams, across Queensland. The Queensland Farmers' Federation warned in their submission—

... how this will be implemented throughout the remainder of Queensland has yet to be identified in relation to the evaluation for metering requirements.

The QFF went on to say—

There is considerable concern around how this may be measured, as a number of dams are likely to store captured overland flow, Sunwater allocations and/or spring water.

The configuration of metering to avoid double counting of water moving in and out of the system has the potential to become cost prohibitive.

As I understand it, this bill does provide the minister with a head of power that would enable him to establish regulations that could require the measurement and reporting of farm dams that sit outside the Murray-Darling Basin and are not currently regulated. That is the case in New South Wales, where graziers find themselves in the situation where longstanding farm dams are regulated. Their take from those dams is regulated.

In Queensland, dams where the dam wall is higher than 7½ metres already require approval, so it is my view that regulating existing farm dams that are used to support grazing is an unnecessary and excessive step. I think I heard the member for Aspley say earlier that farm dams under four megalitres would not be impacted under this legislation, but I note he did not say if that was four megalitres per dam or per property. I would also note that four megalitres is a drop in the ocean. Four megalitres is around 1½ swimming pools. Just about every single commercial cattle operation in the state would

have a farm storage greater than four megalitres. Four megalitres would support between 125 and 150 head of cattle for a year. That is not a viable commercial cattle operation in Queensland. To suggest that four megalitres of water is what is required to support a grazing operation is a joke.


I acknowledge that the state government has made commitments in relation to the Murray-Darling Basin, and the submissions to the bill were broadly supportive of the provisions to implement those commitments. My concern sits with the fact that this bill provides scope for the state government to go further. I ask the minister to categorically rule out further moves to regulate existing farm dams that are not currently subject to measurement regulation outside the Murray-Darling Basin.

Another issue I have concerns with is the cost of implementation to landholders. The feedback received suggests that state funding will not be sufficient. At a time when escalating inflation is already pressuring family budgets, such an approach will only result in more expensive fruit and vegetable prices as commodity producers pass it on in increased costs. It is all because the state government has decided they are going to whack primary producers with another cost, another regulation, without adequately compensating them. I note that both AgForce and QFF also share concerns in this regard.

While we are debating the regulation of water across the state, specifically the metering of water use, I also want to raise the concerns of my constituents regarding proposed changes to their properties. Residents are concerned that they are going to be slugged to replace their existing water meters. It is important to note that those residents own their property freehold. Their properties are individually metered and each property owner currently pays water access charges to Unitywater, the regulated water provider. Despite this, they will be required to pay between \$450 and \$600 each to replace their existing water meters. Such a situation does not exist with the property owners who live in houses next door and who are in the exact same situation. Those residents will have the cost of replacement meters paid for by Unitywater, as they should. However, the retirees who live in areas of my electorate will be out of pocket many hundreds of dollars when they are in the exact same situation. It is not an equitable situation. I have written to the Minister for Water, and I call on the minister to ensure that every Queensland property owner is treated equally and fairly. Residents such as those I have just described should not be meeting the cost of replacing existing water meters when others are not required to do so.

Finally, I want to call on those opposite to support the amendment moved by the shadow minister for water. The amendment seeks to provide assurance that the concerns I have articulated in my contribution today—that the measures that are implemented in this bill will not go further than what the minister has described and those opposite have assured us is not the case—is the case. If those opposite are genuine when they say their intention is to ensure the regulation of the Murray-Darling Basin and that this will not extend to stock and domestic and farm dams outside of the Murray-Darling Basin, then they will support the shadow minister's amendment.

With the indulgence of the House, in the short time I have left I would also like to acknowledge my electorate officer, Gina Measures, who is retiring today after a long career in the Public Service. Today is Gina's last day. I am devastated that she is on her way. Gina has been my EO for over five years. She was there through COVID dealing with me and constituents. As you may appreciate, some days were good; some days were bad. Gina has always been there. She has been a sounding-board and invaluable support for my constituents. She is the ultimate professional. Gina had a long career with Queensland Health before she came to the Parliamentary Service. On behalf of the community and personally, I would like to wish Gina and her family all the best in retirement.

 **Mr HEALY** (Cairns—ALP) (5.07 pm): I rise to support the Water Legislation Amendment Bill. I was quite surprised, Mr Deputy Speaker, that in your contribution we heard so little about Emu dam. I was very excited—

**Honourable members:** Emu Swamp!

**Mr HEALY:** Emu Swamp, sorry. It could be a dam if you spoke a bit more about it, but anyway that was just a passing observation. Secondly and most importantly, member for Buderim, that was a great contribution. Like yourself, I would be absolutely nowhere without my staff, so I appreciate the member for Buderim making those comments. I think it is vitally important.

Water—this is pretty important. The simple thing is that generally these bills are somewhat minor, technical and operational in nature, but fundamentally there are some very important parts of this legislation, and it needs to be important.

**Mrs Frecklington:** Tell us!



**Mr HEALY:** If you use your body in proportion—two ears, one mouth—you will learn. The bill also includes amendments to the water supply act 2008 and the distribution and retail restructuring act—you walked into that one—2009. We know how important water security is. We are the second-driest continent on the planet. Does anybody know who is dryer than us?

**Mr Mickelberg:** Antarctica.

**Mr HEALY:** Well done. Member for Buderim, you get new staff. It is Antarctica. While I recognise these amendments are generally minor, technical or operational in nature, they do clarify existing provisions and requirements and improve the operational efficiency of these acts. Fundamentally, this is the commitment we made to the people of Queensland. It is about making those improvements, and I want to touch on some of them.

The bill includes an amendment to ensure emergency action plans for Queensland's 114 referable dams are reviewed and approved well ahead of the start of each wet season. We know that is a vital thing that needs to be done to ensure security. The amendment defines the required date a review must be completed by and expands this to allow for a date to be prescribed by the regulator via a notice. That is important. This increased flexibility will support the preparedness ahead of the wet season and allow for a rapid response to unforeseen circumstances by dam owners and operators and also by government agencies which are charged with that responsibility.

The bill also includes an amendment to confirm service provider registration details annually. Maintaining these on a regular basis has been recognised as being important. The wording in the current provision required a review only by a service provider if there had been a change in their registration details. I want to say that again. The wording in the current provision required a review only by a service provider if there had been a change in their registration details. That was the only thing that motivated that change. That amendment ensures the water supply regulator has up-to-date information, which is vitally important. The water supply regulator has fielded many inquiries relating to the engagement of an independent auditor to conduct an audit on a water service provider's drinking water quality management plan. We only have to look at certain parts, particularly in my part of the world, and the consumption and the quality of water and ensure that those organisations and institutions are in the appropriate place and have all the protocols in place to ensure the best outcomes.

The amendments clarify that existing offences related to the audit of drinking water quality management plans apply to the water service provider and not to the auditor. That is important. Amendments are also made to clarify requirements for auditing particular performance reports, amending the definition of who is an auditor and how performance reports are assessed when audited. These amendments also clarify that a service provider must amend their customer service standard six months after completion of a review. This is ensuring that the appropriate data is in place, and that is fundamental to ensure we get the best outcomes for the community. This will improve public transparency and increase water service provider accountability with minimal administrative burden.

The committee did a fantastic job. There were a lot of people involved and it was quite extensive. A lot of this material has come around as a result of extensive and thorough consultation with the users. I would like to report on the commitment this government has made to water security to Far North Queensland. There have been numerous funding initiatives to councils for vital infrastructure, particularly in recent times. Most notably, there was a \$107 million contribution for the Draper Road water project south of Cairns to futureproof drinking water for Cairns into the medium term. This project is fully funded with equal support from the Albanese federal government. I understand that in 2016 or 2017 the Cairns Regional Council became aware that there was a significant need. The ask has only come recently. To date, there has been \$214 million raised. We recognise the importance of water and we are making that contribution. This project has been fully funded by both the state and the federal government.

I want to commend our community for their water-saving initiatives, and other speakers have mentioned the initiatives in their own communities. These water-saving initiatives have been developed and initiated by not just our primary schools but also a large number of community groups. Whilst we might receive a significant amount of rain during a short period over the wet season, our challenge lies in our capacity for retention. People think we get so much rain and we should be able to hold onto it, but, once again, it comes down to the capacity to be able to hold onto it. We enjoy the wet season but our challenge is that we need to make sure we have a good understanding of how we use the water.


This project is also a timely reminder for local government to remember their responsibilities in terms of water management. With some councils raking in many millions every year from water revenue, we should expect that a good portion of these profits will go back into new water infrastructure

and maintenance while also overseeing demand management programs. At the end of the day, this is the legal responsibility of a lot of those local governments. Putting their hand out all the time does not necessarily reflect good management or confidence.

I want to mention the drinking water reports. The water supply regulator has fielded many inquiries relating to the engagement of an independent auditor to conduct an audit on the water service providers, which I touched on earlier. The bill also includes an amendment to confirm service provider registration details, as I have touched on. Amendments are also made to clarify requirements from the auditing side of things, which has proven to be absolutely vital.

The bill makes publishing requirements more contemporary across water legislation, including the SEQ water act, the Water Act and the water supply act. These reforms are in line with requirements introduced under the Financial Accountability Act 2009 to prioritise publishing online. The bill includes improvements for the management of underground water, which is part of the environment and science portfolio, at the request of the Minister for the Environment and the Great Barrier Reef, Minister for Science and Minister for Multicultural Affairs. The amendments provide greater clarity about the requirements for protecting groundwater and reduce the unnecessary administrative burden, which I think we all acknowledge is pretty important.

In closing, I want to acknowledge the work of the committee. I also want to acknowledge those who have contributed. I understand it has been extensive. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Ms PEASE** (Lytton—ALP) (5.16 pm): This 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 Queensland, the economy and the Queensland people. 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 the bill is to establish a clear and transparent framework for implementing Queensland's strengthened non-urban water measurement policy. Communities across Queensland have benefited far and wide from the Palaszczuk government's water reforms. We have benefitted as a state from all of the Palaszczuk government's reforms as a result of the progressive coal royalties.

The funding provided in the government's 2022-23 budget delivered more than \$510 million for water infrastructure and planning to drive jobs and better services. 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 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.

**Mrs Frecklington** interjected.

**Ms PEASE:** I do not know about the member for Nanango, but I am actually interested in making sure that all of Queensland's water security is taken care of.

I am sorry if you are getting bored by listening to the great work of the Palaszczuk government, but I have more to deliver. I have more to talk about. I might say that again. In the state's Far North, \$107.5 million—

**Mr MICKELBERG:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order on relevance. There is no reference to water regulation in the Far North, particularly not retail water, and I would ask that the member be brought back to the long title of the bill.

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

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Lister): Thank you, member for Buderim. I will deal with the first point of order, if you would please resume your seat, member for Bundaberg. The member for Buderim is correct: this bill is concerned with non-urban water. There has been a degree of latitude given by successional speakers, but that is going a little bit too far, so I ask you to come back to the bill, please, member for Lytton. Member for Bundaberg, what is your point of order?

**Mr SMITH:** The Water Legislation Amendment Bill report by the committee says in 2.9.3 under the heading Amendments to the Water Supply Act that—

The Bill amends the Water Supply Act to address identified inconsistencies and clarify dam safety, drinking and recycled water provisions.

I would argue that that element is quite relevant to what the member for Lytton is speaking on.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** You have got me there, member. I will take some advice on that one. Member for Lytton, I have taken the point of order from the member for Bundaberg. He is correct. It would assist us all, however, if you could attempt to remain within the long title of the bill.

**Ms PEASE:** Certainly. Thank you for your guidance. I really appreciate it, thank you. I would like to reiterate that it is a great story. It is great to hear about how our state is really benefitting from the wonderful initiatives in place. In fact, in the 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. \$40.4 million over three years was allocated to the construction of a drinking water pipeline from Gracemere to Mount Morgan, as well as necessary water infrastructure upgrades in Gracemere. I will talk about the Landsdown Eco-Industrial Precinct project which includes a reservoir and a 13-kilometre pipeline connecting the—

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. Whilst much leniency has been given, I am sure the member on her feet could get the speaking notes to the bill, and I ask that you rule on relevance.

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

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you, member for Nanango. Member for Logan, do you have a point of order?

**Mr POWER:** There has been a wide discourse on the nature of water throughout the state. I even heard one speaker talking about Emu Swamp Dam before.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I thank the member.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** Which is relevant because of overland flow into the proposed dam.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Nanango, please resume your seat. I will take some advice. Member for Lytton, I ask you to demonstrate how what you are saying is relevant to the bill. If not, if I can give you some guidance, it concerns the metering of the take of water in the Murray-Darling system and it is concerned with non-urban, non-industrial water.

**Ms PEASE:** And may I also mention that it does not just relate to that matter, Deputy Speaker—thank you for your guidance—but we also talk about the administration of the water authority boards in the bill. The bill modernises administration of these boards with similar arrangements to other government boards. The bill will extend the maximum term for the water authority board members from three to four years, and this aligns more contemporary arrangements for other Queensland government boards, such as under the Hospital and Health Boards Act 2011 and the Brisbane Olympic and Paralympic Games Arrangements Act 2021.

Also, I would like to point out in particular that the amendments will ensure that swift action can be taken to address poor performance of board members, or perhaps even bad behaviour, and we have seen some pretty bad behaviour in the House this week by those on the opposite side. This is important for safeguarding service delivery and accountability of these organisations that manage significant state-owned assets and large capital investment programs.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Ms PEASE:** Oh, my goodness me! I have obviously touched a bit of a nerve. I am sorry that I am upsetting those opposite. Permanent removal of a director by the Governor in Council is the only avenue currently available which is why a more timely, temporary and flexible approach is so important.

The bill also delivers a key government commitment to strengthening water measurement in Queensland, as we were talking about earlier. Improving water measurement will strengthen transparency and community confidence in how Queensland's rural water resources are managed. Balancing the need for strengthened measurements against managing impacts on water users has been a key consideration in developing the measurement policies and regulatory framework. Water users and the community want their water resources managed effectively. They expect the government to have appropriate systems and processes in place to ensure—

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Lytton, would you please resume your seat?

**Ms PEASE:** Can I just say one more thing?

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I will give you 10 seconds, member for Lytton.

**Ms PEASE:** The community really wants their water resources managed effectively. I commend the bill to the House.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** 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 on the minister to reply to the second reading debate.



**Hon. GJ BUTCHER** (Gladstone—ALP) (Minister for Regional Development and Manufacturing and Minister for Water) (5.25 pm), in reply: I thank all honourable members for their participation in this debate today and over a few weeks. The Water Legislation Amendment Bill 2022 delivers a key milestone for this government's state and national commitments to improve water management in Queensland. The Palaszczuk Labor government is delivering water infrastructure and water security right across Queensland. There is Rookwood Weir, the Toowoomba to Warwick Pipeline, the Fitzroy to Gladstone Pipeline and many more.

Our record at delivery for water infrastructure is \$5.2 billion invested since 2015, supporting 3,500 jobs, most of them in regional Queensland. In addition to delivering water infrastructure, this bill certainly demonstrates that we are also delivering better water management in Queensland and practical improvements to the way that we manage water, because we all know that fair and sustainable access to water is vital for Queensland's regional communities. It creates jobs, drives economic growth and supports good environmental and social outcomes.

At its core, this bill will strengthen water management in Queensland. It establishes a clear and transparent framework to implement Queensland's strengthened, non-urban water measurement policy. This includes implementing telemetry for some surface water entitlements, enabling water use data to be submitted in real time. It will also include implementing measurement plans for entitlements to take overland flow in the Queensland Murray-Darling Basin. These management plans will improve our understanding of the impact of this take on river flows and water availability for other users so it can be managed more effectively into the future. This will ensure government and entitlement holders have access to better water use information. The Palaszczuk government is serious about strengthening water measurement, and the amendments will also support appropriate action where water is taken and measurement requirements are not met.

My department is also responsible for regulating Queensland's urban water resources. This bill has improvements to Queensland's urban water supply and distribution legislation to ensure it remains fit for purpose. These include amendments to clarify dam safety, drinking water and to clarify the audit and review arrangements for recycled water management plans for water service providers. The bill also makes improvements to water service provider registration, reviews of customer service standards, reporting and auditing arrangements and clarifies offence provisions.

The bill also modernises the administration of category 1 water authority boards to bring them into line with other government boards with similar governance responsibilities. In particular, the amendments will ensure that swift action can be taken to address poor performance or bad behaviour of board members. This is important for safeguarding service delivery and accountability of these organisations that manage significant publicly owned assets and large capital investment programs.

I would like to now turn to the specific issues raised by members during the debate. I refer to the member for Nanango's contribution to this debate. I welcome the member's acknowledgement that the LNP will not stand in the way of this bill. They accept that this bill is good policy that will deliver better outcomes for Queensland water users. I note the member is proposing an amendment in relation to stock and domestic metering. We will be opposing that amendment because it is unnecessary. If the member knew anything about this legislation and the water plans that are in place in Queensland, she would also know that it was unnecessary. Let me be clear. Stock and domestic are already exempt from the metering requirements. Other low-risk new entitlements of five megalitres or less per year are also exempt. This is all set out in the policy that sits alongside the bill. Let us remember section 96 of the Water Act already permits landowners to access water for stock and domestic purposes.

In relation to overland flow, I can advise there are no costs for taking overland flow for stock and domestic purposes as measurement requirements do not apply to take that is not licensed. The acting director-general wrote to the member about this. Not only that, every water plan that regulates overland

flow take includes an exemption for stock and domestic purposes. I say to the member for Nanango that it is in section 37 of the Condamine and Balonne water plan. It is in every water plan that regulates overland flow.

I want to talk about certified meter installers. It is certified meter installers who revalidate and certify meters. The certified meter installers are certified by peak body Irrigation Australia. Instead of holding photo-ops and grandstanding, those opposite should be encouraging their growers to get appointments booked in with their meter installers. They should also be encouraging water users to talk to the department if they have questions on this. We cannot forget that the department used to own and maintain these meters in Queensland, but the LNP cut these arrangements and sacked staff. So it is pretty galling that the member for Nanango and the member for Burnett pretend this is something that is new. The member for Bancroft said it best in his contribution when he said, 'You cannot manage what you cannot measure.' This bill is about water management to better measure the water that we are using in Queensland.

I do not have enough time to fact check everything that he said, but I do want to respond to the member for Burleigh's more outlandish claims in this House. This is not a revenue-raising measure. Let me make that clear. This is about better water management in Queensland, to help us meet our Murray-Darling Basin commitments and to strengthen how our water is managed.

I say to the LNP that they cannot talk about water costs. When they were in government bulk water prices in South-East Queensland increased an average of 12 per cent a year. How much more expensive would urban water prices or irrigation water prices be if they sold off parts of Sunwater like they wanted to when they were previously in government? How much more expensive would water be if the LNP had kept their word when they said that any future water infrastructure must only be built by the private sector?

We are delivering improvements to water management through this bill, but we are also delivering irrigation price discounts for our growers. We saw an additional \$22.6 million in irrigation price discounts announced by the Palaszczuk government in the recent budget. That is money in irrigators' and farmers' pockets. Unlike those opposite, we have worked with the federal government to secure funding from them to assist with the rollout of this policy in the Queensland Murray-Darling Basin. We will continue to listen to the experts when it comes to water management in Queensland. We are a government that plans and we deliver.

Some members of the LNP raised the issue of local content. On this side of the House we support local content, and these strengthened requirements will provide more opportunities for local water product suppliers and contractors. I will talk about the annual reporting shortly, but in the contributions of those opposite I was reminded that none of them seem to have read the government response to the committee's report. If they had, they would know that the department has already committed to providing draft regulations for stakeholder feedback through the Water Engagement Forum. The department has also committed to reviewing the new arrangements.

I say to those opposite that they owe it to their communities to read in full the committee reports, the submissions and all of the documents on this legislation. Comments from the LNP that there is insufficient information about how stakeholder views were considered are just not true. My department has been consulting with stakeholders throughout the development of this policy. They published a consultation report, implementation plan and the policy in October 2022. The consultation report details key issues raised and how my department considered these issues in finalising this report.

While implementing the strengthened measurement requirements, we have listened to the views of water users and industry every step of the way. We are using a risk-based approach to implementation as well. This means strengthened measurement will be rolled out in the Queensland Murray-Darling Basin first where pressure on water resources is at its highest and access to accurate, timely information about water use is most critical. Implementing the strengthened non-urban water measurement policy will take a phased risk-based approach. The initial focus will be on the Murray-Darling Basin through to 2025. The rest of the state, prioritised based on risk and water plan commitments, is expected to be completed by 2030. This is a sensible and consultative approach to implementation over a long period.

We are supporting water users with existing meters through grandfathering arrangements. This will allow a significant number of existing meters to remain in service. Where telemetry is required in the Queensland Murray-Darling Basin, the Palaszczuk Labor government and the Albanese Labor government have come to the party with funding and in-kind help to subsidise telemetry for water users. My department will continue to monitor implementation and costs in its annual reporting. This will

include seeking feedback from the Water Engagement Forum to ensure we get the right balance between improved measurement and minimising costs for water users. As part of this annual reporting, I want to make sure industries' ability to meet increased demand for measurement devices and validation services is monitored in Queensland. I also want to make sure as many Queensland businesses as possible have a chance to play their part in this process.

Privacy and data security affects all of us, no matter who we are and how we interact with government. I want to acknowledge the feedback about privacy and data security as part of this bill. I can understand why water users want assurances that the information they provide will be securely stored and used only for its intended purpose. I want to assure water users that the collection, use and storage of water users' data and information by my department will meet the requirements of the Information Privacy Act in Queensland.

As part of my department's Rural Water Futures program, we are also building appropriate systems and security for the data we will be collecting. The bill improves the current water measurement framework, expanding its scope so that measurement devices such as telemetry and a broader range of measurement approaches such as measurement plans can be used to improve how water take is measured and reported across Queensland. Implementing strengthened water management will give the government better information about water use and availability. Having accurate information about how much water is taken from our river catchments and aquifers is crucial to support sustainable water management here in Queensland.

That information means better decisions about water allocation and planning. Water users, and the community, want their water resources managed effectively. They expect the government to have systems and processes in place to ensure that all water users can access their fair share and that penalties are in place and enforced for people who are doing the wrong thing. Getting better water information in means getting better water information out. This will help water users, industry and businesses to access the information they need to make informed decisions about the best use of this precious resource in Queensland. This will put Queensland in the best position to stimulate regional development. Access to water is the lifeblood of regional communities. It drives economic growth, creates good jobs and supports thriving regional Queensland lifestyles.

The bill proposes amendments to Queensland urban water management legislation that will give greater clarity, accountability and transparency in the way Queensland urban water resources, assets and service delivery responsibilities are managed in Queensland. The changes proposed in the bill will improve the way Queensland's groundwater resources are managed, brought forward on behalf of the Minister for the Environment and the Great Barrier Reef, Minister for Science and Minister for Multicultural Affairs. The amendments help us to protect groundwater and reduce the administrative burden of managing our groundwater resources. This bill is a clear demonstration that the Palaszczuk Labor government is delivering on its commitments to strengthen water management in Queensland and is meeting its national commitments to the Murray-Darling Basin.

As I highlighted in my second reading speech, I will be moving an amendment in consideration in detail to clarify the process for deciding an application for a water licence dealing. The proposed amendment in the bill provides that the chief executive is not required to publish a public notice about an application to add, remove or change a condition of a water licence if satisfied that granting the application will not have an impact on other interests or water needs. The amendments in the bill will also ensure this can apply to an application to renew or reinstate an expired water licence. This is an acknowledgement that public views on these applications have already been sought and considered as part of the original application. Importantly, the amendments in the bill clarify that a public notice must be published if granting the application would or could result in additional take or impact. This will reinforce protections proposed by the bill for other interests and for those third parties.

I commend the work undertaken by the Department of Regional Development, Manufacturing and Water—in particular, the water measurement and the policy and legislation teams within the Water Act Initiatives branch—to bring this bill before the House. I thank Leanne and her team for the policy and consultation they have done to get us to this point. It is my expectation that the department will continue to listen to the views of industry as part of its annual reporting on the implementation of this policy. I would like to thank all of the stakeholders that have provided feedback to this bill process. I particularly thank the Queensland Farmers' Federation and AgForce for their input as part of this process. The extensive consultation and feedback started with early policy development through to, and including, the review of the bill by the State Development and Regional Industries Committee. I

take this opportunity, while I am on my feet, to acknowledge the work that was done by that committee and the work that it has done to get this bill to us here today. I also acknowledge the member for Lockyer and note the sad passing of his father recently. In conclusion, I commend the bill to the House.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

### Consideration in Detail

Clauses 1 to 16, as read, agreed to.

Clause 17—



**Mr BUTCHER** (5.44 pm): I move the following amendment—

#### 1 Clause 17 (Replacement of s 130 (When dealing must be assessed as if it were a new water licence))

Page 17, line 20 to page 18, line 1—

omit, insert—

- (3) However, the chief executive is not required to publish a public submissions notice for the application for the dealing if—
  - (a) subsection (1)(a) does not apply in relation to the dealing; and
  - (b) the chief executive is not satisfied publishing the public submissions notice would be—
    - (i) in the interests of Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islanders and their connection with water resources; or
    - (ii) in the public interest.

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

*Tabled paper:* Water Legislation Amendment Bill 2022, explanatory notes to Hon. Glenn Butcher's amendments [\[1342\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* Water Legislation Amendment Bill 2022, statement of compatibility with human rights contained in Hon. Glenn Butcher's amendments [\[1343\]](#).

Amendment agreed to.

Clause 17, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 18 to 38, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 39—



**Mrs FRECKLINGTON** (5.45 pm): I move the following amendment—

#### 1 Clause 39 (Insertion of new ch 2, pt 3A)

Page 33, after line 14—

insert—

- (3) However, an authorisation or class of authorisations that permit the taking of overland flow water may be declared under subsection (1) to be subject to a measurement requirement only if the authorisation or class—
  - (a) permits the taking of water in an area of the State for which a water plan allows the measurement of overland flow water under this part; and
  - (b) is for a purpose other than stock or domestic purposes.

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

*Tabled paper:* Water Legislation Amendment Bill 2022, explanatory notes to Mrs Deb Frecklington's amendments [\[1344\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* Water Legislation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022, statement of compatibility with human rights contained in Mrs Deb Frecklington's amendments [\[1345\]](#).

Whilst I have the deputy chair of the committee sitting beside me, I would like to acknowledge the life and the service of his dad, John 'Cracker' McDonald. May he rest in peace, Jimmy.

In relation to this amendment, I have listened with consideration to the minister. We on our side have really reflected upon this. We have read the details, and I did appreciate the letter that the minister was able to provide. If the minister took note of my amendment he would know that the water management plans, which exempt overland flow, are also exempt in my amendment. That is exactly what it is. As the minister said in his contribution, this legislation enables the regulation of overland flow outside of those water resource plans. That enables that to be regulated via regulation. As all of us, particularly on this side of the House, understand, that does not come back to the House for review.

The serious idea of the future measurement of overland water, even for smaller users and for stock and domestic use, is deeply concerning. We have seen, and we have watched with interest, what is happening in New South Wales. That is why I am deeply concerned about this. I appreciate the current minister's intent that that is not the purpose, but this legislation will provide for the department or the minister to enable it via regulation. That is why we are so concerned. It is the ones without the water resource plans. Like the minister said, we do appreciate that. That is why we have written in our amendment an exemption for water management plans.

I do not need to go into any further detail, except to say that I put that in my very considered speech to enable the minister to understand the deep concern that we on this side of the House hold in relation to the management of overland flow water into the future, outside of water management plans. I ask that the minister take that into consideration.

**Mr BUTCHER:** I rise to speak against the amendment moved by the member for Nanango. As we have just heard, although this issue was extensively canvassed through the committee consultation process, the member raised it again with me on Tuesday. I wanted to get the correct information to the member in the time frame that I was given. I sought confirmation in writing, as requested, in relation to the amendment she was looking to move forward with as part of this debate tonight.

As I said yesterday afternoon, my director-general provided a letter to the member providing the requested information that the member was looking for from our government's side on the issue she was talking about with regard to overland flow. For the sake of clarity, I will say it again: the measurement requirements do not apply to water take that is not licensed. Every single water plan in Queensland that regulates the take of overland flow includes an exemption for stock and domestic take from requiring a licence in Queensland. For example, the Condamine-Balonne water plan explicitly in section 37, as I have discussed, excludes stock and domestic overland flow take from needing a licence. Therefore, there is no possible way to require measurement as we can only apply that where a licence exists in Queensland. Therefore, this legislation does not impose any costs for taking overland flow for stock and domestic purposes in Queensland as the measurement requirements do not apply to take that is not licensed. The amendment is clearly not required as part of the legislation being debated tonight and we will not be supporting this amendment.

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

**AYES, 33:**

**LNP, 33—**Bates, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Camm, Crandon, Crisafulli, Frecklington, Gerber, Hart, Head, Janetzki, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Lister, McDonald, Mickelberg, Millar, Minnikin, Molhoek, Nicholls, O'Connor, Perrett, Powell, Purdie, Robinson, Rowan, Simpson, Stevens, Watts, Weir.

**NOES, 52:**

**ALP, 50—**Bailey, Boyd, Brown, Bush, Butcher, Crawford, D'Ath, de Brenni, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Furner, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Healy, Hinchliffe, Howard, Hunt, Kelly, A. King, S. King, Lauga, Linard, Lui, Madden, Martin, McCallum, McMahon, McMillan, Mellish, Miles, Mullen, O'Rourke, Palaszczuk, Pease, Power, Pugh, Richards, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Scanlon, Skelton, Smith, Stewart, Sullivan, Tantari, Walker, Whiting.

**Grn, 2—**Berkman, MacMahon.

Pair: Dick, Mander.

Resolved in the negative.

Non-government amendment (Mrs Frecklington) negatived.

Interruption.

## SPEAKER'S STATEMENT

**Hinchy, Ms J**

**Mr SPEAKER:** Before we move into the next phase, I just wanted to make a quick statement that today is Jackie Hinchy's last day working here at the parliament. She has been here for about one month shy, I think, of seven years. We all know that she does wonderful work as an attendant and has done very great work supporting our parliamentary education program as well. We wish her all of the very best for her future endeavours.

**Honourable members:** Hear, hear!



## WATER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

### Consideration in Detail

from p. 2770.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Under the provisions of the business program agreed to by the House and the time allocated for this stage of the bill having now expired, I will now put all remaining questions. In accordance with sessional order 4, the House must now consider all remaining clauses, schedules and any amendments circulated by the minister in charge of the bill.

Clauses 39 to 75, as read, agreed to.

Schedule, as read, agreed to.

### Third Reading

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a third time.

### Long Title

Question put—That the long title be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

## ADJOURNMENT

### Kawana Chamber of Commerce; Kawana Electorate



**Mr BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (5.58 pm): Tonight I welcome to the public gallery the Kawana Chamber of Commerce. Buckle up! No, it is okay; this is a good one.

**An opposition member:** They're all good!

**Mr BLEIJIE:** They are all good. I particularly acknowledge the president, Hamish, and vice-president, Daniel—who has just become a father for the first time—and Alister and Jacqueline on the committee and also Councillor Joe Natoli who is visiting from our area as well. It is great to have you in the public gallery tonight. The Kawana Chamber of Commerce is a great business organisation connecting wonderful Kawana businesses on the Sunshine Coast. In the good times, the bad times and the hard times, it is always there for our business community. I want to give a shout-out to the Kawana Chamber of Commerce for all of the mentorship and programs it has put in place for our wonderful small business community on the Sunshine Coast, particularly in the Kawana electorate.

I want to address some of the issues that are important to me as the local member for Kawana, and one of course is the Sunshine Coast direct heavy passenger rail connecting Beerwah to Caloundra to Kawana to Maroochydore. I call on Minister Mark Bailey, who is in the House tonight, to fund the Sunshine Coast direct passenger rail.

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

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms Bush): Order, members! I will hear the point of order in silence.

**Mr BAILEY:** Is this the line that the member did nothing about when he was in power—absolutely nothing?

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** There is no point of order, Minister.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** For the visitors in the gallery, that is Minister Mark Bailey who has failed to deliver the Sunshine Coast heavy passenger rail, failed to deliver roads such as the Mooloolah River interchange and failed to deliver all of the infrastructure that we so desperately need for the Sunshine Coast community.

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

**Mr Bleijie** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms Bush): Member for Kawana, I do not need any more calling out. I will hear the point of order in silence. You will be warned next time.

**Mr BAILEY:** I point out to the member that the microphone system is actually working.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Minister, that was a frivolous point of order. If that occurs again you will be warned under the standing orders.

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

**Mr Crisafulli** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Broadwater, you will be warned. I will hear the point of order in silence. If there are further interjections I will start to issue warnings.

**Mr POWELL:** Madam Deputy Speaker, I acknowledge your ruling. That was indeed the second frivolous point of order taken by the minister and, therefore, I suggest that a warning is due now.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you, member. I am comfortable with my decision. Thank you for pointing that out but we will keep things moving.


**Mr BLEIJIE:** This is the non-controversial adjournment speech. I want to talk about the Sunshine Coast Stadium expansion. The government have announced that, during the Olympics, the stadium will host the basketball. I call on the state and the council to consult with our community, particularly the Kawana junior and senior rugby league clubs that will uprooted and pushed out. I call on the mayor of the Sunshine Coast Council to consult with our community about what the future holds for those Rugby League clubs.

The Kawana Football Club is in the grand final this weekend and to them I say, 'Good luck!' We have some fantastic Kawana sporting organisations. The division 1 men's team is in the grand final this weekend. I say, 'Go the banana army!' They are the yellow banana army of Kawana. Good luck to the division 1 men of the Kawana Football Club and the division 1 women of the Kawana Football Club for the grand final this weekend.

Let us talk about law and order. We need more police in Kawana. We need more police resources in Kawana. We need road upgrades in Kawana. We need the Mooloolah River Interchange. We need the Direct Sunshine Coast Rail Line to give the Sunshine Coast community the infrastructure that is so desperately lacking and that has been neglected by the state Labor government for many years. I call on Minister Bailey to come to the Sunshine Coast to talk about the infrastructure that is needed on the Sunshine Coast. I thank the Kawana Chamber of Commerce for joining us tonight.

*(Time expired)*

### Thuringowa Electorate, Schools

 **Mr HARPER** (Thuringowa—ALP) (6.02 pm): Having listened to that contribution, it sounds like they need a harder working local member in Kawana. I have a very proud record of delivering infrastructure in Thuringowa, particularly for our schools. I have 11 schools and I have proudly delivered for each of the primary schools. Whether it is tuckshop upgrades, shelter sheds, security fences or block upgrades, they get everything.

There are three state high schools in Thuringowa. In 2015-16 I lobbied for Kirwan State High School to get a hall for their 2,000 students. We delivered that. With the quadrangle, that was a \$12 million investment into that school. Heatley Secondary College is my old high school. In the following term I worked with the broader school community and delivered \$12 million of funding for their performing arts centre. I am very proud with the progress we have seen. We have also assisted Ryan Catholic College with their upgrades.

Thuringowa State High School pumps above its weight. They have been waiting a long time as other schools have had halls built and so on. I am very proud to announce that, just a few days ago, I joined with the principal, Kaylene—

**Mr Stewart:** Mladenovic.


**Mr HARPER:** I never can say it correctly; thank you, member for Townsville—and the P&C President, Krystle Lewis, for the sod turn on an almost \$13 million investment in that school. They get a health science building as part of the construction project. On the back of a 2020 election commitment, Thuringowa State High School will get a new hall where they can perform. I am sure members will

remember I made a speech recently about the school's theatre restaurant. Those kids work and train for months to do that. I think at the last theatre restaurant performance there was a particular character called Kneewucker. The kids work hard. They deserve this.

This is a proud Labor government initiative that is now underway. The sod has been turned. Construction is underway. I am working with the P&C. I give the P&C a shout-out. They committed and raised \$100,000 towards that build. They deserve to be congratulated. I thank the broader school community. I doorknocked through that area a number of years ago to get their support. Together we did it.

I will keep delivering for our schools. I cannot wait to see that centre opened next year. The school will be able to continue their 35-year tradition with the theatre restaurant, which is a special thing that Thuringowa high does.

### **Volunteer Marine Rescue Midge Point**

 **Ms CAMM** (Whitsunday—LNP) (6.05 pm): The Volunteer Marine Rescue Midge Point was founded in September 1995 when it was recognised that there was a need for a rescue squad given the distance between the Whitsunday and the Mackay squadrons. A public meeting was held on 25 June 1995 and it was attended by residents from the local and surrounding communities including Keith Lade, who initiated the idea. The meeting was addressed by Air Sea Rescue president, Mr Matt Patane. Residents attending the second meeting included Grant Brown, Gary Considine and Keith Lade. In 2016, the squad had 80 members. It has now grown to 137 members, 17 honorary members and 120 financial members.


Over the past weekend, I was privileged to present: Les Mitchell with his five-year pin; Steve Summers with his five-year pin; Gail Lade with her five-year pin; Sharon McLean with a pin for 10 years of service; Evan Lawn with a pin for 15 years of service and the national medal; Mal McLean with a pin for 15 years of service and the national medal; Rob Murolo with a pin for 20 years of service and the national medal; Grant Brown with a pin for 25 years of service, life membership and the national medal; Keith Lade with a 25-year pin, life membership and the national medal; and Gary Considine with a 45-year pin, a 50-year pin, life membership and the national medal.

**An opposition member:** Hear, hear!

**Ms CAMM:** Thank you. In particular, I want to highlight Rob Murolo's 20 years of service. Rob is a skipper and holds a commercial coxswain ticket. He helps with training, fundraising and working bees. Grant Brown became the squad treasurer in 1996 and secretary in 2000. He has held those positions for 23 years. I have worked closely with Grant in my former role as deputy mayor as well as through ongoing support for the Voluntary Marine Rescue.

Somebody very dear to my heart is Gary Considine. Supported by his wife, Sue, Gary has been a member of the Voluntary Marine Rescue for 51 years, joining on 12 June 1972. He was originally a member of the Whitsunday Air Sea Rescue and is a founding member of the Midge Point squad. Gary was awarded life membership in October 2016. He started using his own boats and a cheap CB-27 meg radio. He has been the squad president for the past 20 years. Gary also volunteers with the Bloomsbury Rural Fire Service. He has been a member of Canegrowers for 12 years, six years as chairman, and a member of the mill board for six years. He is a skipper and an incredible man who does incredible things across our community. I have known Gary since I was a very young girl. The Camms and the Considines are dear friends. I congratulate Gary on his valued service to our community and the Volunteer Marine Rescue.

### **Urangan State High School, Upgrades; Hervey Bay Tennis Club; Hervey Bay RSL Sub-Branch**

 **Mr TANTARI** (Hervey Bay—ALP) (6.08 pm): Recently, on behalf of the Minister for Education, I attended the sod turning for the commencement of the new \$18.2 million multipurpose hall at Urangan State High School. This project, as part of the government's Great Schools Great Future program and one of my election commitments, will deliver an impressive new multipurpose hall which includes two full-size multipurpose sports courts, a performance stage, a classroom, other amenities for staff and students and change rooms as well as a new car-parking area and an outdoor courtyard. Urangan State High School currently has around 1,600 students, and this new addition will enable greater participation in a range of current and additional sporting and creative arts activities. Most of all, it will provide a covered space large enough to enable full campus assemblies—something they have been unable to

do on their own grounds until now. I want to acknowledge: Principal Tony McCormack and former principals; the chair of the school council, Tanya Stevenson; the P&C committee; parents; teachers; school leaders; and the greater school community, who have championed the need for this hall. This will be a huge bonus to this school community and a great community asset for the Hervey Bay community. Well done to all.

I was excited to make another great announcement for my local community. Recently, I joined with members of the Hervey Bay Tennis Club executive, including club secretary Michael Price, to congratulate the club for rallying together to lob in their funding application under the Minor Infrastructure Program. Their application for just over \$117,000 to install brand new lighting on an additional four outdoor courts was an outright winner. Hervey Bay has an active tennis community. The volley of use across all the courts between 6 am and 10 pm is an indication of this. These additional lit courts will add extended use to this facility, so more of the community will be able to play for longer. It aces the options for the club and the Hervey Bay & District Tennis Association to hold larger regional tournaments, a great win for my community. Who knows where the next Ash Barty, Pat Rafter or even 2032 Olympic team members will come from? By providing this funding to support good regional facilities, the Palaszczuk government is ensuring my region reaches game, set and match when it comes to more jobs, better services and a great lifestyle.

Finally, this morning, as they do every year, the Hervey Bay RSL sub-branch held a commemorative service to mark Australian Peacekeepers Day, honouring those who served in this capacity right across the world since 1947. That is 76 years since Australians were first deployed. As members may be aware, the Hervey Bay electorate has a large contingent of ex-servicemen and ex-servicewomen from right across the various services and theatres of action. I also congratulate the RSL sub-branch executive that works tirelessly to ensure that the recognition of their service is never forgotten. Lest we forget.

### **Toowoomba North South Transport Corridor; Cecil Plains State School, Anniversary**



**Mr WEIR** (Condamine—LNP) (6.11 pm): Recently the Department of Transport and Main Roads released a proposed north-south corridor on the western side of Toowoomba. The intent is to divert traffic from traversing Toowoomba itself and to also provide access to the fast-developing Charlton industrial precinct. The proposed corridor would connect with the New England Highway near Geham in the north, travel through Meringandan and Gowrie Junction, cross the Warrego Highway then go through Wellcamp, along the edge of Westbrook, across the Gore Highway and link back up with the New England Highway at Vale View in the south.

This announcement has caused widespread concern and outrage at the poor consultation process and resulted in the community having many unanswered questions. In an attempt to seek some answers, I held two public forums and invited representatives from TMR to attend, which they did. I thank them for their attendance, as they were aware that the impacted property owners were not happy. Whilst these forums addressed some misunderstandings as to the intent of the corridor, the community is justifiably upset that there was no local input into the actual location of the corridor to minimise the impact on their area. I have had individual meetings with local community leaders, who have accepted that there is a need for such a corridor and have offered sound alternatives to the proposed corridor.

I wrote to the minister to request an extension to the consultation period, which was granted and has again been granted since. I have also requested a meeting with the minister, which the minister has agreed to. I look forward to that taking place, be it Brisbane. It is vitally important that the community's concerns and input are taken on board, and I look forward to the meeting with the minister to address these concerns.

Last weekend I attended the 125-year anniversary of the Cecil Plains State School, not in an official role but as a past pupil. The official duties were conducted by the local member, the member for Southern Downs, James Lister. In saying that, I was asked to say a few words as a past student, join in the singing of the school song and cut the cake with the youngest student. It was a great day and a chance to catch up with some old friends, but the day was a little overshadowed by the bushfire in the Dunmore Forest not far from town. The fire was believed to be started by a lightning strike and resulted in 25,000 hectares being burnt before it was brought under control by the rural fire brigade, assisted by water-bombing aircraft. This is a timely reminder to us all to have our bushfire plans in place. The state is tinder dry and in many areas it would only take one spark to burn. Everybody, be bushfire aware.

### Caloundra, Tourism Awards



**Mr HUNT** (Caloundra—ALP) (6.14 pm): All of us in this chamber like to think that we represent the most beautiful or the most attractive electorate in Queensland but, sadly, I am the only member who can say that with absolute confidence—and I can prove it. Recently Townsville, Bundaberg, Bowen, Tamborine Mountain, Rockhampton and Redcliffe—all beautiful destinations by every measure—tried valiantly, if overoptimistically, to compete with Caloundra as Queensland's top tourist town. On 9 June the judges announced what I have known since 1973: Caloundra is not just plain beautiful; it is our state's top tourist town. The Caloundra Chamber of Commerce and the Caloundra community invested several months of time, resources and funds to strategically craft a four-part application including a video, a four-day itinerary and a feature article to showcase Caloundra. This presentation proudly showed Caloundra's vast tourism offering to the target market of families with children. The video, itinerary and feature article showcased Caloundra as a haven for families where children can run wild on the beaches and play among the waves while parents let their worries wash away.

Caloundra, so much more than a playground by the sea, was showcased as what we know it really is: a perfect destination for families with children looking to create lasting memories over many generations. The video highlighted the carefree side of Caloundra by touring our town through the eyes of children before revealing that the children were in fact adults all along. It included some of Caloundra's top attractions and accommodation providers. The itinerary was written to reflect the fun had on family holidays in Caloundra, while the article was written to reflect the perspective of a mother who had enjoyed Caloundra as a child and had brought her family back to the area as a holiday destination. Once submitted, the application was judged by the Queensland Tourism Industry Council panel and we were announced as a finalist. Once made a finalist, the chamber of commerce team coordinated a statewide voting campaign to secure the crown.

The community support during the voting campaign was immense and helped secure the crown. It was a huge community effort by locals, business owners, Caloundra's loyal visitors, the Downtown Caloundra taskforce and the Sunshine Coast Council, with a modest contribution from me. Inevitably, as befitting its excellence, Caloundra was crowned Queensland's Top Tourism Town. In a stop-the-presses moment, as at two hours ago we are now third in Australia as a top tourist town. Well done! Congratulations to Caloundra. We really are magnificent up that way.

### Taringa Railway Station, Accessibility



**Mr BERKMAN** (Maiwar—Grn) (6.17 pm): I want to take a moment this evening to talk about the Taringa train station. I, along with my team and a bunch of west-side locals, have been advocating for years now for an accessibility upgrade at the Taringa station. Just this morning a petition we are running clocked over 1,500 signatures, which is great to see. I have to confess that I am not at all surprised that there is that level of interest, given how many folks rely on Taringa station. It is close to hundreds if not thousands of residences, our indefatigable federal MP's office, a private hospital, a medical centre, a pharmacist, a couple of pathology services, local shops, a church, a park—I could keep going. I have not even got to the Persian Star grocery store or Saccharomyces Bottle-O. What an incredible range they have there!

Importantly, with no busway on the west side or bus lanes on Coronation Drive—thanks kindly to the Newman LNP—it is even more important that we have accessible train stations. For those who do not know or have not been there, Taringa station is only accessible by very steep flights of stairs, which makes it entirely inaccessible for people using wheelchairs, those with mobility issues or most parents or carers with prams. For years I have heard stories from residents about the great difficulty they have lugging their bikes or prams or children up and down the stairs. I have heard from folks trying to access the relatively new private hospital who have been forced to drive because they cannot walk up and down the stairs with their injuries. I have also spoken to people in wheelchairs who are forced to get off the train at the neighbouring Indooroopilly or Toowong stations and hope that there is an attendant available to help them get to Taringa using alternative transport. The very fact that the neighbouring stations at Indooroopilly and Toowong are accessible has been presented as justification for delaying an accessibility upgrade at Taringa. For local residents or anyone relying on that station, it simply is not good enough.

For years the state government has put upgrading Taringa station into the too-hard basket. They have blamed constructability issues. It is a difficult site, but, if memory serves me correctly, I recall that that was a barrier to upgrading the now beautifully upgraded and accessible Auchenflower station. Everything is impossible until it is not anymore.

It is 2023 and my community is starting to get sick of the excuses. Investment in accessibility is not a nice to have; it is an essential investment in our communities. Everyone should be able to access our public transport system, and it is about time the government made that a clear priority. I was obviously pleased to hear in estimates from Queensland Rail that Taringa is definitely being considered for the next round of accessibility upgrades. I urge the transport minister to stop putting off this essential upgrade and add it to the accessibility upgrade program.

Given I have eight seconds to spare, I should embarrass my son who is in the gallery. Hi Noah, thanks for joining us. Members will be pleased to know that he came in from Indooroopilly on the train to wait for dad to finish work.

### Walker, Mr J



**Ms HOWARD** (Ipswich—ALP) (6.21 pm): I rise to acknowledge the life of someone who was not only a great man, but someone who embodied everything that is good about Ipswich and its people. John Walker was born in Ipswich on 3 September 1938 and died on 13 May this year. He grew up in East Ipswich with his sister, Wendy, and his parents, Connie and Jack. He went to Ipswich Central School and on to Ipswich Grammar School. At age 20, John was conscripted into the National Service and spent two years in the 25th Artillery Battalion, 5th Field Regiment.

John started working at his family's mine when he was 16. Beginning his working life underground, John went on to hold many roles in the mining industry. In 1993, when the mine closed, he formed a mining consulting company where he continued to provide mining workplace health and safety support until his retirement. When I say 'retirement', I use that word extremely lightly because here is a list of the things that John was involved in on a voluntary basis throughout his entire life, right up to his death.

He was an active member of the Ipswich City Uniting Church and was superintendent of Sunday school at Blair for 23 years. In addition, he served on the management committee for 39 years and was treasurer for 11 years. He was a board member of Wesley Mission from 1993 to 2007. He was also a board member of Lauriston nursing home board in 1993 and was made a life member of BlueCare nursing service.

I first met John through his involvement with Ipswich North Rotary, which he started in 1985 and where he held various positions including president, secretary and bulletin editor. He was awarded the Paul Harris Fellow in 1997 and in 2010 was awarded a Rotarian Sapphire Award. Anyone involved in Rotary will know that these two awards are very high honours.

But there is more. John was a passionate member of Habitat for Humanity, which supports vulnerable members of our community. He loved sport, especially cricket, Rugby League and Rugby Union. He also loved music and poetry and was a writer. In 2017, John published a book, *The Walkers of Aberdare—an Ipswich mining family*, which I was proud to have presented to our very own Parliamentary Library.

There is so much to say about John, but before finishing I want to mention John's friend and neighbour, Paul Casas, who gave the eulogy at John's funeral. He did such a great job and told a lot of very funny anecdotes about John's life and loves.

The main reason I want to talk about John tonight is the contribution John made in establishing the magnificent mining memorial in Limestone Park in Ipswich. John was secretary/treasurer of the Ipswich Rosewood Coalminers Memorial Trust. This is really where I came to know him through his advocacy. He and his team were tireless and worked incredibly hard to acknowledge the 186 men and boys who died working in the mines in Ipswich over the years. It took about a decade. I was proud to support them in their endeavours and get that mining memorial up and running.

I pass my sincere condolences on to John's wife, Lynne, his daughters and to his grandchildren. Vale John Walker.

### Woodgate Seawall



**Mr BENNETT** (Burnett—LNP) (6.24 pm): I want to bring to the attention of the House a serious issue that is evolving at Woodgate. We have had a real issue with the seawall and erosion over many years. A delay in approvals is contributing to this issue. It is understood that today a revised approval has been given to the Bundaberg Regional Council. The Bundaberg Regional Council's Woodgate Beach sand nourishment program was granted \$2 million in July last year. The project was then called

in by the department and the tender process had to be put on hold. The project has since come to a grinding halt. One condition on the new approval is ceasing for nesting sea turtles. In 17 days time the project has to cease until April next year.

The reason it is a serious issue is that we have already lost bike paths, we are at risk of losing some of the main road and, more important, if a high tide at Christmas busts through the seawall we are at serious risk of losing homes. This has been a big issue. All those things are serious.


It is now five months since the original approval and the blunder was acknowledged by the department. If the bureaucratic interference is not bad enough, the department is now—can members believe this?—demanding sand be brought from the Hervey Bay or the Port of Bundaberg, a 100-kilometre round trip, when there is plenty of sand for sand nourishment on the beach at Theodolite Creek or on the main beach at Woodgate.

As I have said, the foreshore pathway has collapsed. We have had a man and his dog fall into a hole. No sea turtles have ever nested in this area. We are talking about homes and roads that seriously need to be dealt with right now. This is a terrifying reality at Woodgate and residents facing this are scared. The refusal to approve this vital project will cost the community dearly. It is yet another example of the government's failure to listen to the people on the ground.

Yesterday I asked a question on notice. I will not read it out given the time left. Basically it asks: why is this sand nourishment program being delayed? The money was approved and granted by the Queensland Reconstruction Authority. Why is the department demanding that the sand be brought from 100 kilometres away on our road network when sand can be and should be taken from the local area? This is about a rock wall that will be replenished, covered over and revegetated. It will not be an eyesore but a saviour for the people of Woodgate who want this area taken care of.

The Woodgate and District Residents Association are reporting the community's fear is growing around this issue. There is frustration and anger every high tide as they lose a little more of the beach. King tides are pending over the coming Christmas period. If we have a storm surge we are worried. We have asked the ministers to come to Woodgate to meet with the people and listen to their concerns. Let us get this fixed.

### Voice to Parliament

 **Mr POWER** (Logan—ALP) (6.27 pm): Recently I received an email about an upcoming bill. It was one of those auto created ones where you get a mass of them. It was from a woman named Joan. I looked up my notes and I had received similar emails and calls from her regularly complaining about a bill we were debating. In fact, I had rung Joan four times. Each time I explained why I disagreed with her, so I reluctantly dialled her number again knowing that I was going to cop it again.

I had fully read up on the bill, so we ended up having a decent discussion, but we agreed to disagree, although some of the points and concerns from her perspective I properly understood, and I hope she understood mine. However, at the end of the conversation she said something to me that seemed the strangest thing. She said, 'Linus, you do a great job.' I said, 'Why would you say that? Every time we speak we completely disagree.'

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr POWER:** I note there are some members opposite who disagree with Joan like I did. She said, 'At least you listen and you respond to what I say.' That is our job really—listening to all, processing it, thinking and taking it in. Sometimes I get new ideas from the most unusual people. I value that part of my job.

I urge everyone here to reach out to someone whom they would not normally hear from and would not normally agree with on anything. Joan's words also made me reflect on the national debate we are having now—the process of thinking about how we listen to those who have not been heard for over 200 years of our nation's history.

I love Australia but I know our nation is much better when we listen, when we hear the voices of those who have not been heard. Proverbs tells us that we are entrusted as community leaders to 'be a voice for the voiceless'. Even the Old Testament recognised that hearing—truly listening—is required, not just to elites and kings but to those who society has given no voice at all.

In Australian history the voiceless have been the first people of our great nation. We grow as a nation knowing the history of our first people and the history of their interactions. Recently I was deeply moved by Archbishop Coleridge, who said, 'Only a heart of stone could allow the Indigenous people to become aliens, exiles and refugees in their own land.' He went on to say, 'We also need to listen to Indigenous peoples, in order to learn from them and learn to love them, not to see them as "the other".'

These are powerful words of faithful reflection and they create a challenge for us, a challenge as elected servants of the people. Too often those who have all the voice, the money, the education, the organisation—the peak bodies—monopolise all of the voice. They have all the say and leave no space for others. It is too easy to only listen to those who are like you. I challenge us all to do better.

For the people of Logan, this is why I am voting ‘yes’ at this referendum, to recognise Aboriginal people and create a space where we will listen to those who have never been given such a space. I know from having spoken to so many that not all agree with me, but that is what democracy is about—listening to those who do not agree with you and listening to those who have not been given a voice.

The House adjourned at 6.30 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, Skelton, Smith, Stevens, Stewart, Sullivan, Tantari, Walker, Watts, Weir, Whiting