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FIRST SESSION OF THE FIFTY-SEVENTH PARLIAMENT

Wednesday, 11 October 2023

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WEDNESDAY, 11 OCTOBER 2023

The Legislative Assembly met at 9.30 am.

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



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

SPEAKER'S STATEMENT

Absence of Member



Mr SPEAKER: Honourable members, I have received advice that the member for Southern Downs, Mr James Lister MP, will be absent from this week's sittings of the House. The member's notification complies with standing order 263A.

COMMITTEE OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Reports



Mr SPEAKER: Honourable members, I table report No. 35 of the Committee of the Legislative Assembly titled *Annual report 2022-23* and report No. 36 titled *Report on the 2023 budget estimates process*. I commend the reports to the House.

Tabled paper: Committee of the Legislative Assembly: Report No. 35, 57th Parliament—Annual Report 2022-23 [\[1611\]](#).

Tabled paper: Committee of the Legislative Assembly: Report No. 36, 57th Parliament—Report on the 2023 Budget Estimates Process [\[1612\]](#).

SPEAKER'S STATEMENTS

Wynnum Fringe Festival



Mr SPEAKER: Honourable members, courtesy of the member for Lytton, today at Parliament House there will be a sneak preview of a performance planned for the upcoming Wynnum Fringe Festival. With the member for Lytton's permission, I am now able to break the exciting news that the surprise guest performer at Parliament House today will be Rhonda Burchmore. As members may recall, an invitation has been circulated for this pop-up event being held in the Members' Reading Room during the lunch break starting at 1 pm.

School Group Tours



Mr SPEAKER: Honourable members, I wish to advise that we will be visited in the gallery this morning by students and teachers from Dakabin State School in the electorate of Murrumba, Dayboro State School in the electorate of Pine Rivers, and Drillham State School in the electorate of Callide.

PETITION

The Clerk presented the following paper petition, sponsored by the Clerk—


Ayr Hospital, CT Scanner

Mr Last, from 1,155 petitioners, requesting the House to install a CT scanner at the Ayr Hospital [\[1610\]](#).

Petition received.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS


Housing

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Olympic and Paralympic Games) (9.32 am): Our government is doing everything we can to make sure that Queenslanders have a place to call home. It is almost one year since our government convened the Queensland Housing Summit, bringing together almost 200 stakeholders to help ease housing pressures across the state. Our government has committed a record \$5 billion in housing in this budget to deliver 13,500 homes. That includes \$3 billion for the Housing and Homelessness Action Plan and an additional \$2 billion in the Housing Investment Fund. We work best when we work together. That is why we brought together the experts for our Housing Summit and it is why we are constantly engaging with local councils and the federal government to ensure the best outcomes for Queenslanders. I am very pleased to advise the House that we will deliver 600 more public homes thanks to new funding from the federal government's Social Housing Accelerator plan.

In August National Cabinet met in Brisbane, where an extra \$2 billion in funding was secured for housing across the nation. Of that, Queensland secured \$398 million. This funding will be invested, meaning that we can help more people into housing in North and Far North Queensland, the Wide Bay-Burnett region, Cape York, the outback, Central Queensland, Mackay, Whitsunday, the Darling Downs and here in the south-east. This announcement builds on the thousands of social homes delivered since we were elected in 2015 with more than 10 homes delivered each week, including 858 last financial year. I want to thank the Prime Minister for investing in Queensland and Minister for Housing Meaghan Scanlon for her hard work.

Nearly one year on from the Housing Summit, our government remains steadfast in its commitment to address the housing pressures that are being experienced by Queenslanders. We know that there is always more work to be done, and we are committed to throwing everything we have at easing housing pressures.

Coercive Control

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Olympic and Paralympic Games) (9.34 am): Coercive control is a complex issue and can have long-lasting mental health impacts. It is at the core of domestic and family violence and has no place in modern Queensland. We as a government want to put a stop to it. That is why we committed to making coercive control a standalone criminal offence: to break that cycle of fear, isolation, intimidation and humiliation; to make Queensland a safer place for women. Today we take another bold step towards that change. Today landmark legislation will be introduced to combat coercive control. This means that the patterned and deliberate manipulation of a person will be criminalised. It will carry a maximum penalty of 14 years imprisonment.

I wish to thank the many victim-survivors, the Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Council and advocates who helped us achieve this. Some of them will be joining us today. I also want to commend Minister Fentiman and the Attorney-General for working on this very closely on behalf of the government to bring us to the place we are today. On behalf of this parliament I also want to say a special thanks to Sue and Lloyd Clarke of Small Steps 4 Hannah for their advocacy and support. They do incredible work. I think anyone who has met them has been touched not only by the tragedy they have gone through but also by how they have now devoted their lives to making a difference. They really do need to be called out and given credit for this legislation coming before the House. I want to put on the record the thanks of this House for their work. What happened to their daughter Hannah and her children, Aaliyah, Laianah and Trey, was absolutely devastating. It is something that should never have happened. Sue and Lloyd's work to raise awareness on the red flags of coercive control has played a huge role, and last year the pair was named Queensland's Australian of the Year.

Looking back on our journey to this point, we have truly come a long way. We have large-scale reforms currently being implemented through our \$588 million response to implement the recommendations of the two Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce reports. Since 2015 our government has invested more than \$1.5 billion to combat domestic, family and sexual violence and improve women's safety. We have achieved a lot, but we still have a long way to go. We will continue to work together. I am proud to lead a government that is committed to championing women, their safety and their achievements.

Infrastructure Projects



Hon. A PALASZCZUK (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Olympic and Paralympic Games) (9.37 am): Queensland is also growing rapidly, and our government recognises that and is responding, building the infrastructure that is needed now. We are building a better, safer and richer lifestyle for all. Our \$89 billion Big Build is delivering schools, hospitals, TAFEs and the SuperGrid. We have a record \$32.1 billion for roads, rail and buses to keep Queenslanders moving, supporting over 25,000 jobs over the next four years.

I was just up on the Sunshine Coast with the Minister for Transport and the member for Caloundra to open the \$70 million Bells Creek Arterial Road, bringing Caloundra closer to Brisbane for families, commuters and holiday-makers alike, saving anything up to 10 minutes on a trip to Caloundra from Brisbane.

Ms Grace: We deliver for the Sunshine Coast!

Ms PALASZCZUK: That is right. Not only has this road opened 10 years ahead of schedule; it also means they can unlock more housing. When you put infrastructure in, then extra housing flows. We know that people are moving to the Sunshine Coast, and this government is committed to making sure that we are building schools. How many schools are there now, Minister for Education?

Ms Grace: Lots!

Ms PALASZCZUK: There are lots of schools.

Opposition members interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I do not know what they have against infrastructure.

Dr Miles: They want to cut it.

Ms PALASZCZUK: That is right; I will take that interjection. We are a government that delivers on our commitment to Queenslanders. We are bringing back train manufacturing to Maryborough; supporting local bus manufacturing; building the extension of Gold Coast Light Rail; building a better Bruce Highway, with 459 upgrades; investing in Cross River Rail to unlock the bottleneck at the heart of our rail network; and upgrading train stations, making them accessible for people with a disability. I look forward to joining the Minister for Transport when we inspect some of these projects in the not-too-distant future. We will continue to build right across this state.

Feeney, Mr C




Hon. A PALASZCZUK (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Olympic and Paralympic Games) (9.39 am): We received the sad news yesterday that philanthropist Charles Feeney has passed away in the United States at the age of 92. Known to many as Chuck, he was named an honorary Queensland Great in 2019, thanks to his contribution of more than \$350 million to research institutions here in Queensland. His generosity set us on the path of becoming the Smart State. Since 1990, Mr Feeney, through his The Atlantic Philanthropies institution, made game-changing donations to fast-track the development of Queensland's educational, scientific and research infrastructure.

His story is quite an amazing one and I want to share it with the House. He was a man who experienced incredible wealth but used that wealth for extraordinary philanthropy focused on medical research and education not just in Queensland but right across the globe. He made his fortune by getting involved in duty-free shopping, which was a concept he became involved in in the 1950s. He started out selling duty-free alcohol but expanded his business in the 1960s with the group he founded, the Duty Free Shoppers Group. From here he founded The Atlantic Philanthropies, which grew to become one of the world's largest charities. It is estimated that he gave away \$8 billion across a lifetime dedicated to supporting medical research, educational institutions and a host of other causes including disaster relief. Some of the Queensland benefactors include UQ's Institute for Molecular Bioscience, the Queensland Brain Institute, QUT's Institute of Health and Biomedical Innovation, the QIMR Berghofer Medical Research Institute and Griffith University.

I want to quickly share a story. When I met Chuck Feeney in San Francisco many years ago, I had the honour of sitting down with Peter Coaldrake. After we finished a meal, he asked me 'Did you enjoy the meal and the service?' I said that it was of such high quality and that the staff were very generous with their time. He said to me later that this coffee shop was set up in San Francisco to help prisoners who had served their time and were coming out of prison to get a job back in mainstream

society. When no-one would take them on, they would come to this cafe and from there they would go on and get other jobs. I wanted to share that story because that shows the sort of man he was. A lot of people would never have known the causes that he put money into. He touched the lives of many and he helped change the lives of many people.


Housing Supply

 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Murrumba—ALP) (Deputy Premier, Minister for State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning and Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympic and Paralympic Games Infrastructure) (9.42 am): The Palaszczuk government is taking action to increase housing supply and affordability in Queensland. We have implemented a comprehensive package of planning reforms, investments and interventions into the housing market to increase housing supply and affordability. We removed planning barriers for the delivery of temporary emergency housing, empowering local and state governments to act swiftly without the need for development approvals, especially during natural disasters. We have allowed granny flats to be rented on the open market, and there are now nearly 350 secondary dwellings being leased. We have made it easier to repurpose existing under-utilised facilities for rural workers accommodation. We established the \$220 million Growth Area Compact as part of the SEQ City Deal, ensuring a coordinated approach to critical infrastructure in Caboolture West. This is in addition to our record investment in social and affordable housing.

We are also paving the way to get more homes built for our most vulnerable Queenslanders. Late last year we introduced planning reforms so critical social and affordable housing proposals can get off the ground faster. Since introducing these changes, the process has been used to fast-track a development in Toowoomba that will deliver 23 social and affordable housing units for Queenslanders in need. The second project to be facilitated through Planning Regulation changes is an 81-unit social and affordable housing development in Woolloongabba. New social and affordable homes on this inner-city site will mean that more families and essential workers can reduce their ongoing cost of living by having better access to transport and other services in their local area once in their new homes. It is a great result and one we plan to build on.

The growth challenges we face will need solutions from the federal government, local councils, the development industry and community housing providers, but the Palaszczuk government is pulling every lever it has to deliver more housing for Queenslanders. Later today I will introduce a bill that will help the development of even more homes faster. It will provide a new, streamlined development approval for eligible infill and affordable home developments, help manage fragmented land holdings and ensure land to deliver essential infrastructure like water, power and sewerage. Every Queenslanders deserves a place to call home and this government is doing all we can to make that happen.


Manufacturing

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment) (9.44 am): The Palaszczuk government is delivering on our plan to strengthen and diversify Queensland's economy. That means supporting new jobs in the industries of the future, including jobs in advanced manufacturing that reduce both emissions and landfill. There are few better examples of projects that achieve these goals than Visy's new corrugated box manufacturing facility at Hemmant. Earlier this week I had the opportunity to open that new facility with Visy chairman Anthony Pratt, co-owners Fiona Geminder and Heloise Pratt, federal Minister for Industry and Science Ed Husic, and my colleague the member for Lytton, Joan Pease.

This new \$175 million facility is the largest box manufacturing plant of its kind in Australia and one of the most advanced facilities of its kind in the world. Thanks to our government's support for this initiative through the Queensland Jobs Fund, more than one-third of the \$2 billion Visy is investing in Australia is being invested here in Queensland. That is \$700 million being invested in advanced manufacturing and advanced manufacturing jobs in this state. Each day, the 100 workers in highly skilled green-collar jobs at this new facility will produce one million corrugated cardboard boxes, mainly to get Queensland-made food and beverages to supermarkets here and overseas. That includes 20 million boxes each year for Queensland banana farmers alone. Every one of those one million boxes each day will be made with 100 per cent recycled paper from Visy's recycling facility at nearby Gibson Island, another project supported by our government. By recycling those boxes, Visy is keeping 39,000 tonnes of paper and cardboard out of landfill each year. Consequently, carbon emissions will also be reduced.

By working closely with industry, our government is diversifying Queensland's economy. We are developing more sovereign manufacturing capability, we are ensuring a long-term stream of skilled, secure manufacturing jobs, and we are supporting projects that will help Queensland achieve our target of net zero emissions by 2050.

Coercive Control; Richards, Aunty Rose

 **Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (Minister for Health, Mental Health and Ambulance Services and Minister for Women) (9.47 am): The Palaszczuk government is committed to ending all forms of violence against women. That is why we established the Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce. Today is an important milestone on our commitment to deliver on these historic recommendations. We will be introducing legislation to establish a standalone offence of coercive control and enshrine an affirmative model of consent in our Criminal Code. I want to thank all of the victim-survivors who, with great generosity and bravery, shared their experiences and their trauma with the hope that they would improve things for other women right across Queensland.

Of course, violence against women is often underpinned by gender discrimination. This government—the first government in the nation that had 50 per cent women around the cabinet table—is committed to the equality of all. As the Minister for Women and the Minister for Health, I am so pleased that we have also committed to developing the first Women's Health Strategy. This strategy will address the barriers that many women face in accessing health care. I have been working with local MPs to hold women's health forums across Queensland in recent weeks. The one issue that has been raised more than any other is women's mental health. We know that the intersection between domestic, family and sexual violence and mental health is a real one.

We are also continuing our work to strengthen our mental health systems across Queensland, and it is Mental Health Week here in Queensland. Coming out of the COVID-19 pandemic, we have witnessed a huge change in community attitudes of Queenslanders who are willing to put up their hands to say, 'I am not okay.' In order to better deal with this increase in demand, our \$1.64 billion Better Care Together plan is rolling out new and expanded mental health supports right across Queensland. I am excited to hand down the first annual progress update for Better Care Together, detailing the incredible efforts of service providers, showing where funds have been invested so far and outlining a raft of initiatives for the year ahead. I table that annual progress update.


Tabled paper: Queensland Health: Better Care Together—Annual Progress Update 2022-23 [\[1613\]](#).

In the first year, almost \$120 million has been invested to strengthen mental health and wellbeing outcomes and to support people in crisis and at risk of suicide. An additional 252 mental health frontline staff have been employed across our hospital and health services. Every single one of these health workers will make an enormous difference in the lives of vulnerable Queenslanders. We are investing \$39 million to expand the mental health Hospital in the Home program to provide specialist care for vulnerable people in their home rather than in a hospital, because we know that hospital settings are not always the most appropriate for someone in crisis. We are investing almost \$50 million to hire 181 more frontline staff for new and existing headspace centres to provide timely care for people aged 12 to 25. I look forward to seeing this plan continue to grow, improve and boost mental health services for all Queenslanders.

Finally, it is with great sadness and respect that I want to acknowledge the passing of Aunty Rose Richards on Monday night. She was a Kuku Yalanji and Tagalaka elder from Far North Queensland who worked tirelessly to improve the delivery of health care for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women, children and families from the Cape York and the Torres Strait. Her advocacy and commitment saw the establishment of a number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander services in Cairns, most notably Mookai Rosie Bi-Bayan, the accommodation provider for pregnant women travelling from the cape and the Torres to give birth in Cairns. The legacy left by Aunty Rose cannot be described in words; it is felt and lived in the many women, children and families who benefited from her advocacy and commitment to improving the lives of First Nations peoples. I thank Aunty Rose for her significant contribution to health, and I offer my sincere condolences to her family, extended family and community.

Mr SPEAKER: I would like to associate myself with those comments from you, Minister for Health.

School Infrastructure

 **Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for Education, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing) (9.51 am): The Palaszczuk government will embark on the biggest decade of infrastructure delivery in Queensland's history with our Big Build. I am thrilled that education is playing

its part, with a \$2.1 billion infrastructure investment this year alone—a truly eye-watering figure—to deliver new schools, halls, classrooms and facilities right across the state. This is part of our record-breaking \$17.8 billion education budget.

We are certainly delivering in spades for the students of Queensland and their families and supporting 3,700 jobs in the process. Our \$2.1 billion investment is in addition to the \$723 million already announced for new schools like the new primary schools opening in 2024: Scenic Shores State School at Redland Bay and Bellbird Park State School in Bundamba. We are proud to deliver new schools in the fastest growing areas of Queensland. In 2024, the number of new schools we have delivered since 2015 will be 27.

There is also \$357 million for new general and specialist learning spaces at schools like Broadbeach State School in Mermaid Beach, Jamboree Heights State School at Mount Ommaney, Burpengary Meadows State School in Morayfield, and Moggill State School in Moggill. This is on top of investments we have made in learning spaces right across the state already, such as the \$20 million upgrades at Coolum State High School, which was praised last night by the member for Ninderry, and I thank him. Thanks to the \$259 million in this budget, our investment in school halls will be over \$700 million since 2015.

An opposition member interjected.

Ms GRACE: At least we do have a member who appreciates fine infrastructure. Eighteen of the 37 halls we committed to in 2020 are being built in regional Queensland, including Warwick State High School in Southern Downs, St George State High School and Chinchilla State High School in Warrego, Ayr State High School in Burdekin, and Oakey State High School in Condamine. It is a Palaszczuk government that will look after the Nationals. New halls announced in the budget include: Kenmore State High School in Moggill, Kedron State High School in Clayfield, Toowoomba North State School in Toowoomba North, and Townsville State High School in Townsville.

Our \$49 million playgrounds and tuckshops program will deliver upgrades at 150 schools, including playgrounds at Riverview State School in Bundamba, Coppabella State School in Burdekin, Tagai State College Yorke Island Campus in Cook, and Woorabinda State School in Gregory. We will look after the Nationals in Gregory. We are delivering tuckshops at Silkwood State High School in Hill, White Rock State School in Mulgrave, Allenstown State School in Rockhampton and Harlaxton State School in Toowoomba North. We know how popular this program is and we want to do more, so members should watch this space.

Our \$100 million Go for Gold Fund will inspire the next generation of Olympians. There is \$50 million in this budget for teacher housing. Of course, we have air-conditioned every single state school classroom, library and staffroom on budget and ahead of schedule. Queensland's Big Build will deliver in education infrastructure. Our students, wherever they live, deserve nothing less.

Social and Affordable Housing




Hon. MAJ SCANLON (Gaven—ALP) (Minister for Housing) (9.55 am): Our big housing build just got bigger. As the Premier said, we will be building an additional 600 social homes, thanks to a \$398 million injection from the Albanese Labor federal government. It adds to our government's \$5 billion investment for social and affordable housing and means this Palaszczuk government will now deliver 14,100 new homes for families, seniors, young people and people with a disability all across this state. Importantly, though, eight out of 10 of these 600 additional homes will be delivered outside of Brisbane in regional, rural and remote parts of Queensland. From Cape York to the Gold Coast, we have made sure these additional homes are going where they are needed most, alongside the thousands of homes we already have in the pipeline.

These additional homes mean that at a minimum we will now deliver 216 homes for Cape York, 308 homes for Far North Queensland, 279 homes for North Queensland, 218 homes for Wide Bay, 174 homes for the Sunshine Coast, 220 homes for Moreton Bay and 189 homes for Ipswich over the next few years, just to name a few. That does not even include the Housing Australia Future Fund or the \$2 billion Housing Investment Fund at a state level.

Shovels are in the ground right now on hundreds of sites across Queensland to build more public homes, and we will be looking at mixed methods for their delivery through traditional means, prefabricated builds, house and land packages, partnerships with community housing providers and First Nations councils, and the redevelopment of accommodation like hotels and motels into housing.

It shows what can happen when different levels of government work together. I want to acknowledge this investment from the Commonwealth. It is a welcomed step forward after a decade of underinvestment. However, this cannot be it. The Albanese government's commitment must be the beginning, not the end, of the Commonwealth's engagement in solving the housing puzzle. We will soon start negotiations for a national housing and homelessness agreement and we will be advocating that Queensland gets its fair share, because to house Queenslanders of the future we need all levels of government to play their part.

Water Infrastructure

 **Hon. GJ BUTCHER** (Gladstone—ALP) (Minister for Regional Development and Manufacturing and Minister for Water) (9.57 am): No matter where you go in our great state, the Palaszczuk government's Big Build means good jobs in our regions and delivering the infrastructure that Queensland communities need to grow and to thrive. When it comes to water infrastructure, the Palaszczuk government continues to deliver for this state. We have the amazing Rookwood Weir, the Fitzroy to Gladstone Pipeline, the raising of Burdekin Falls Dam, Big Rocks Weir, stages 1 and 2 of Haughton Pipeline, Mount Morgan Pipeline, Paradise Dam Improvement Project, Isisford Weir, the Toowoomba to Warwick Pipeline, the Southwest Pipeline to Beaudesert, the Cairns Water Security project, the Southern Downs Drought Resilience Package, and multiple dam safety improvement projects going on right across the state—and that is just to name a few.

We cannot forget the 99 water and sewerage projects that are currently underway across 50 of our regional councils, thanks to Building our Regions round 6—so many projects all part of the Palaszczuk government's Big Build in Queensland. We are seeing significant investment in water infrastructure, transforming Queensland. Take Rookwood Weir for example. Late last month the final concrete pour for the weir crest was completed. This means that that weir is now 98 per cent complete and on track for completion in a few months.


That is the Big Build creating big weirs giving us big opportunities for more regional jobs. Rookwood Weir really is a sight to behold. Honourable members have to go there and see it firsthand to really appreciate what a feat that weir construction has been. It is a massive project delivered in a live river environment that has been impacted by multiple inundation events during its construction. The weir has supported more than 360 local workers onsite during peak construction and created more jobs down the supply chain with more than \$250 million spent in Central Queensland alone.

Rookwood Weir is so much more than just a piece of water infrastructure in Queensland and its benefits go far beyond the water security and irrigators. It is a job generator, it is a capacity builder and it is a legacy project of the Big Build that Central Queenslanders can be so proud of.

On the topic of job generators, the Fitzroy-to-Gladstone pipeline really highlights how water can unlock economic growth. I am not just talking about the 400 local jobs and the 25 apprenticeships during construction; I am talking about future hydrogen opportunities and further investment in jobs that the 117-kilometre pipeline will unlock for the future of Queensland.

Whether it is the \$5.2 billion in water infrastructure delivered by the Palaszczuk government since 2015 or the planning work that is underway across the state, Queenslanders can be certain this government will deliver the infrastructure needed not just now but into the future.

Road and Transport Infrastructure

 **Hon. MC BAILEY** (Miller—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads and Minister for Digital Services) (10.01 am): Queensland is larger in size than 180 countries with only 15 nations larger than us. We are a big state and everyone across Queensland will benefit from the Palaszczuk government's Big Build. That is something to aspire to. We have delivered another record QTRIP with \$32.1 billion to be invested over the next four years on priority infrastructure across the state, nearly double the last Newman government cuts budget. We are investing more than \$18 billion—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr BAILEY: We hear more whingeing and whining from those opposite. They cannot help themselves. We are investing more than \$18 billion outside the metropolitan region, supporting 14,850 direct jobs in regional Queensland. That is why the Palaszczuk Labor government Big Build invests in our regions with major projects like the billion dollar Gympie bypass, the \$280 million Townsville Ring Road, the \$187 million Walkerston bypass, the \$1 billion Rockhampton Ring Road and the \$300 million Cairns Western Arterial Road to name a few. There is also our package in Cape York sealing the

Peninsula Developmental Road. We have also invested \$76 million this financial year in the Transport Infrastructure Development Scheme, the TIDS project, which increases our commitment to work with local governments on regional roads and transport networks.

A key feature of our Big Build is the Palaszczuk government's continued investment in the Bruce Highway, the economic backbone of regional Queensland. We are co-investing \$13 billion over a 15-year period to upgrade the Bruce with 459 projects delivered along the big Bruce, and the work will not stop there.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr BAILEY: I am advised more than 80 projects are currently underway compared to four when you were in power—

Mr SPEAKER: Direct your comments through the chair, member.

Mr BAILEY: I do not even need two hands to count them. I only need one hand when it comes to the Newman government, but I digress. Those 80 projects underway include the Killymoon Creek to Townsville Port Road intersection, the Bowen Connection Road to Champion Street intersection, the six-laning of the Bruce Highway from the Bribie turn-off to Steve Irwin Way—nearly done—and significant upgrades on the Caboolture-Bribie Island Road. There is no pruning there.

Mr Minnikin interjected.

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

Mr BAILEY: Of course the Palaszczuk government's Big Build backs Australia's sixth largest city, the Gold Coast, with \$5.5 billion allocated in QTRIP for the south coast over the next four years. This includes the continued delivery of major projects such as the \$2.1 billion second M1 Coomera Connector and the \$1.2 billion Gold Coast Light Rail stage 3 from Burleigh to Broadbeach, right near my old school, good old Broadbeach State School. Bless them.

I am pleased to announce that the Logan and Gold Coast Faster Rail project is taking more exciting steps forward with three major packages of work moving to the next phase of procurement. Once finalised, this double track duplication and removal of five level crossings will mean more frequent and reliable train services between Brisbane, Logan and the Gold Coast as well as better amenity for all those local communities.

The Palaszczuk government Big Build will also deliver a new fleet of 65 new trains built in Queensland by Queenslanders for Queenslanders, manufactured and constructed at a purpose-built manufacturing facility at Torbanlea near Maryborough by local workers. It is not just the Maryborough region that will benefit; there will be new stabling yards at Ormeau and flow-on benefits for Logan and Gold Coast workers as well as Queensland manufacturers, suppliers and contractors across the state. The Queensland made Train Manufacturing Program will provide well-paid advanced rail manufacturing jobs for hundreds of Queenslanders for the next 35 years. There is no policy-free zone here.

The Palaszczuk government Big Build continues to deliver for Queenslanders with Cross River Rail unlocking the rail bottleneck and revolutionising the South-East Queensland rail network, including the Sunshine Coast rail duplication and doing the hard yards on the direct line to the Sunshine Coast in partnership with the Albanese Labor government. Queenslanders need a state government that will keep building the infrastructure that a booming Queensland population needs—

Mr Minnikin interjected.

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

Mr BAILEY:—not cuts, not sacking, not selling and not sending manufacturing jobs overseas again. It takes a Labor government to build, and that is what we are going to continue to do.

Renewable Energy, Projects



Hon. MC de BRENNI (Springwood—ALP) (Minister for Energy, Renewables and Hydrogen and Minister for Public Works and Procurement) (10.06 am): With an historic \$19 billion budget investment in the Queensland SuperGrid we are building bigger than ever. Right now Queensland tradies are commencing building one of the world's largest high voltage direct current networks. From Currumbin to Cook the Queensland SuperGrid is connecting this great state. In the north, CopperString 2032 is connecting Traeger to Townsville. Workers from Gladstone, Rockhampton and Keppel are getting ready to build CQ-H2, the nation's largest green hydrogen project. A workforce of over 2,000

Queenslanders from places like Nicklin, Gympie, Glass House and Caloundra are building up to deliver the Borumba Pumped Hydro Project. There will be thousands more from Mackay, Mirani, Whitsunday and Burdekin who will build Pioneer-Burdekin, the world's most powerful pumped hydro.

Queensland is the only state with a renewable energy pipeline to meet our renewable energy targets. That is because in the Southern Downs we are building the largest onshore wind farm in the Southern Hemisphere. Even the members for Callide and Condamine get a slice of the action, the nation's largest solar farm, the Western Downs Green Power Hub.

We are also going big on the biggest build of batteries in the nation through publicly owned Energy Queensland. Queenslanders today are involved in designing, testing, manufacturing and building neighbourhood, community and network connected batteries right across Queensland. From Gordonvale to Gladstone, Tanby to Townsville, from Mundubbera to Morayfield, from Kleinton to Kewarra, we are putting more money back into the pockets of Queenslanders with 40 per cent of Queensland's homes already hosting rooftop solar and a new system being installed every 10 minutes. There has never been a more important time for households looking to make the switch to cheap, clean energy.

I am also pleased to announce that from 1 October this year reforms to building codes mean that all new apartment buildings will now be built electric vehicle ready, futureproofing our nation towards a low carbon economy. This will save those households literally millions of dollars by not having to retrofit in the future. I am advised the average Queensland motorist could save around \$2,900 on fuel each and every year. The Palaszczuk government's big energy build is ensuring that Queensland's best days are truly ahead of us.

Training and Skills, Infrastructure



Hon. DE FARMER (Bulimba—ALP) (Minister for Employment and Small Business, Minister for Training and Skills Development and Minister for Youth Justice) (10.09 am): The latest figure on the Fee-Free TAFE initiative that the Palaszczuk government is jointly funding with the federal government is 45,000. That is 45,000 people who may never have otherwise had the opportunity to get the training or skills to get a job. This initiative is life-changing—even more so in these times when the cost of living is such an issue. We look forward to negotiating Queensland's share of the next tranche of 300,000 fee-free TAFE places across Australia which the federal government has just announced.


Relief on fees is only part of the equation for vocational education in Queensland. This government believes that, no matter who they are or where they are in Queensland, people deserve the same access to high-quality vocational education. This is why investing in TAFE facilities across the state is a key part of this government's Big Build program—a record four-year \$88.729 billion capital program.

Since 2017 we have invested over \$288 million to build new and upgrade existing TAFE facilities across Queensland. Every month I seem to be opening a new TAFE facility: the \$1.1 million Toowoomba stage 2 of the Rural Centre of Excellence in February; the \$2.95 million South Bank Cyber Security Training Operation Centre and Robotics Lab in February; the \$1.32 million Hervey Bay nursing and allied health upgrades, which I opened with the local member; the \$3.5 million Mount Isa Engineering and Trade Workshop in June; and the TAFE Coomera Cyber Security Training Operation Centre in August.

There are more Big Build TAFE projects underway across the state. I am looking forward to opening the \$1.5 million community TAFE learning centre in Yarrabilba; the \$7.5 million Ooralea Trade Training Centre expansion in Mackay; the \$8.4 million campus consolidation in Rockhampton; the \$13.2 million Hydrogen and Renewable Energy Training Facility and the \$5 million advanced manufacturing skills lab at Bohle TAFE in Townsville; the \$7 million metal trades, manufacturing and robotics centre in Bundamba; and the \$4.1 million advanced manufacturing skills lab in Cairns.

There are yet more Big Build TAFE projects to come: in Cairns, the \$16 million Great Barrier Reef International Marine College expansion; at Eagle Farm, the \$40 million robotics and advanced manufacturing centre; and at Bundaberg, the \$1 million advanced manufacturing skills centre and the \$3.35 million agriculture and horticulture centre. There are new TAFE Big Build projects across the state. This government's capital program will directly support around 58,000 jobs, creating generational change and providing first-class facilities for all Queenslanders. We are continuing to deliver the economic and social infrastructure needed to support a growing Queensland.

Richards, Aunty Rose; Voice to Parliament

 **Hon. LM ENOCH** (Algerst—ALP) (Minister for Treaty, Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, Minister for Communities and Minister for the Arts) (10.12 am): I join with you, Mr Speaker, and the Minister for Health in recognising Aunty Rose Richards and all of the work that she has done for so many women over our lifetime. I also acknowledge my Grogan family who will be mourning that loss as well.

The Palaszczuk government supports the call for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the Uluru Statement from the Heart for voice, treaty and truth. We stand alongside every other state and territory government in Australia in our support for the modest request to recognise the First Peoples of this country in our founding document by enshrining an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advisory body whose sole purpose will be to provide advice to government on matters that relate to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.


Earlier this year, Queensland took our next step in honouring the Uluru Statement from the Heart with the passing of our landmark Path to Treaty legislation. This legislation received bipartisan support. I acknowledge the Leader of the Opposition and every member of the Queensland LNP for their resolute support for this historic legislation. It is because of the commitment of the Labor government and the support of the opposition that Queensland will see the establishment of a Treaty Institute to ready all parties for treaty making in this state and that we will see the establishment of a Truth-telling and Healing Inquiry where we will unlock the thousands of generations of stories, some ancient and others more recent, along with the many thousands of records created and kept since first contact that are held in our State Archives.

This Saturday, all Australians will have a profound opportunity to make history by supporting a Voice to Parliament. Over the past few months I have joined with thousands of Queenslanders and colleagues in supporting the Voice to Parliament—from Logan and Acacia Ridge to Townsville, Barcardine and Yarrabah, to name just a few. Queenslanders right across the state have been campaigning for 'yes'—knocking on doors, handing out flyers and having important and respectful conversations about the importance of this proposal. A 'yes' vote is an opportunity to reflect the true unique identity of Australia—an Australia that recognises its true and full history, an Australia that permanently recognises Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders as the First Peoples of this country in our Constitution, an Australia that says 'yes' to a First Nations voice to the Commonwealth government enshrined in the constitution.

For too long, Commonwealth governments of all persuasions have established and abandoned numerous representative bodies comprising Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians advising on government policies affecting their lives. This impermanent approach has actively hindered momentum and progress in so many areas and resulted in the persistent and unacceptable disadvantage experienced by First Australians. This weekend, I am voting 'yes'. I am voting 'yes' for recognition; I am voting 'yes' for listening; I am voting 'yes' for better results. That is what it is all about. It is as simple as that.

NOTICE OF MOTION

Cost of Living

 **Mr BERKMAN** (Maiwar—Grn) (10.16 am): I give notice that I will move—

That this House:

1. notes that:
 - (a) the cost-of-living crisis is hitting Queenslanders hard, with transport costs a major contributor. According to the Australian Automobile Association, Brisbane households currently spend an average of 18 per cent of their incomes on transport, including fuel, registration, car loans and insurance, with Townsville households spending an average of \$355 per week.
 - (b) Brisbane public transport fares are among the highest in the country.
 - (c) according to TransLink data, weekly patronage on its South-East Queensland services has fallen by 16 per cent from pre-COVID levels in 2019.
 - (d) the Queensland government failed to meet the 2022 deadline for all train stations to be compliant with federal disability standards as required under the federal Disability Discrimination Act, and around a third of train stations across South-East Queensland are still not fully accessible.
 - (e) transport emissions are the third largest source of greenhouse gas emissions in Australia, with emissions from cars and light commercial vehicles contributing 11.6 per cent of annual emissions, and are also the fastest growing source of emissions in the country.

2. calls on the government to:
- (a) commit to increase the general public transport concession to make public transport free for all users.
 - (b) commit to a binding, fully funded plan to make all of Queensland's train stations 100 per cent compliant with federal disability standards.
 - (c) increase investment in public transport frequency and connectivity including through investment in new routes and dedicated bus lanes along major transport corridors.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Mr SPEAKER: Honourable members, question time will conclude today at 11.17 am.

Crime and Corruption Commission, Reports



Mr CRISAFULLI (10.17 am): My question is to the Premier. Will the Premier introduce retrospective legislation to allow the CCC to release its reports, as requested by the CCC?

Ms PALASZCZUK: The Attorney-General is seeking legal advice. The Attorney-General will update cabinet when she has received that advice.

Public Service, Recruitment

Mr CRISAFULLI: My question is to the Premier. Former deputy premier Jackie Trad was the subject of a CCC investigation about interference in the selection of a public servant in the education department. Can the Premier confirm that the Labor government has learned from this and is not getting involved in the public hiring of public servants?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I say to the Leader of the Opposition: if he has any evidence that that is not the case, he should forward that to the director-general of the Department of the Premier and Cabinet.

Regional Queensland, Job Creation

Mr SAUNDERS: My question is of the Premier and Minister for the Olympic and Paralympic Games. Can the Premier outline the government's commitment to regional employment, and is the Premier aware of any other approaches?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the member for Maryborough for the question and at the outset I commend the member for Maryborough for transforming the city that he represents. What a proud member for a regional centre that had high unemployment when we came to office. That unemployment level has come down to around five per cent, and youth unemployment has come down as well. He is a champion for the people of Maryborough; he represents the people of Maryborough proudly in this state.

When it comes to manufacturing, of course we are bringing the building of trains back to Maryborough. The Train Manufacturing Program will deliver 800 jobs in construction and manufacturing alone. That provides generations of opportunity to people living and working in that regional centre. The member for Maryborough knows that when he was the candidate and I was the opposition leader we went to Maryborough and the area was absolutely decimated when it came to local employment. Under the Newman government, there were massive cuts to health across that region. What we see very clearly now is the same Newman government under the Leader of the Opposition. Why do I say that? The member for Mudgeeraba made it very clear.

Mr Crisafulli interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: The member for Broadwater might not like to hear it, but I have to say it. The member for Mudgeeraba said, 'The doctors and nurses have nothing to fear.' Where have we heard that before? Maybe the member for Mudgeeraba should not do any more interviews. I went back, because it reminded me of when Campbell Newman became the leader of the opposition.

A government member interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: That is right: the member for Surfers Paradise remembers it very well. I do not like what happened to the member for Surfers Paradise. It was very unfair and he should never forget. What did Campbell Newman say? This is what he said—

What I'm saying is that the Public Service has nothing to fear from me.

That is what Campbell Newman said. They are cut from the same cloth. They are still arrogant, they are still out of touch and all they have is whingeing and no policies.

(Time expired)

Palaszcuk Labor Government, Integrity

Mr BLEIJIE: My question is to the Premier. Given the history of investigations by the CCC into allegations of Labor members of parliament interfering in the appointment of public servants, is it appropriate for the Labor member for Pumicestone to interfere in Queensland Health recruitment processes by requesting job applications be sent through to her office?

Ms GRACE: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I think there were a lot of imputations in there when you consider that one of the CCC investigations referred to actually cleared a particular member and there is an imputation that—

Mr SPEAKER: Member, it is not an opportunity to debate the question. In terms of imputations, I have heard the question as asked. I would ask that the facts of the question could be substantiated however. I think that is an important point.

Mr BLEIJIE: Mr Speaker, I table a copy of a Facebook post by the member for Pumicestone asking for Queensland Health applications to be sent to her pumicestone@parliament email address.

Tabled paper: Extract, undated, from the Facebook page of the member for Pumicestone, Ms Ali King MP, regarding application processes for expected Bribie Satellite Hospital jobs [\[1614\]](#).

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you, member.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the member for Kawana for the question. He might forget how he appointed a chief justice of this state. If the member wants to talk about appointments, what about the little meeting that happened in Campbell Newman's electorate office and the appointment of the former chief justice of this state? That is the member for Kawana. The new members of the LNP might not know about that. Well, there are lots of front pages. There is lots of information. There was a public debate about it—the hand-picked appointment of the chief justice of Queensland.

Mr Bleijie interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Member for Kawana, you asked the question. The Premier is providing an answer. I would hope that you would at least hear the answer.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Then there was a former treasurer of the LNP. He was appointed to do a review. Then there was the appointment of Michael Caltabiano. That was the experience there.

Ms Grace interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: That is right: then we had the member for Mudgeeraba.

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

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Who did she appoint? Her son.

Mr SPEAKER: Premier, please resume your seat.

Ms Palaszcuk: Oh, he doesn't like it.

Mr BLEIJIE: I do actually. You are doing well. Keep going.

Mr SPEAKER: What is your point of order?

Mr BLEIJIE: A point of order, Mr Speaker, on 118(b). My question was about appointment processes of Queensland Health public servants advertised by the member for Pumicestone and I ask you to direct the Premier back to the particular element of the question, which was the only aspect I asked.

Ms Grace: No.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you, member for McConnel. I do believe that I am actually looking at the standing orders, not you. Premier, you have one minute and 47 seconds remaining. I trust that you will come back to the question as asked.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I am happy to look into that matter, but let me say this: let us also talk about the hand-picked appointment as head of the CCC. The member for Kawana went and hand-picked the head of the CCC—own goal! Oh my goodness! Out of all the people! Those opposite probably said in strategy group, 'Who's going to ask this question about appointments today to the Premier?', and the member for Kawana said, 'Oh, I'll do it.' Unbelievable! We have appointments of the Chief Justice, the director-general of the transport department—

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

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Pause the clock. Please resume your seat, Premier. If this is about relevance, member, I am paying close attention and I will be ruling.

Mr POWELL: It is about relevance and 118(b).

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you. That is all I need to hear.

Government members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you, members to my right. Premier, they raised a particular aspect of the question. You have given a commitment to look into the matter. Do you have anything further to add in that part of the question?

Ms PALASZCZUK: As I said, I will look into the Facebook post, but on first glance it looks like that the satellite hospital is coming on board and she is encouraging people to get involved—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order!

Ms PALASZCZUK:—in her electorate.

Mr SPEAKER: I am a little confused, members. I asked the Premier to be relevant to the question. She is being relevant to the question and it got shouted down. We cannot have it both ways.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Let me say very clearly—

Mr Crisafulli interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Leader of the Opposition, you are warned under the standing orders. The House was not called to order for you to simply fill the gap.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Let me say this: appointment processes usually go through cabinet, so under the LNP government the Leader of the Opposition sat around the cabinet table when all of those appointments were made.

Mrs Frecklington: Let the sun shine in.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I hear the member for Nanango carrying on. Those opposite want to talk about nurses in regional hospitals. Under the LNP, 4,500 people were cut. We are actually putting on nurses to look after our landmark satellite hospitals, and guess what? People living regionally are able to work regionally. People who want to live locally to go to a—

(Time expired)

Regional Queensland, Job Creation

Mrs GILBERT: My question is of the Premier and Minister for the Olympic and Paralympic Games. Can the Premier update the House on how the Palaszczuk government's Big Build will support our regions, and is the Premier aware of any alternate policies?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the member for Mackay for the question. It was wonderful to join the member for Mackay last night with the Isaac council, the Whitsunday council and the Mackay council for their showcase here at Parliament House. I want to commend all members of parliament who took the time to come along to see that and speak with the delegation and hear their great plans for the region. The whole region has an incredibly bright future and we know that unemployment rates are coming down in regional Queensland.

In 2015 the unemployment rate was 5.5 per cent. Today it is 3.4 per cent, which is absolutely incredible. There has been good work from the local member, who is very passionate about the region. I love visiting there. The member is always showing me something new and innovative that is happening, whether it is to do with the mining industry—we have been to the mining centre of excellence—or the new pumped hydro that will be built there, the Pioneer-Burdekin. I mention the money going into local infrastructure as part of our Big Build: \$45 million for the bypass project; \$29.5 million to the Moranbah Hospital; and \$24 million to the Mackay Base Hospital. We are investing \$6 billion for the Pioneer-Burdekin pumped hydro and \$5.7 million for the Resources Centre of Excellence to develop a future industries hub.

This Big Build is happening, as I and other ministers have said today, right across our state. These are big projects. They keep people in work. We have workforces that move from one area to another. It keeps employment happening in regional Queensland. We know that in Cairns, Toowoomba and Townsville the Big Build is having a big impact on the local economies. All of this is under threat because the Leader of the Opposition, as the Treasurer has said time and time again, has refused to commit to keeping the progressive coal royalties. These coal royalties mean that money is going back into the regions—back to the areas that produce the coal to be exported. Let me say very clearly that I

know that the public supports us in this: they support the progressive coal royalties. The Leader of the Opposition is creating a big black hole if he does not say that they are going to be keeping this, because all of these projects would be under threat.

Palaszczuk Labor Government, Integrity

Mr POWELL: My question is to the Minister for Health. The member for Pumicestone has requested people seeking a Queensland Health job send their application to her, a process she claims—

Government members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Members to my right, I will start issuing warnings, as I have instructed, if I cannot hear the question.

Mr POWELL: The member for Pumicestone has requested people seeking a Queensland Health job send their application to her, a process she claims was signed off by the minister's department. Given the corruption risk of political interference and vetting in the appointment of independent public servants, why did the health minister's department approve job applications being sent through a Labor MP?

Dr MILES: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. That question is misleading. The verification provided by the member does not support that question and I ask that it be ruled out of order.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order, members! I am taking advice. The House will be silent. Members, the Facebook post in question provides two options: one is going through SmartJobs; one is via the Pumicestone electorate office. I will allow the question, but I will give latitude in terms of how you are able to respond to it, Minister for Health.

Ms FENTIMAN: I thank the member for the question. It is interesting that the LNP want to talk about getting people into health jobs, because they sacked 4,000 health workers when they were in government. Our government has not only replaced those health workers but we have, in fact, hired so many thousands more of them, because we need more health workers to continue to look after Queenslanders. We are a government that is absolutely focused on getting Queenslanders employed. As the Premier has just said this morning, we have some of the lowest unemployment rates in the nation and a big part of that is our government's commitment to hiring people to do the health jobs that we need to look after Queenslanders.

I would like to invite members of the opposition, if they know any local constituents who would be interested in applying to work for Queensland Health, to let me know because we will absolutely make sure that their CVs go to the appropriate HHS. We absolutely want more Queenslanders employed through all of our health and hospital services.

Mr Head interjected.

Mr de Brenni interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Member for Callide, you are warned under the standing orders. The Minister for Energy will cease his interjections.

Ms FENTIMAN: As the member for Pumicestone has said, they can apply through SmartJobs. Because those opposite are all local members of parliament, they should be encouraging Queenslanders to apply for decent, well-paid health jobs. On this side of the House, we actually think nurses deserve the pay and entitlements that they get, unlike the LNP. Unlike the member for Burnett, we do not think they are unrealistic entitlements that need to be broken the back of. We do not think regional health workers are duds, either. The member for Mudgeeraba has still not apologised for calling our health workers 'duds'.

It is a bit hypocritical for the LNP to come in here and talk about Public Service appointments when they had Michael Caltabiano as their hand-picked director-general of Transport. Let's not forget that the member for Mudgeeraba was hauled before the Ethics Committee and was found to have misled parliament for getting her son a job in the Public Service.

Opposition members interjected.

Ms FENTIMAN: On that side of the House they have form not only for interfering in Public Service appointments, but also for misleading the parliament about it. I am not going to be lectured to by the LNP about health workers and putting more people into our health system when they sacked so many thousands of them. I certainly will not be lectured to by those opposite about integrity when it comes to appointments in the Public Service.

Mr SPEAKER: Before calling the next questioner, member for Nanango, member for Buderim and member for Glass House, you are warned under the standing orders.

Housing Supply

Ms RICHARDS: My question is to the Deputy Premier. Could the Deputy Premier advise the House how the Palaszczuk government is delivering more housing for Queenslanders, and is the Deputy Premier aware of any alternative approaches?

Dr MILES: I thank the member for Redlands for her question. She has been active in making sure there is adequate supply of affordable houses in the Redlands. While approving housing developments is primarily the responsibility of local governments, what the Palaszczuk government has done, where local governments cannot or will not approve sufficient housing, is step in to assist them, including in the Redlands, where we are assisting the Redland City Council with their housing plan. We are working with them on that right now.

Today we will introduce new laws to give the state even more powers to assist local government to deliver the housing that Queenslanders need, to help them to manage the opening up of new land and new developments as well as deliver easements for utilities that will unlock currently under-utilised parts of the urban footprint. That is our next legislative step. Members have heard from the housing minister today that our next step, along with the Australian government assisting us with \$398 million, is to deliver another 600 social houses, 80 per cent of which will be outside of Brisbane in rural, regional and remote parts of Queensland. That is on top of the \$5 billion the Palaszczuk government has committed to deliver up to 13,500 new homes—a comprehensive plan of action to deliver more and more affordable homes for Queenslanders.

While on this side of the House we are focused on delivering the homes and the jobs that Queenslanders need, I have overheard more than a few members from the other side of the House wondering who will lose their job so that Amanda Stoker can take her place on the shadow front bench. Who would have thought the LNP would need another extreme right-wing, crazy, woman-hating lunatic, but that is who the Leader of the Opposition chose as his candidate in Oodgeroo.

We know why he chose her. It is because he still owes her from when she took down the member for Nanango. Who could forget when she called the member for Nanango weak and accused her of playing the gender card? The ultimate beneficiary of that has been the member for Broadwater, and now he rewards with her a safe seat and a spot in the shadow ministry. She is your pick and now you have to answer—

Mr SPEAKER: Direct your comments through the chair, Minister.

Dr MILES:—for every single one of her crazy, right-wing, lunatic views.

Member for Pumicestone

Ms SIMPSON: My question is to the Premier. Former deputy premier Jackie Trad was investigated by the CCC for alleged interference in the selection of public servants. Will the Premier refer the member for Pumicestone to the CCC for alleged interference in the selection process of independent public servants, just like Jackie Trad?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I have had a chance to review the email. I think the member would also agree that it was probably not appropriate to have it going through her electorate office. She was—

Opposition members interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: No, it is up to her to say that. However, I will say this—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: I am sorry, Premier. Pause the clock. Members to my left, the Premier is being responsive to the question as asked. I ask you to show her some courtesy.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I think her intention was clearly to provide advice to people that positions would be coming available at the satellite hospital in her local community. I will let her respond to that.

Renewable Energy

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 affordable and reliable energy future and is the Treasurer aware of any alternative approaches?

Mr DICK: I thank the member for Bundaberg for his question. As he represents a community that has one of the highest penetration rates of rooftop solar in the country, the member for Bundaberg knows that, since we were elected, the Palaszczuk Labor government has provided a clear path for investment in and the development of renewable energy in this state. After an investment boycott under the Newman LNP government, we provided policy certainty for Queensland's renewable energy revolution to get started. I am very pleased to say that the appetite for investment in renewable energy generation and transition and, of course, the world's largest pumped hydro storage scheme is absolutely through the roof. That interest in investing in Queensland's renewable energy is enormous and I saw it on my recent trade mission to Europe.

However, there is another approach and it is the approach of the federal LNP, led by two Queenslanders, Peter Dutton and David Littleproud: a nuclear power future. We now know for certain that that is the policy of the state LNP following the endorsement of the new LNP candidate for Oodgeroo. Amanda Stoker has been relentless in her push for Australia to build its own nuclear reactors. I will say this for Amanda Stoker: she has been completely transparent and up-front with Queenslanders about her fierce and genuine advocacy for nuclear power in this state and in this country. No-one could accuse her of hiding her plan, which cannot be said for the Leader of the Opposition.

When will the Leader of the Opposition reveal the LNP's secret plan for nuclear power? Where would he build those power stations? In Bargara, in the electorate of Burnett? Ted O'Brien is the federal LNP spokesman on energy. In this country there is no greater champion for nuclear energy than Ted O'Brien. Where on the Sunshine Coast would it be built? In Maroochydore? In Kawana? We do not know because although they have a plan they will not reveal it.

What does the Leader of the Opposition think about Amanda Stoker's other clearly announced policy positions? She has made it clear that not only would she wind back a woman's right to termination of pregnancy, but also that that is an issue that the states should deal with. When will the LNP reveal its plans to repeal and wind back abortion laws in this state?

There is a very clear choice coming up: the LNP's plan led by the member for Broadwater about nuclear power or a renewable energy future. The four questions that the Leader of the Opposition must answer are: where will they build nuclear power stations, when will they start operating, how much will they cost and where will the Leader of the Opposition dump the nuclear waste? It is well and truly time for the Leader of the Opposition—

(Time expired)

Member for Pumicestone

Mr NICHOLLS: My question is to the Minister for Health. Noting the Premier's comments just a minute or two ago about the actions of the member for Pumicestone in calling for health department job applicants to send their applications to her office, does the health minister agree with the Premier or does the health minister stand by her comments of only six minutes ago?

Ms KING: Mr Speaker, I rise on a matter of privilege suddenly arising. As has been noted, in a Facebook post I encouraged a constituent to apply for a job at the new Bribie Satellite Hospital on SmartJobs and, as I was indicated to do by Metro North, I also said that the—

Mr SPEAKER: Member, you have to get directly to the point of privilege suddenly arising and what your actions are planned to be. It is not a chance to make a statement.

Ms KING: I simply wish to indicate to the House that I recognise that I made an error of judgement in encouraging the constituent to also pass their CV to me.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Pumicestone, the appropriate time would be as a matter of personal explanation or during a standard set of privilege opportunities. This is not a time to make a statement at this point. If you have a matter of privilege suddenly arising related to a particular matter in the House then I encourage you to do so. Otherwise, there will be other opportunities for you to provide that statement

Ms KING: Thank you for your guidance, Speaker.

Ms FENTIMAN: Of course, I support the Premier's comments but I—

Opposition members interjected.

Ms FENTIMAN: The member for Pumicestone—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr O'Connor interjected.

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

Ms FENTIMAN: The member for Pumicestone has acknowledged she made a mistake.

Mr Bleijie interjected.

Ms FENTIMAN: Let me tell you, member for Kawana, what I said six minutes ago was that you have form in sacking health workers.

Mr SPEAKER: Minister for Health, you will direct your comments through the chair. Member for Kawana, you are very close to being on a warning.

Ms FENTIMAN: The Premier has indicated and the member for Pumicestone obviously has now made a statement. She has apologised for her error. She now has said that that was something that she regrets doing.

Opposition members interjected.

Mrs Gerber interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: I am sorry, Minister. Member for Currumbin, you are warned under the standing orders. Members to my left, the minister, as I hear her, is being responsive to the question. I wish to hear the response of the Minister for Health.

Ms FENTIMAN: That is right, Mr Speaker. Again, what I said six minutes ago is that we are hiring health workers at our new satellite hospitals that the LNP do not support. That is what this is about. This is about the LNP's record on health workers. In this House in the past few weeks we have heard the member for Burnett and the member for Mudgeeraba talk about their secret plan, 'aspiring' back to the LNP Newman years. That is what this is about.

We are absolutely committed to getting more Queenslanders into health jobs. That is what we are doing. We are building satellite hospitals to take the pressure off our emergency departments. I say to anyone in Queensland who wants to apply, please apply through SmartJobs. If any of you have any constituents—

Mr SPEAKER: Through the chair, Minister.

Ms FENTIMAN:—who want to work for Queensland Health, please encourage them to apply.

Mr Purdie interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Which member was that? Member for Ninderry, you are warned under the standing orders.

Work Health and Safety

Mr KING: My question is to the Minister for Education, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing. Can the minister update the House on the Palaszczuk government's initiatives to protect Queensland workers and is the minister aware of any alternative approaches?

Ms GRACE: I thank the member for the question. I know that he is a strong advocate for workers in his electorate. This is Safe Work Month. I know that he has been tireless in ensuring that workers' safety is paramount in workplaces not only in his electorate but everywhere in Queensland. The Palaszczuk government has led the nation in worker safety. Every step of the way those opposite have opposed that. Tomorrow will be six years since we passed the industrial manslaughter laws opposed by those opposite. These laws were nation leading in ensuring that, when a worker loses their life through a tragedy on a job site, the courts are able to handle these issues. We have had two successful convictions. We know, of course, that those opposite voted against those provisions. We know that they will probably be cut should they ever govern again in this state. Lord help us! I did not even want to say it.

We have nation-leading wage theft laws that were passed three years ago. Those laws were opposed by those opposite. You can bet your bottom dollar that they will be on the chopping block. Now we have the Albanese government looking at our laws as a model going forward. We also have the same story with labour hire licensing laws. They were introduced six years ago and have been extremely successful. Once again, we know that they will be cut by those opposite. They opposed them at the time. In fact, I remember during the debate the bizarre comments of the member for Toowoomba South who said that the legislation was one of the most technically and legally flawed bills he had ever seen. It was only a few weeks later that the National Agricultural Workforce Strategy, delivered by the

Morrison LNP government, recommended that all states and territories actually mirror Queensland's legislation—incredible. They could not understand it. We now have the Albanese government introducing labour hire licensing laws, and we look forward to those.

In terms of silicosis we are nation leading in looking after and protecting workers. I remember writing six letters to four different IR ministers—O'Dwyer, Porter, Cash and Hunt—to get them to take this matter seriously. It has only been the Albanese Labor government that is finally doing some work in this space. We have had the member for Mudgeeraba talking about the fake union. When it comes to industrial relations, they would reinstate union powers to NPAQ to give workers an alternative. Let me tell the member for Mudgeeraba: they were never registered federally and never registered in this state. You cannot bring back something they never had.

(Time expired)

Pumicestone Electorate, Desalination Plant

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: My question is to the Minister for Water. Are any locations in the Pumicestone electorate, including Bribie Island, being considered for a water desalinisation plant?

Mr BUTCHER: I thank the member for the question. If the member had listened carefully yesterday to ministerial statements and to the media we did, she would know that Seqwater has a 30-year plan and part of that plan is to build a desalinisation plant by 2035 in the northern part of the South-East Queensland water grid. We currently have one of the safest grids in Australia, if not the world. It includes desalinisation, recycled water and also our dams in South-East Queensland. Part of the way forward is to do detailed business cases for two proposals we have put forward for short-term support for the South-East Queensland water grid. To start with there is a proposal to make sure that we connect and upgrade the desalinisation plant at Tugun by 2031. The detailed business case for that is moving forward and will be handed to the government by early 2024.

Crazily, we heard last night in this parliament the member for Nanango screaming about having the money to build two extra dams in South-East Queensland. I want to point a few things out this morning in relation to the member for Nanango's comments last night. There is no proposal in the Moreton Bay water plan to build any new large-scale dams in South-East Queensland. I also want to make another point clear—

Mr POWELL: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order on relevance, 118(b). The question was very short and specific about plans to build a desalination plant in the Pumicestone electorate, including on Bribie Island.

Mr SPEAKER: I am listening to the answer and the minister has made multiple references to desalination plants and plans by the government as I hear it. I will allow the minister to continue with his response.

Mr BUTCHER: I want to make it quite clear to the opposition that there is a dam in Queensland called Wyaralong Dam which was built during the millennium drought for water security for South-East Queensland and it has not yet been connected to the water grid. As part of the South-East Queensland water plan moving forward, we will be hooking up Wyaralong Dam to the water grid to support South-East Queensland water users. That is a sensible decision by Seqwater to ensure that we can supply extra water into the grid due to population growth and climate change—all the reasons we need more water security in Queensland.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Pause the clock. Minister, under 118(b) I ask that you address the direct component of the question. I believe it was reasonably direct. I appreciate the broader context that you are providing.

Mr BUTCHER: Thank you, Mr Speaker. What we did say yesterday in relation to a desalinisation plant in 2035 is that Seqwater will be doing a detailed business case that will be delivered to government in 2025. That detailed business case will look at the amount of water Seqwater says we will need to ensure, with the people coming into Queensland, we have water security into the future. They will be looking at the location of the desalination plant to ensure it is close enough to the grid that it will not be too expensive to build. The north part of the South-East Queensland water grid is the obvious place for it because we already have a desalinisation plant in the southern part.

(Time expired)

Women

Ms HOWARD: My question is to the Minister for Health, Mental Health and Ambulance Services and the Minister for Women. Can the minister update the House on how the Palaszczuk government is supporting the women of Queensland, and is the minister aware of any alternative approaches?

Ms FENTIMAN: The member is a tremendous advocate for women and girls in her community of Ipswich. I am proud to be the Minister for Women in this Palaszczuk Labor government because we have such a strong track record of supporting women—whether it is getting them elected to the parliament or putting women at the centre of our criminal justice law reforms. We want a health system that is responsive to the needs of women and girls. I am so pleased that we are nearing 10,000 responses to our women's health survey. I think it is—and I am going to claim it—the biggest response to a government survey that we have had in many years. Almost 10,000 women have taken the time to respond to our survey.

That is because we are a government that values women's voices. I have said many times in this place that with only six women sitting across that side of the chamber how does the LNP ever hope to represent modern Queensland? It seems that the Leader of the Opposition is determined to change all of that because we have seen the preselection of Amanda Stoker in Oodgeroo—Amanda Stoker, that famous champion for women who supported Bettina Arndt when she said that there was no sexual assault crisis on university campuses, leading former Australian of the Year Grace Tame to say that Stoker was 'falsifying all counts of sexual abuse on campuses across the nation'.

Who can forget when Amanda Stoker accused the member for Nanango of playing the gender card when she came out to talk about the bullying from men in her own party? This is the woman that the LNP leader has hand-picked to change the LNP's image problem for women—Amanda Stoker.

Mr Bleijie interjected.

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

Ms FENTIMAN: What else would we expect from a party that voted against a woman's right to choose and is clearly not saying what it will do if it is re-elected. Their own spokesperson for women, the member for Mudgeeraba, has not proposed a single piece of legislation to advance the rights of women or women's health. In fact, in the 14 years that the member for Mudgeeraba has been a member of parliament she has introduced one bill. That was the same bill that the former arts minister also introduced. What has the member for Mudgeeraba been doing? Since 2020—

Ms Bates: Rachel Nolan.

Ms FENTIMAN: Rachel Nolan; that is right. I take that interjection from the member for Mudgeeraba. The one bill she introduced was Rachel Nolan's bill. The member for Mudgeeraba has a terrible track record when it comes to the rights of—

(Time expired)

Gillnet Fishing

Mr KATTER: My question is to the Premier and Minister for the Olympic and Paralympic Games. I refer the Premier to the plight of a small fishing business in Mareeba that employs about 50 people. It recently borrowed a million dollars to grow the operation. It will be rendered worthless if gillnet fishing is banned in the gulf as proposed. Will the Premier explain why this and other small North Queensland businesses should be wiped out so her government can appease the WWF, UNESCO and the inner suburbs of Brisbane in the pursuit of their ideological agenda?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the member for Traeger for the question. I am advised that the joint decision to end gillnet fishing in the Great Barrier Reef and parts of the gulf has not been taken lightly. There are thousands of jobs in tourism, hospitality and fishing that depend on a healthy Great Barrier Reef, and UNESCO is looking closely at impacts on the reef. In removing gillnets, state and Commonwealth governments are aiming to protect the wildlife that the reef needs for resilience. We want to see a future for those thousands of jobs. We also want a sustainable fishing industry.

We know that around 242 licence holders are affected and some of them are in the gulf, as the species they impact move between the two areas. We have been clear that we are providing financial support. There is a total package of \$160 million in transition funding. A taskforce was set up to guide the implementation of the package. I expect that the government will make a decision soon on implementing that package, including the Queensland contribution of \$100 million in direct financial support and other forms of support like business advice, individual retraining and skills opportunities.

As Minister Furner confirmed at his estimates hearing, the knowledge of the industry is critical in shaping that support. That is why we set up a taskforce to guide the implementation. I am advised that it has met regularly, and industry representatives are engaged with the taskforce and the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries. I am sure that Minister Furner will keep the member updated in relation to these issues.

Housing Supply

Mr SKELTON: My question is of the Minister for Housing. Can the minister update the House on how the Palaszczuk government is delivering more housing with the federal government, and is the minister aware of any alternative approaches?

Ms SCANLON: I thank the member for Nicklin for the question. I know that yesterday he was really pleased to announce that we are able to support supported accommodation for young vulnerable people in his community in Nambour, and we have even better news today: our Big Build is getting even bigger! Today we announced how we will distribute nearly \$400 million from the Commonwealth government to help deliver 14,100 new homes across the state. Today I am really pleased to announce some more good news for the Sunshine Coast: we have identified the first project that will receive federal government funding. Coast2Bay has submitted a development application to build 34 social housing units in the master planned community of Aura in Caloundra South. This is 34 of 600 new homes we will develop throughout the state in partnership with the federal government. It is welcome news after almost a decade of underinvestment by the former federal government.

Yesterday I was particularly interested to hear the Leader of the Opposition's comments. He said—

When it was an LNP government in Canberra, this team stood up for Queensland.

I was not in the chamber, but I could almost hear the laughter from my office, because it was certainly a very interesting rewriting of history. I do not think even anyone on his own backbench believed it. I am happy to go back through history. What did the Leader of the Opposition say when the former federal government decided to cancel the National Rental Affordability Scheme? Nothing. Ten thousand homes in Queensland? They were not interested. They said nothing. We hear them say no to a Voice to Parliament, but we heard nothing from them when the former federal government decided to discontinue the National Partnership Agreement on Remote and Indigenous Housing, leaving vulnerable communities in despair.

In a global pandemic, when our government was investing in the Works for Tradies program to deliver more homes in places like Bundaberg, what did the former federal government do? We know that their signature policy was to give people with money more money to deliver an upgraded back deck. At the time, the chief executive of National Shelter said—

Not including social housing in a housing stimulus package is negligent.

What did we hear from those brave soldiers opposite at the time? Nothing. Over the last few months the Housing Australia Future Fund has again been debated in the federal parliament, and again we heard nothing from the Leader of the Opposition when his colleagues blocked almost 30,000 homes from being developed right across the state. The Leader of the Opposition can come in here and talk a big game, but we know that at every opportunity he will sell out vulnerable Queenslanders to back in his mate Peter Dutton and his pursuit for leadership.

Parole

Ms BOLTON: My question is to the Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services. With 204 prisoners eligible for parole in August 2023 not paroled due to a lack of accommodation, what efforts are underway to address this and a shortage of beds whilst facilities at Wacol and Gatton are built?

Mr RYAN: I think it is important to firstly highlight that it is conditioned on suitable and appropriate accommodation. This is really important, because when a prisoner is eligible to apply for parole they have to nominate an address they will be paroled to. Hypothetically, if a DV offender is in custody and they nominate the address of a DV victim as the accommodation they wish to be paroled to, of course that is not suitable and of course that person will not be granted parole because suitable accommodation is not available. Likewise, if you are an offender who offends against a particular cohort of members of our community, it would not be appropriate to parole you to a particular location where there might be a school or other vulnerable cohorts. It is important that, when we are talking about the process, we highlight it is about suitable accommodation and not just accommodation.

That being said, of course there are initiatives and supports in place through the re-entry services this government funds with Queensland Corrective Services to ensure people who are paroled transition to the community with supports. Those supports may be connecting people to external services and supporting those people through accommodation services and other like connected services. The government is very firm in its view that people who offend, who are found by the courts to be responsible for that offending and who are ordered to be detained should be detained. We have very strong laws that have led to more people being incarcerated, and that is what the community wants. They want strong laws and strong consequences for actions.

We have invested in custodial infrastructure including more bunk beds; we expanded Capricornia Correctional Centre; we reopened the Borallon Training and Correctional Centre; we have a new prison at Lockyer Valley under construction and due to be finished next year; and of course we are investing in other infrastructure investments for youth justice and a youth remand centre which we announced last week. There is a big focus on ensuring people are accountable for their actions, but there is also a big focus on community safety and ensuring that when grants of parole are made the community is protected from offenders.

Cost of Living, Local Government

Ms BOYD: My question is of the Minister for Regional Development and Manufacturing and the Minister for Water. Can the minister give an update on how the Palaszczuk government is helping local councils tackle cost-of-living pressures and whether he is aware of any alternative approaches?

Mr BUTCHER: I thank the member for the question. I know that she is a huge supporter of our regional councils and our regional communities right across Queensland. The Palaszczuk government is a government for all of Queensland. In my role as Minister for Regional Development, I have spent a significant amount of time out and about talking to regional councils and their communities about the issues that are impacting them. The No. 1 thing that I hear is that councils need support to undertake critical infrastructure projects like water and wastewater projects that are vital to the livability of regional communities in Queensland. While these projects are necessary, they are often costly, particularly for our smaller councils in regional Queensland.

The Palaszczuk government is committed to supporting families, communities and businesses with cost-of-living relief here in Queensland. Our commitment is clear. Queensland has the biggest measures to ease cost-of-living pressures in Australia. Through our Big Build and our Building our Regions program, we are supporting regional communities by investing in essential regional infrastructure—investments that create jobs, deliver better services and support the great Queensland lifestyle, particularly in regional Queensland. Due to the support from the Palaszczuk Labor government, councils are able to get on with these important projects while at the same time limiting the impact on their ratepayers. Including round 6 of Building our Regions, it has supported 370 projects across 69 local governments here in Queensland. Our investment of \$417 million has leveraged close to \$610 million of like investment into that funding, bringing the total expenditure to over \$1 billion of investment in Queensland. Importantly, it has also supported 3,180 jobs in regional Queensland.

The Palaszczuk government is committed to supporting regional councils with cost-of-living pressures. This is in stark contrast to those opposite in the LNP. When in government they were criticised by regional mayors, who raised concerns with them that they would not have enough funding to pay for critical infrastructure. Do members know what the LNP said? This will not surprise anyone on this side of the chamber, but they dismissed their concerns. They said to them at the time that councils are sitting on a goldmine. That is right. They basically said for them to go away and pay for it themselves—to jack up the rates in their regional communities. The LNP in Queensland at the time could not care less and they will not care less going forward. You can guarantee Building our Regions is on the chopping block to go as one of their cuts under this same old tired opposition here in Queensland. Only Labor can be trusted to support our local councils in regional Queensland to deliver the infrastructure they need.

(Time expired)

Local Government, Gravel Pits

Ms LEAHY: My question is to the Minister for Agricultural Industry Development. Queensland councils are frustrated by the gravel shortage and either cannot get access to it or absorb the increased costs associated with carting gravel longer distances. When will the minister resolve this impasse for Queensland councils?

Mr FURNER: I thank the member for her question. The member would be familiar with what works have been going on with my department, the state development department and the resources department with regard to addressing the challenges for quarry materials. We engage quite regularly with local councils in the member's electorate and many other western electorates and also with the LGAQ. In fact, I will be meeting with the LGAQ tomorrow. No doubt this will be a subject of interest to—

Ms Leahy: Yes, it will be.

Mr FURNER: Do you want to listen to the answer or not?

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Thank you, members. Member for Warrego, you did ask the question and I expect you want to hear the question. Minister, you will direct your comments through the chair. It is not helpful for the House.

Mr FURNER: I apologise for that, but it frustrates me and other members on this side of the chamber when we engage with our friends in the west, because the National Party has let them down time and time again. We see that on a regular basis. We are continually engaging with those local government areas on these sorts of items that need to be addressed. You would think the member would be aware of the process to be engaged in when addressing quarry materials in terms of working through Indigenous land use agreements and through native title. The Minister for Resources fully understands the process in respect of working through those challenges. We will continue engaging with those councils and with the LGAQ to address those fundamental issues.

It was only a short time ago that I was out in Charleville having a look at some of those quarry areas in that particular electorate. We understand those challenges and we will continue engaging with the councils. There are stockpiles that are in readiness and available for use. That is one of the matters we are working with councils on, to make sure materials are ready in times of need. I assure the member that this is a matter that my department, the Department of Resources and the department of state development are fully aware of. We will make sure we have adequate quarry material ready for use, whether it be through stockpiles or fast-tracking Indigenous land use agreements where we can. We will work with those councils to make sure we deliver. We do understand the urgency of it. It is a matter of concern, as the member would know, in many of those western regions. We will make sure that is completed.

Road Safety

Mr HUNT: My question is to the Minister for Transport and Main Roads and Minister for Digital Services. Will the minister please update the House on how the Palaszczuk government is improving safety, reliability and efficiency on Queensland roads, and is the minister aware of any alternative approaches?

Mr SPEAKER: Minister, you have two minutes to respond.

Mr BAILEY: I thank the member for Caloundra, who is doing a magnificent job as the member for Caloundra. I was up there recently with the Premier and the member for Caloundra opening the mighty Bells Creek Arterial Road, a \$70 million piece of new infrastructure to get people to and from the Sunshine Coast more directly to bust congestion. I can absolutely attribute the credit for this to the member for Caloundra, who negotiated this commitment from this government when he was not even an MP but just a candidate. He was so connected to his community that he said, 'We need this road now, not in 10 years time,' and we have delivered it on time and on budget—10 years early—for the people of the Sunshine Coast and also for the people of Brisbane who visit the Sunshine Coast.

I congratulate the member. He aspires to infrastructure. He aspires to people moving around more evenly. He aspires to a better community. He does not aspire to putting people on notice or to pruning the budget, as the member for Chatsworth has said. He is not cutting the budget but building things, because he knows that with the population growth in Caloundra and the Sunshine Coast new infrastructure is absolutely what is needed. That is what this government is committed to.

We have done the Caloundra Road to Sunshine Motorway upgrade. We have the Sunshine rail duplication happening. We have commitments on the Mooloolah River interchange. We have built the Bells Creek Arterial Road. We are doing the hard yards on a Sunshine Coast direct line. Under a Palaszczuk Labor government, we build. We do not cut and we do not prune, like the member for Glass


House, the member for Maroochydore and the member for Kawana. They had their chance. They had a record majority and what did they do for the Sunshine Coast? They did absolutely nothing when they were in power. In such a short time this member has already built a major piece of infrastructure.

(Time expired)

Mr SPEAKER: The period for question time has expired.

CRIMINAL LAW (COERCIVE CONTROL AND AFFIRMATIVE CONSENT) AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Introduction

 **Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (Minister for Health, Mental Health and Ambulance Services and Minister for Women) (11.18 am): I present a bill for an act to amend the Bail Act 1980, the Criminal Code, the Domestic and Family Violence Protection Act 2012, the Domestic and Family Violence Protection Regulation 2023, the Evidence Act 1977, the Evidence Regulation 2017, the Justices Act 1886, the Penalties and Sentences Act 1992, the Recording of Evidence Regulation 2018, the Security Providers Act 1993, the Youth Justice Act 1992 and the legislation mentioned in schedule 1 for particular purposes, and to repeal the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences) Act 1978. I table the bill, the explanatory notes and a statement of compatibility with human rights on behalf of the Attorney-General. I nominate the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee to consider the bill.

Tabled paper: Criminal Law (Coercive Control and Affirmative Consent) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023 [\[1615\]](#).

Tabled paper: Criminal Law (Coercive Control and Affirmative Consent) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023, explanatory notes [\[1616\]](#).

Tabled paper: Criminal Law (Coercive Control and Affirmative Consent) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023, statement of compatibility with human rights [\[1617\]](#).

I am very pleased to introduce, in the absence of the Attorney-General, the Criminal Law (Coercive Control and Affirmative Consent) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023. The Palaszczuk government is committed to ending all forms of domestic, family and sexual violence in Queensland. This legislation is an important milestone towards achieving this goal.

One in five women have experienced sexual violence since the age of 15. One in six women and one in 18 men have experienced physical or sexual violence by a cohabitating partner. These statistics are startling and expose the epidemic of violence against women. However, these statistics can also obscure the reality of the violence—the impact of trauma on victims, their families and the community. Countless brave victim-survivors spoke their truth, shared the horror of their experiences and exposed the reality of these forms of violence that until recently have remained concealed.

In introducing this bill today I want to, first and foremost, thank those brave and courageous victim-survivors whose stories led to the establishment of the Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce, which made these recommendations. The taskforce produced two reports titled *Hear her voice*. The taskforce said in the opening chapter of its first report, which examined coercive control—

Her voice is too often unheard. We can't hear her voice because, as a community, we don't recognise many of the perpetrator's behaviours as abusive. She often has no bruises, no injuries that are discernible to the eye. The underlying weapon of the perpetrator in this kind of abuse is control—exerted slowly, steadily and with increasing intensity—over her free association, free movement, and free thought. Like water torture, the drip, drip, drip continues until she is disorientated, confused, and in fear of drowning. It destroys and far too often ends her life.

I want to thank the taskforce, led by the Hon. Margaret McMurdo AC, for their work and also acknowledge the taskforce secretariat, its members and all of the stakeholders and advocates who shared their experiences, many of whom have joined us in the gallery today. The brave women who shared their stories to the Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce did so with great difficulty but with great generosity. They shared their experiences so that others may avoid it. Margaret McMurdo called it recentring victims' voices. Women's voices and their experiences have been heard and are always at the centre of everything we do in this space.

Perhaps the most reluctant but most effective champions of this cause, Sue and Lloyd Clarke, who still live with the trauma of their devastating loss every day, have used their experience—their story—to educate others. They told the taskforce—

We have to admit that we did not understand coercive control, even as our family was dealing with it on a daily basis. We knew that something was wrong with the behaviour, and we certainly knew that Hannah deserved so much better from her husband. We didn't understand that this bad behaviour had a name, could be codified and should be illegal. And, of course, we didn't know where it was leading.

Coercive control is a pattern of behaviours perpetrated against a person to create fear, isolation, intimidation and humiliation. It can be hard to detect, report and protect from, particularly if we do not listen to the person experiencing it. It is an all-consuming, relentless pattern of behaviour by manipulative perpetrators who gaslight and redefine the victim's reality, and all of it can be done without any physical contact. Another woman told the taskforce—

I was a victim of domestic violence though I didn't know it until Allison Baden Clay's detective said on TV you don't have to have a black eye to be a victim.

Allison Baden-Clay's parents, Priscilla and Geoff, and her sister, Vanessa, who is also the chair of our DV Prevention Council, are also with us today, and I want to acknowledge their ongoing advocacy. Imagine trying to leave or seek protection when you have lost most of your life skills. You have no access to money or safe communication. You have very few friends left and no-one understands that what you are describing is domestic violence. That is what we have to change.

Central to this bill is the recognition that this abuse is criminal. The bill amends the Criminal Code to establish the criminal offence of coercive control. The taskforce recognised that no current Queensland criminal offence captures the full range of abusive behaviours which may constitute coercive control. This offence will build community awareness that coercive control is abusive behaviour and will capture the full range of domestic violence behaviours which may constitute coercive control, not just physical behaviours.

The bill makes it an offence for an adult in a domestic relationship to engage in a course of conduct consisting of domestic violence occurring on more than one occasion where the person intends the course of conduct to coerce or control the other person and where the course of conduct would, in all the circumstances, be reasonably likely to cause the other person harm. The offence is a crime which carries a maximum penalty of 14 years imprisonment. As recommended by the taskforce, the offence applies only to acts of domestic violence constituting the course of conduct that were done after the commencement of this bill.

Limiting the offence to adult offenders recognises that children who commit domestic violence are often victims themselves who have experienced trauma and adopt the use of violence as a learned behaviour. The taskforce recognised that the impact of domestic and family violence on children is immense and ongoing. The bill therefore amends the Penalties and Sentences Act, which requires a court to treat domestic and family violence offending which is committed against a child or exposes a child to domestic and family violence as aggravated. Offending which is committed in contravention of a domestic violence order will also be treated as aggravated.

In response to recommendation 75 of report 1, the bill introduces the new offence of engaging in domestic violence or associated domestic violence to aid a respondent. The taskforce heard that families and friends of perpetrators are at times intimidating, berating and abusing victims on behalf of perpetrators. The taskforce also heard that some perpetrators hire private investigators to follow and monitor victims, despite there being a domestic violence order in place. The offence applies to an adult who engages in behaviour that would be domestic violence if done by the respondent against a person protected by a domestic violence order, police protection notice or release conditions. The offence carries a higher maximum penalty if benefit is derived from engaging in the behaviour.

In response to recommendation 77 of report 1, security providers convicted of the offence will be disqualified from holding a licence under the Security Providers Act.

In response to recommendation 76 of report 1, the bill amends the Domestic and Family Violence Protection Act to require the inclusion of a new standard condition in DV orders to ensure a perpetrator does not counsel or procure another person to do something that if done by the respondent would be domestic violence.

The second report of the Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce focused on sexual violence. The bill will also introduce an affirmative model of consent in Queensland and expressly reference stealthing conduct as non-consensual sexual activity. These key recommendations from the taskforce reports aim to address this under-reported form of violence. One woman told the taskforce—

By the time I realised what had happened, I didn't have evidence and I knew the statistics. Something like 5% of rape allegations actually get prosecuted and even fewer perpetrators actually face criminal charges. I knew it would be a he said, she said scenario and I knew that it couldn't be proven.

Our laws have to reflect community attitudes. The bill amends the meaning of 'consent' in the Criminal Code to a free and voluntary agreement between the parties to a sexual activity. Also, as recommended by the taskforce, the bill provides that consent may be withdrawn at any time and that agreement to one sexual activity is not agreement to another sexual activity.

The bill also provides where a person does not offer physical or verbal resistance to an act, they are not to be taken to consent by reason of that alone. The bill also introduces a new provision which provides a non-exhaustive list of circumstances where there is no consent. These circumstances include where: the person does not say or do anything to communicate consent; the person does not have the cognitive capacity to consent; the person is so affected by alcohol or another drug as to be incapable of consenting to the act, or incapable of withdrawing consent to the act; the person is unconscious or asleep; the person participates in the act because of force, fear of force, harm of any type or a fear of harm of any type; the person participates in the act because the person is overborne by the abuse of a relationship of authority, trust or dependence; the person is a sex worker and participates in the act because of a false or fraudulent representation that the person will be paid or receive some reward for the act; and the person participates because of a false or fraudulent representation by the other person about whether they have a serious disease and that disease is transmitted to the person.

The provision also provides that where a person participates in the act on the basis that a condom will be used and the other person does not use a condom, tampers with the condom, removes the condom or continues with the act after becoming aware that the condom is ineffective, this will be a circumstance where there was no consent. This recognises the crime sometimes referred to as stealthing. I want to acknowledge the work of Chanel Contos and others who have raised awareness on this particular form of violation. Failing to use, or interfering with, a condom strikes at the heart of a person's right to bodily autonomy and their right to choose whether and how to participate in a sexual activity.

The taskforce heard that women and girls are increasingly subjected to non-consensual violence during sexual activity. The bill provides a rebuttable presumption that where a person suffers grievous bodily harm as a result of, or in connection with, the sexual offence, this is evidence of a lack of consent. I am proud to say that this amendment goes further than any other jurisdiction when it comes to consent laws.

Importantly, the bill amends section 348A of the Criminal Code, which provides for operation of mistake of fact in relation to consent. A defendant will not be able to rely on their mistaken belief that a complainant was consenting as being reasonable if they did not, at the time or immediately before an act, say or do something to find out whether the complainant was consenting. This additional requirement—to say or do something to check another person is consenting—will not apply where a defendant had a cognitive impairment or mental health impairment which was a substantial cause of the defendant not saying or doing something. The onus of proving the matters relevant to the safeguard provision rest on the accused on the balance of probabilities.

The prosecution still bears the onus of proving an absence of a mistaken belief in consent beyond reasonable doubt where the defence is raised. The taskforce found this safeguard was critical if Queensland adopted an affirmative model of consent. This is similar to safeguard provisions that have been adopted in New South Wales and Victoria. This ensures that people with a relevant impairment that substantially affects their ability to communicate are not unfairly disadvantaged by a requirement to say or do something to ascertain consent.

The affirmative consent provisions will apply to children as well as adults. This recognises that anyone engaging in sexual activity, including young people, are required to be proactive and ensure their partner is consenting to a sexual activity. However, children—even those without an impairment who would not be captured by the safeguard provision—are still developing physically, emotionally and relationally. Children are potentially more likely to misread verbal and non-verbal communication, can be inexperienced or might enter sexual encounters with a certain naivety. Respectful relationship education—consent education—is absolutely critical, particularly for young people, particularly vulnerable young people, who may not be engaged in formal education because laws on their own are not enough to end sexual violence.

The taskforce found that sexual offence laws are often misunderstood, and rape myths and stereotypes, including narratives of implied consent, still feature very heavily in trials. The bill amends the Evidence Act to introduce jury directions for sexual offence trials and strengthen the provision pertaining to improper questions. The taskforce heard from victim-survivors of sexual violence who said they were traumatised by the offence and then re-traumatised by the justice system. One victim told the taskforce—

All the current justice system does is retraumatise rape victims. Being constantly asked for more details of an event you've tried to forget and bury is brutal. And you go through all these administrative hoops and it takes months and months of your time. All you get at the end of it is nothing. No justice.

The taskforce also heard from service providers who gave many examples of cases where victim-survivors of sexual assault were traumatised by brutal and apparently irrelevant cross-examination. The taskforce also heard that women are still self-blaming due to rape myths and that rape myths continue to influence criminal justice processes, including trials. The bill amends the Evidence Act to make it mandatory for a court to disallow an improper question put to a witness or inform the witness that the improper question need not be answered. This applies whether or not an objection is raised. The bill will also expand the matters the court must take into account when deciding whether a question is improper and better align Queensland to the position that exists in other jurisdictions.

The bill inserts jury directions related to sexual offences which address common misconceptions about sexual violence, including that victims will make a complaint at the first reasonable opportunity, or that people contribute to their own victimisation by what they wear, by being intoxicated or by flirting with a defendant. The new directions will apply to trials for sexual offences whether conducted in front of a jury or by a judge alone. In response to recommendations 58 and 59 of report 2, the bill amends and moves into the Evidence Act provisions relating to prohibitions and restrictions on evidence about a complainant's sexual reputation and sexual activities. The new Evidence Act provisions modernise language and make other amendments, including to strengthen and clarify certain provisions.

The bill creates a new part in the Evidence Act concerning limits on publishing information in relation to sexual offences. The new provisions maintain the prohibition on publishing material that identifies, or is likely to lead to the identification of, a complainant for a sexual offence. However, the amendments will allow an adult complainant for a sexual offence, who wants to tell their own story, to self-publish or provide others with written consent to publish, provided it does not or would not identify another complainant. Importantly, a child complainant can also self-publish and can consent to publication with a supporting statement. Sharing these stories can promote important public discussions about the nature of sexual violence, help improve community understanding and challenge common myths and misconceptions. The bill amends the Evidence Act and Recording of Evidence Regulation to allow researchers to access transcripts of sexual offences at reduced or no cost.

I would like to briefly touch on some of the other amendments in this bill. In response to recommendation 86 of report 2, the bill amends the Domestic and Family Violence Protection Act to allow media to access transcripts for, and publish information on, applications for domestic violence orders provided that such publishing does not identify, and could not lead to the identification of, victim-survivors or their children. Other amendments to the Domestic and Family Violence Protection Act are in response to recommendations 20 and 50 of the commission of inquiry to enable a court to extend a police protection notice in exceptional circumstances. In response to recommendation 76 of report 2, the bill amends the Evidence Act to make preliminary complaint evidence admissible for domestic violence offences. The taskforce thought admission of this evidence for domestic violence offences may better contextualise the complainant's evidence, which is particularly important where the case involves coercive and controlling behaviour.

The bill expands the reasonable excuses under the existing failure to report offence in section 229BC of the Criminal Code. The new reasonable excuse applies where a relevant professional, as defined in the bill, gains information during a confidential professional relationship with the child and where the relevant professional reasonably believes there is no real risk of serious harm to the child or any other child in not reporting the information. The bill otherwise amends an existing excuse that applies where the adult gains the information after the alleged victim becomes an adult, which the bill changes from 16 to 18 years of age, and the adult reasonably believes the alleged victim does not want the information to be disclosed to a police officer.

The taskforce found that women are proportionally more likely to be refused bail and held in custody than men and, because of their circumstances and vulnerabilities, may be disproportionately impacted by existing bail laws and processes. The bill amends the Bail Act to require a police officer or court considering bail to have regard to the effect that a bail condition or refusal of bail would have on the defendant's ability to carry out their responsibilities for: a family member for whom they are the primary caregiver; a person with whom the defendant is in an informal care relationship; or, if the defendant is pregnant, the child of the pregnancy.

The bill makes amendments to the Penalties and Sentences Act which are intended to ensure a sentencing court takes a much more holistic approach when considering a defendant's personal circumstances, including their history of being abused or victimised. The bill also provides that when a court is sentencing an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander person the court must have regard to any

cultural considerations, including the effect of systemic disadvantage and intergenerational trauma on the offender. The bail and sentencing amendments are mirrored in the Youth Justice Act to ensure the changes also apply to children.

This bill is the embodiment of a shift of our understanding of domestic, family and sexual violence. This bill recentres victims' voices and puts women's voices at the heart of our criminal justice system. For too long, victims have been let down by a system that does not understand or acknowledge the pain inflicted upon them by perpetrators who face no consequences. This bill will begin to change that.

I again acknowledge the contributions of the countless victim-survivors who have shared their stories. This bill and the legacy it will create belong to them. They have contributed to making the Queensland of tomorrow a safer, more just state than it was yesterday. I commend the bill to the House.

First Reading

Hon. SM FENTIMAN (Waterford—ALP) (Minister for Health, Mental Health and Ambulance Services and Minister for Women) (11.41 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 Legal Affairs and Safety Committee

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Bush): In accordance with standing order 131, the bill is now referred to the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee.

HOUSING AVAILABILITY AND AFFORDABILITY (PLANNING AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT) BILL

Introduction

 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Murrumbidgee—ALP) (Deputy Premier, Minister for State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning and Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympic and Paralympic Games Infrastructure) (11.42 am): I present a bill for an act to amend the Acquisition of Land Act 1967, the Economic Development Act 2012, the Environmental Offsets Act 2014, the Planning Act 2016, the Planning and Environment Court Act 2016, the Planning Regulation 2017 and the legislation mentioned in schedule 1 for particular purposes. I table the bill, the explanatory notes and a statement of compatibility with human rights. I nominate the State Development and Regional Industries Committee to consider the bill.

Tabled paper: Housing Availability and Affordability (Planning and Other Legislation Amendment) Bill 2023 [\[1618\]](#).

Tabled paper: Housing Availability and Affordability (Planning and Other Legislation Amendment) Bill 2023, explanatory notes [\[1619\]](#).

Tabled paper: Housing Availability and Affordability (Planning and Other Legislation Amendment) Bill 2023, statement of compatibility with human rights [\[1620\]](#).

I rise to introduce the Housing Availability and Affordability (Planning and Other Legislation Amendment) Bill 2023. The need for more housing is an issue facing the country, and Queensland is no exception. Queensland is also the fastest growing state. More than 125,000 more people each year are choosing to call Queensland home. In South-East Queensland alone, the population will grow by a further 2.2 million to six million by 2046, meaning almost 900,000 extra homes are needed. This growth is coming when the housing market is already strained. To ensure we maintain our great Queensland lifestyle, we need to plan for this growth. We need to be able to pull new levers in the planning and development system to deliver more homes where they are needed faster. If we plan ahead and plan well, growth will not only deliver more homes but also bring opportunities like more jobs, more infrastructure and more services sooner.

At the Queensland Housing Summit, the Palaszczuk government made a commitment to introduce legislative changes to the planning framework to remove barriers to the development of new housing. Today we are delivering on that commitment. The Housing Availability and Affordability (Planning and Other Legislation Amendment) Bill amends the Planning Act 2016 to optimise the planning framework's response to housing challenges.

The land use and development planning system is one of the key tools used by state and local governments to deliver connected, livable and sustainable communities across Queensland. This bill will ensure the framework is responsive, efficient and effective in removing barriers affecting housing and land supply in areas where growth should be occurring, with quick and targeted intervention. This bill will support the implementation of the update to the South East Queensland Regional Plan, ShapingSEQ—our blueprint for delivering the 900,000 new homes needed in the south-east corner by 2046 to accommodate 2.2 million new residents. It will support the implementation of ShapingSEQ and ensure the planning framework can play its part in delivering more homes for more Queenslanders across the state. It includes a raft of new measures to cut barriers and to get more affordable and diverse homes off the ground without delay. To address housing supply constraints, these changes will give the state powers to manage fragmented land holdings, streamline approvals for developments of state significance and take control of easements for water, power and sewer.

The introduction of this bill forms part of a broader planning program to support key housing priorities which are vital to the economic growth, livability and sustainability of our towns and cities. This bill is backed by evidence and experience. A review of under-utilised parts of the existing urban footprint in South-East Queensland was undertaken to identify the barriers to why development had stalled in some areas. Consultation has been conducted with statewide stakeholders, and learnings from projects, including Caboolture West, have been incorporated into the bill's development. The bill allows for the planning minister to acquire land or create easements for planning purposes to deliver critical infrastructure to support development—for example, water and transport infrastructure, parks and local community facilities.

The bill includes a new alternative development pathway to deliver development that is a priority to the state, known as a state facilitated application—for example, unlocking an increased supply of infill development that includes diverse and affordable housing. It enables local government to better manage growth and sequence development through the introduction of a new zone called an urban investigation zone. To make sure we can unlock under-utilised land across Queensland now, these tools will be structured as reserve powers. They will be subject to strict criteria, consistent with the approach of existing powers in the planning framework. This will enable direct intervention in supply streams to create more homes and jobs through state-led processes, avoiding unnecessary delays or costs that may arise by declaring specific priority growth areas one by one.

The tools proposed in the bill complement the work of Economic Development Queensland. EDQ continues to intervene in areas of the state declared as priority development areas, where complex planning and infrastructure problems exist and longer term, larger scale solutions are needed. The bill is also part of Queensland's response to the reforms agreed upon at National Cabinet and the National Planning Reform Blueprint. It will help Queensland to reach our share of the National Housing Accord target of 1.2 million new, well-located homes over five years. In particular, it will deliver an alternative development approval pathway which prioritises the delivery of affordable housing. Our action today positions Queensland to get our fair share of the new federal funding, which is directly dependent on these types of planning reforms, to unlock more homes faster.

This bill also makes operational and process improvements to the Planning Act and other legislation, addressing feedback received by stakeholders since the Planning Act's commencement in 2017. Since the Planning Act commenced in 2017, a range of matters have arisen which this bill addresses and improves upon.

Development control plans have been in operation in Queensland for 30 years. These historic mechanisms formalise the planning intent for larger planned areas through assessment and approval of a series of increasingly specific plans. Development control plans have been used in three local government areas: Ipswich City Council, Moreton Bay Regional Council and Sunshine Coast Council. In these areas, they work in conjunction with their respective planning schemes.

The bill proposes development assessment in development control plan areas will occur under the Planning Act but maintains the important functions development control plans play in the areas they affect. This bill will also ensure that development approvals previously given in development control plan areas are valid under the Planning Act as always intended.

Across the state we are seeing increasing pressures of urban encroachment on industrial land uses. In response, this bill provides amendments to urban encroachment provisions in the Planning Act. These protections allow local governments to support increasing residential density in urban areas while protecting existing key employment generating industries. Amendments to the Planning and

Environment Court Act will support an effective dispute resolution process for existing businesses, clarifying the burden of proof for appeals about non-minor change applications and urban encroachment registrations.

This bill seeks to protect existing businesses from civil or criminal proceedings when levels of emissions comply with any development approval or environmental authority under the Environmental Protection Act. Other operational and process improvements in the bill include removing duplicate assessment relating to a local heritage place that is also a Queensland heritage place; improving the functionality of applicable event and temporary use licence provisions; modernising public notice and submission requirements; and reducing regulatory burdens for state and local governments by improving processes and techniques.

Lastly, this bill provides for operational and process improvements to the Economic Development Act 2012, the Integrated Resort Development Act 1987 and the Sanctuary Cove Resort Act 1985. These improvements will ensure operational efficiencies in the Planning Act also apply to other planning legislation. The amendments to the Planning Act relating to the new state facilitated applications, development control plans, urban encroachments and some operational matters will require amendments to the Planning Regulation, the *Minister's guidelines and rules* and the *Development assessment rules* to give effect to the provisions. It is intended that those provisions will therefore commence upon proclamation to allow these instruments to be drafted and consulted upon.

This bill provides a comprehensive response to the key challenges impacting the delivery of housing across our state. We know the pressure on housing will continue as the population grows which is why we need to put in place these measures now. With this package we lead the way in having a planning system that is responsive, delivering more homes for Queenslanders faster while protecting our lifestyle and environment for current and future generations. I commend the bill to the House.

First Reading

Hon. SJ MILES (Murrumbidgee—ALP) (Deputy Premier, Minister for State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning and Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympic and Paralympic Games Infrastructure) (11.52 am): I move—

That the bill be now read a first time.

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

Bill read a first time.

Referral to State Development and Regional Industries Committee

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


CRIMINAL CODE (SERIOUS VILIFICATION AND HATE CRIMES) AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Resumed from 10 October (see p. 2877), on motion of Ms Linard—

That the bill be now read a second time.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Bush): Before I call the member for Clayfield, I might just remind the House of those who are on a warning. They are the members for Chatsworth, Broadwater, Callide, Nanango, Buderim, Glass House, Currumbin, Ninderry and Kawana.

 **Mr NICHOLLS** (Clayfield—LNP) (11.53 am), continuing: And not Clayfield, Madam Deputy Speaker. Yesterday I had only just started my contribution for a few minutes before the adjournment debate of the House and I was commenting on the very many good and serious organisations and individuals that had made submissions to the committee inquiry into this bill and also the previous inquiry into serious vilification and hate crimes. Obviously many of the submissions made to those two inquiries were similar and the first inquiry and then the committee report on the bill were similar or carried on with similar themes. I have read many of those submissions made to the bill and to the previous inquiry. I would not claim to have read every detail of all of them but have certainly read many

of them and I have had the opportunity, along with many of my colleagues on this side of the House and, I am sure, many members of this House, to meet members of our multicultural community to discuss the need for this bill and their concerns in relation to the bill.

I have also had the opportunity to consider the submissions made by the Queensland Law Society and other organisations, together with those of distinguished academics like Professor Nicholas Aroney and Dr Paul Taylor. I also want to commend Mr Jason Steinberg, President of the Queensland Jewish Board of Deputies, whom I have known, as I am sure others have, for many years. In fact, Jason participates in Anzac Day ceremonies in my electorate. Many in this place know Jason and his efforts to ensure that the history of the Nazi persecution of Jews is not forgotten. He has fought tenaciously and persuasively to establish a Holocaust Museum here in Brisbane. His actions were supported originally by the LNP opposition under the leadership of the member for Nanango and subsequently by the Labor government. This has resulted in the opening in June this year of Australia's newest Holocaust Museum located in Brisbane's CBD in the grounds of St Stephen's Cathedral in a space kindly and generously made available by the Catholic Archdiocese in Penola Place and under the guidance of His Grace Archbishop Mark Coleridge.

I recently attended a Righteous Among the Nations ceremony held by the Israeli Embassy and Yad Vashem, the World Holocaust Remembrance Center, at the Hanly centre and took the opportunity to visit the new museum. It is, as all such museums are, an incredibly moving place to experience. The displays, while often simple and of simple things, are carefully presented and paint the picture of the way in which hate and vilification and symbols can be used to lure an entire population into actions of such horror that to contemplate them in a civilised society seems impossible. The deaths of six million Jews and many millions of other so-called undesirables like Roma, Soviet POWs and those with disabilities shows just how persuasive such actions and symbols can be.

How ironic then that the opening hours for the museum currently say, 'We will be closed for the Jewish holiday of Simchat Torah on Sunday, 8 October.' Simchat Torah is a celebration, often accompanied by dancing and singing, to mark the completion of the annual reading of a section of the Bible. Surely that holiday will now always bring to mind last weekend's Hamas terrorist attacks—attacks that civilised nations around the world have rightly condemned as I do now in the strongest possible way. Now in the 21st century there surely can be no argument that the democratic and vibrant state of Israel not only does exist but is entitled to protect its citizens and its territory from terrorism and attacks, especially when as seems evident those terrorist attacks are sponsored by states that deny democracy and even fundamental human rights to their own people. I am sure all right-thinking people accept this proposition and reject any false proposition that says otherwise.

It is important to note that there are no specific symbols banned under this bill, even the Nazi Hakenkreuz, sometimes and incorrectly referred to as a swastika. As my friends in the multicultural community kindly and gently inform me, the swastika is a sacred symbol in Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism and Odinism and in many other cultures and religions, as has been noted by other speakers in this place. It is also important to note that the situation today in Germany and many other European states is that the public display of Nazi symbols, including on the internet, is prohibited by law and individuals violating such terms are subject to criminal proceedings. It is of course not only the Nazi hate symbols that must be dealt with. In this era we also have other symbols that emerge, sometimes with bewildering rapidity. We also have symbols not only of the far right or the far left but of extreme religious movements, and the ISIS movement is one of those.

To address these new and emerging symbols, this bill provides that the minister can make a decision on symbols through regulation. Proposed new section 52C in the Criminal Code establishes a framework to proscribe symbols or images that represent an ideology of extreme prejudice against a relevant group based on the protected attributes in former section 131A of the Anti-Discrimination Act. Those are the sections that are to be transferred to the Criminal Code as new section 52A. That framework allows the minister to recommend to the Governor in Council that a regulation proscribing a prohibited symbol be made. The minister must consult with the chairperson of the CCC, the Human Rights Commissioner and the commissioner of the Queensland Police Service, however, before making that recommendation. A number of submitters took issue with the minister having this level of power, and indeed it is an unusual power that is delegated from this Assembly to the minister to make. A number of those submissions stated that there should be consultation with the relevant groups or others. Another stated that there is no need for an emergent response as the intent is to prohibit the use of symbols that have a long history associated with hate, and the Hakenkreuz would be an example of that.

Professor Graeme Orr points out that the power to prohibit something as socially constructed or embedded as a symbol is an unusual power to vest in a member of the executive, and I think he is right. He says even if proposed new section 52C requires behind the scenes consultation with certain integrity and policing agencies such as the chair of the CCC, the Human Rights Commissioner and the Commissioner of Police—two of those are policing agencies, the other is a rights oriented agency, but even it has a mission focused on anti-discrimination as much as resolving competing liberty considerations. His concern is that the ordinary justification for such a delegation of a substantive power to a minister is exigency or technicality—that is, a need to deal quickly with some unexpected problem or to adapt quickly to some technical variant of an existing problem. The pandemic was a good example of this, yet this bill is about repressing the misuse of symbols which, to be meaningful and hateful, must have a history. I think this is a valid concern and there will need to be vigilance that such a provision is not misused.

Under section 52D a new offence is introduced to capture a broad range of circumstances, including the public display of tattoos and the public distribution or publication of symbols online. There are allowances to display these symbols, including genuine artistic, religious, educational, historical, legal, law enforcement purposes, a public interest purpose or to oppose the ideology represented by that symbol. The subjectivity of section 52D was raised by several submitters with concerns that it leads to a low level of criminality and is a subjective rather than an objective test. The department has addressed these matters in its response to the submissions to the committee.


Several submitters also raised the issue of the reversal of the onus of proof when it comes to section 52D(1), and I acknowledge that this is a significant concern—that is, that a person has a defence to an alleged offence if the person has a reasonable excuse. Proposed new section 52D(3) says the evidential burden is placed on the defendant in relation to showing a reasonable excuse for the purposes of a charge under that subsection. This is not an unusual provision. In fact, the Minister for Health referred to this matter in her introductory speech for the previous bill with regard to changes being made to the criminal law in relation to coercive control. It is not unusual because it is the case that the person best placed to show that they had a reasonable excuse is the person actually relying on that defence. Indeed, that is the way the Criminal Code is structured and a reasonable excuse has been a defence since its inception. The evidentiary burden to show reasonable excuse does not relieve the Crown of its obligation to disprove beyond a reasonable doubt that the excuse is valid. The so-called legal burden remains, as it should, with the prosecution. This proposition is not unusual or unknown, nor particularly controversial in a legal sense.

Importantly, the bill's intent was broadly supported by submitters, including the Queensland Law Society, who did raise some other concerns; the Queensland Family and Child Commission; Townsville Community Law; Full Stop Australia; PeakCare; the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Service; Equality Australia; Caxton Legal Centre; Multicultural Queensland Advisory Council; and Multicultural Australia; as well as many other individual submitters. I note the Queensland Council for Civil Liberties is supportive of some amendments of the bill, however is opposed to 52C and 52D, which are two I have already dealt with in regards to the prohibited symbols. They oppose these as a matter of principle. The Council for Civil Liberties say the test of whether you support freedom of speech is not whether you support it for those with whom you agree, but whether you support it for those with whom you most disagree. While this is somewhat along the famous lines of the phrase 'I disapprove of what you say but I will defend to the death your right to say it'—a quotation sometimes misattributed to Voltaire—there are, unfortunately, variations to the shades of black and white these days. Similarly, Professor Aroney and Dr Taylor take issue with the restrictions on freedom of expression, noting the protections afforded such matters under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights; however, as I said, in this day and age there are very few absolutes, much as we might all like things to be different.

So we end up with balancing rights and obligations and in this particular case, and with the safeguards, including the reasonable excuse safeguard, find the balance tilting slightly in favour of limiting the right to freedom of expression or freedom of speech in order to ensure the broader protection of those members or groups who would be menaced, harassed or offended by the display of prohibited symbols. I acknowledge that this is a fine balancing act and that in a competition of various rights there will be some who will feel that the balance has not been adequately achieved. However, it is the obligation of this place to come to a decision, not to forever prevaricate.

While the opposition will support this bill, we make it clear that the answer is not solely in passing more and more restrictive legislation on the freedom of speech. The danger with that is that the tighter the squeeze the more slips between the grasp. We must ultimately change the way people are prepared to think and behave from an early stage. While it is naive to think all bad behaviour will be eliminated,

tolerance, education, civility and respect are an essential part of the longer-term solution to dealing with the mindlessness of hatred and vilification based on race. With those comments, I conclude my contribution to the debate on this bill.

 **Mr RUSSO** (Toohey—ALP) (12.06 pm): I rise to speak to the Criminal Code (Serious Vilification and Hate Crimes) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023. The Legal Affairs and Safety Committee, in its report No. 49 of the 57th Parliament, tabled in this Assembly on 30 June 2023, has recommended to the Assembly that this bill be passed. The objective of the bill is to implement recommendations 7, 8, 9 and 16 of the committee's report No. 22 of the 57th Parliament, *Inquiry into serious vilification and hate crimes*.

Recommendation 7 of the committee was that the Queensland government investigate the viability of removing the requirement for the written consent of a Crown Law officer before commencing a prosecution for serious vilification; recommendation 8 was that the Queensland government introduce a statutory aggravation regarding hate/serious vilification into the Criminal Code and the Summary Offences Act to apply to criminal conduct; recommendation 9 was that the Queensland government relocate section 131A from the Anti-Discrimination Act 1991 into the Criminal Code; and recommendation 16 was that the Queensland government establish a criminal offence that prohibits the display of hate symbols, including those relating to Nazi and ISIS ideology, with considered exceptions to the prohibition.

In addition to addressing these recommendations, the bill will amend the Anti-Discrimination Act to increase the existing penalty for the offence under section 131A, the offence of serious racial, religious, sexuality or gender identity vilification. The bill will amend the following legislation: the Anti-Discrimination Act 1991; the Criminal Code Act 1899; the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000; and the Summary Offences Act 2005. In addition to recommending the bill be passed, the committee made an additional eight recommendations following our inquiries into the proposed legislation.

As a committee our examination of the bill looked into a number of key issues of the bill, including the attributes to be protected, the circumstance of aggravation, including the test to be applied and the prescribed offences, and matters relating to prohibited symbols. The current section 131A of the Anti-Discrimination Act sets out the attributes protected from serious vilification to include race, religion, sexuality and gender identity. The Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act will amend section 131A to include sex characteristics as a protected attribute. It is worth noting that it became apparent to the committee that there is a need for training and education and improved data collection and reporting in relation to serious vilification and hate crimes.

When the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee reported on the inquiry into serious vilification and hate crimes, report No. 22 of the 57th Parliament, in January 2022, I referred to the fact that Queensland did not have a piece of legislation dedicated to serious vilification and hate crimes. The Criminal Code (Serious Vilification and Hate Crimes) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill goes some way to changing that issue. As we heard in evidence during the hearing, there will be further significant changes when a revised anti-discrimination act is introduced into the parliament. Submitters suggested that additional attributes should be protected by the serious vilification and hate crime offences including age, disability, impairment, homelessness, sex and all the attributes set out in section 7 of the Anti-Discrimination Act. The Queensland Law Society recommended that age should be included as a protected attribute and told the committee—

Our members report that age-based discrimination has become particularly prevalent as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Ageist hate speech further entrenches intergenerational tensions, promotes social isolation and facilitates elder abuse by devaluing older persons' social identity.

Equality Australia stated that serious vilification and hate crime protections 'should be extended to all people who commonly experience hate crimes based on who they are or their protected attributes'. Further, Equality Australia raised the issue of serious vilification and hate crimes committed on mistaken beliefs or stereotypes relating to protected attributes. They stated—

Take for example an offender who attacks a drag artist by wrongly associating them with paedophilia or grooming. This has been a common basis of attack recently experienced by members of our communities. For example, in January 2020, a group of university students charged into the Brisbane Square Library where a Drag Queen story time event was being held, chanting "drag queens are not for kids". The event caused extreme distress for children and parents in attendance.

Currently, the bill requires the prosecution to establish that the offender was motivated wholly or partly by the victim's sexual orientation or gender identity, or presumed sexual orientation or gender identity. The difficulty with this may be the disconnect in the available evidence between the offender's

mistaken belief and the attribute of the victim. The evidence may only show that the offender believes that they are proceeding against someone because they are a risk to children and it is the offender's motivation that frames how the provision will apply.

In response to the matters raised by stakeholders, the department stated the inclusion of 'presumed race, religion, sexuality, sex characteristics or gender identity', in new section 52B, 'will ensure offenders who commit offences based on a presumption (despite being erroneous) of the race, religion, sexuality, sex characteristics or gender identity of the person or group are captured by the new circumstance of aggravation'. In relation to crimes committed on the basis of mistaken or false beliefs or stereotypes related to protected attributes, DJAG stated that the way the provision in new section 52B is drafted at the moment is that the offence, whichever one of the prescribed offences they have committed, has to be proved in that it was 'wholly or partly motivated to commit the offence by hatred or serious contempt for a person or group of persons based on' the list of attributes.


It is difficult to gauge whether things have improved or that people are trying to be kinder to each other. However, during our recent inquiry into the Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Bill it was distressing to hear of the vitriol and hatred directed towards the LGBTIQ+ community and the impact on the transgender community. I also do not believe that enough has been done to monitor big tech and social media. The government can distribute information through its own online presence for the benefit of the public, but often the commentary that follows those posts on social media is unsavoury and unhelpful. I believe the Australian eSafety Commissioner has a role in assisting the public to act. Particular departments also need to monitor their online presence and respond actively by taking down inflammatory and derisive comments. It is vital to dealing with this issue.

Although our legislation does not prohibit a specific symbol, it is anticipated that symbols relating to Nazi ideology will ultimately be proscribed as we seek to make the display of the Nazi hooked cross and Islamic State symbols a criminal offence. The offence will include the capture of a broad range of circumstances, including the public display of tattoos and the public distribution or publication of prohibited symbols online. This is a very positive step, although I understand there is scope for further improvements to be made in this area in the future. The bill intends to make change by implementing several recommendations made by the committee focusing on a combination of education, community and cooperation.

My foreword to the committee's report into our inquiry into serious vilification is still relevant today. Each of us has a moral responsibility to ensure our conduct is appropriate and to teach our children to behave properly towards others. The unfortunate reality is that in our society there will always be those who traverse the bounds of proper behaviour. For those persons, deterrents and sanctions are needed. Dr Martin Luther King said—

It may be true that morality cannot be legislated but behaviour can be regulated. It may be true that the law cannot change the heart but it can restrain the heartless.

I thank the secretariat and the committee for their work on this vital piece of legislation and all the witnesses who came and gave evidence at both of our inquiries. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mrs GERBER** (Currumbin—LNP) (12.15 pm): As the deputy chair of the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee, the 2022 inquiry into serious vilification and hate crimes, which resulted in the bill before the House, was a profound experience. Hearing from Queenslanders who have firsthand experience with serious vilification and hate crimes left a lasting impact on me personally. It was clear then and it remains clear now that more needs to be done to protect all Queenslanders from this heinous behaviour. I love our diverse communities and I want to see them protected from discrimination, vilification and hate. There is no place in our community for people being vilified simply because of their race, religion, gender, sexual orientation or nationality.

Before I get into the details of the bill, I want to acknowledge the horrific offences currently unfolding in Israel and utterly condemn the abhorrent attacks by the militant Hamas on Israel. To our Jewish community, which during the course of our inquiry into serious vilification and hate crimes told us about the vilification and hate crimes committed against them, this is yet another abhorrent blow. The people of Israel are under attack by a terrorist organisation and I want our Jewish community and the people of Israel to know that we are here for them during this dark hour. The killing and capture of innocent civilians should be condemned. For our own communities I want to reiterate that discrimination, vilification and hate have no place in our society.

I note that this bill will amend the Anti-Discrimination Act 1999, the Criminal Code, the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000 and the Summary Offences Act 2005. In short, the bill aims to implement the legislative reforms recommended by the committee's inquiry into serious vilification and

hate crimes, specifically recommendations 7, 8, 9 and 16: by removing the requirement for written consent of a Crown Law officer before commencing a prosecution for serious vilification; by establishing a circumstance of aggravation for existing offences in the Criminal Code and Summary Offences Act where the criminal conduct is motivated by hate or serious contempt for a person based on one of the protected attributes of the person or the presumed protected attributes of the person; by relocating the section in the Anti-Discrimination Act that deals with serious vilification, namely section 131A, into the Criminal Code; and by establishing a criminal offence that prohibits the display of hate symbols, including those relating to Nazi and ISIS ideology, with considered exceptions to the prohibition.

This House should also note that the committee's report of January 2022 contains 17 recommendations and this bill enacts only four of those recommendations. Further, the implementation is delayed. The former attorney-general said that it would be introduced in 2022 and we have had to wait until the end of March of this year to see it introduced. One of the committee recommendations that the government is not acting on in this bill is around expanding the attributes currently protected under the anti-vilification provisions to include disability. Many stakeholders raised the need to include disability as a protected attribute under sections 124A and 131A of the Anti-Discrimination Act, these being the current sections in the Anti-Discrimination Act that deal with vilification and serious vilification on the grounds of race, religion, sexual identity or gender identity.

It is important to understand here that vilification and discrimination are not the same. Vilification is more serious and involves someone expressing hatred, disrespect or ridicule for people because of who they are and encouraging other people to think or do the same. Accordingly, an extremely obvious omission from protection is people suffering from vilification on the grounds of disability or impairment. I note that disability is a protected attribute in the ACT and in Tasmania. Queensland Advocacy Incorporated, in calling for expanding the protected attributes to include disability, observed—

People with disability face ongoing vilification and harassment on the basis of their disability. This includes physical and verbal abuse and can be perpetrated by strangers, organised groups or people known to them.

However, this bill does not amend the attributes to include people with a disability or impairment. Rather, it relocates the section of the Anti-Discrimination Act that deals with serious vilification and hate crimes into the Criminal Code. The minister and the Department of Justice and Attorney-General have advised that the work to expand protected attributes will be done with the review of the Anti-Discrimination Act following the *Building belonging* report. However, given the section that deals with serious vilification—that is, section 131A—will no longer be in the Anti-Discrimination Act, I am concerned that the attribute list should have been dealt with now. Further, given the same attribute list has been used for the new circumstance of aggravation on existing offences and the new criminal offence prohibiting the display of hate symbols, it seems to me that the work to properly expand the list of protected attributes should have been done now in this bill in order to get the offence provisions right from the beginning.

I turn to the new offence provision prohibiting the display of hate symbols. The bill provides a framework to prohibit symbols or images that represent an ideology of extreme prejudice against a particular group based on the protected attributes I have already discussed. The new offence will capture a broad range of circumstances including public display of tattoos and public distribution or publication of symbols online that are deemed prohibited. There are exceptions, of course, including: for educational reasons; for a genuine artistic, religious, historical, legal or law enforcement purpose; for a public interest purpose; or to oppose the ideology represented by the prohibited symbol.

It is important to note that the bill before the House does not proscribe specific symbols as banned; rather, it provides that the minister can make the decision to proscribe a symbol or image as prohibited through regulation. During the committee process submitters raised concerns with this power resting with the minister and being able to be exercised through regulation, making the point that the creation of serious criminal offences should be by legislation, not regulation. The Queensland Law Society stated that it is their long-held position that the highest levels of parliamentary oversight are appropriate in this circumstance such that the prohibition should be made by legislation and not regulation. The Queensland Council for Civil Liberties stated—

Finally, and most critically the law allows the Minister to prescribe by regulation the prohibited symbols. This violates what is in our view a fundamental principle that the key concepts creating criminal liability should not be made by regulation. The decision to criminalise conduct should be made by the Parliament, to ensure democratic accountability.

Others pointed out that there should be consultation with relevant stakeholders. Under the bill the minister must consult with the chairperson of the Crime and Corruption Commission, the Human Rights Commissioner and the Commissioner of the Police Service before prohibiting a symbol via regulation. However, Multicultural Australia requested that consultation be extended to encompass the


views of the relevant communities. The subjectivity of the new offence provision was also raised by a number of submitters as potentially problematic, with concerns that it leads to a low level of criminality because the test is subjective rather than objective.

Notwithstanding all of the specific concerns that I have raised here today, overall the bill was largely supported by submitters including the Queensland Law Society, Queensland Family and Children Commissioner, PeakCare, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Service, Multicultural Queensland Advisory Council and Multicultural Australia. The bill will be supported by the LNP.

Lastly, I want to reiterate the importance of education, because the issue of hate and vilification cannot simply be dealt with by the passing of more and more laws restricting freedoms. Recommendation 17 is that government develop community education campaigns in conjunction with organisations such as Multicultural Australia to educate the community about vilification and hate. We need to provide more and better education to our community and we need to be integrating this education in our schools. We must remain focused on the root causes of these types of crime. Education plays an important role in combating hate crimes and vilification in Queensland.

In short, vilification of any Queenslanders or the targeting of Queenslanders based on their race, religion, sexuality or gender identity—and, I would submit, their disability—is a blight on society. It must be called out and corrected as a matter of great urgency. I want to take the opportunity to once again thank everyone who submitted testimony throughout the committee inquiry and consideration of the bill. Your willingness to share your personal experiences has proven invaluable. It enabled us to gain a comprehensive understanding of the spectrum of vilification and hate crimes as well as the profound impact these incidents have on our entire community. Your voices have illuminated a path towards a more inclusive and empathetic society.

Finally, I want to acknowledge the former member for Stretton. The committee's report is dedicated to his memory. The late Duncan Pegg was, as I think everyone in this chamber will agree, a strong advocate for an inclusive Queensland society regardless of race, religion or ethnicity. I personally share that view with him along with a deep commitment to eliminate hate and prejudice in our community.

 **Mr HUNT** (Caloundra—ALP) (12.25 pm): I rise to make this contribution on the Criminal Code (Serious Vilification and Hate Crimes) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023. As always I would like to thank my fellow committee members: Peter Russo, member for Toohey; Jonty Bush, member for Cooper; Sandy Bolton, member for Noosa; Laura Gerber, member for Currumbin; and you, Deputy Speaker Krause, the member for Scenic Rim. Our hardworking secretariat worked incredibly hard to ensure every stakeholder had a chance to make a valuable contribution, as they always do.

The committee conducted an inquiry into serious vilification and hate crimes in 2021, reporting to the Legislative Assembly on 31 January 2022. For a detailed consideration of the definition of 'hate crimes, vilification and serious vilification', members can refer to chapter 2 of report No. 22. Report No. 22 made 17 recommendations. This bill relates to a number of these recommendations. The committee recommended—

... the Queensland Government investigate the viability of removing the requirement for the written consent of a Crown Law officer before commencing a prosecution for serious vilification.

The committee recommended—

... the Queensland Government introduce a statutory aggravation regarding hate/serious vilification into the *Criminal Code Act* ... and *Summary Offences Act* ... to apply to criminal conduct.

The committee recommended—

... the Queensland Government relocate section 131A from the *Anti-Discrimination Act 1991* ... into the *Criminal Code* ...

The committee recommended—

... the Queensland Government establish a criminal offence that prohibits the display of hate symbols, including those relating to Nazi and ISIS ideology, with considered exceptions to the prohibition.

The bill was introduced by the then attorney-general, Shannon Fentiman, in March this year and referred to our committee for consideration. This government values the voices of people from ancient cultures. This amendment bill is testament to that. The committee process allows for a voice. A voice is a very important thing. We have been conditioned to believe that we are all the same under the sun when in fact this is utterly incorrect. We are most certainly not all the same. We are different in a multitude of ways. We look different, we speak differently, we dress differently, we eat different foods, we enjoy different music and festivals, and we value different human qualities. These differences may

be the result of religious belief, nationality, sexual orientation, gender or gender identity, or disability. The point is that we are most assuredly not all the same. We are hugely and splendidly different and our differences are worthy of celebration, but these differences also need protection.

Clause 12 of the bill introduces new section 52B, 'Circumstances of aggravation for particular offences', into the Criminal Code which creates a new circumstance of aggravation for existing offences in the Criminal Code that are prescribed in new subsection 52B(2). The circumstance of aggravation is to apply when the offender in committing the offence is wholly or partly motivated by hatred or serious contempt for a person or group of persons based on the person's or group of persons' actual or presumed race, religion, sexuality, sexual characteristics or gender identity, or the actual or presumed race, religion, sexuality, sex characteristics or gender identity.

Whilst supportive, many submitters would have liked the overall scope of the bill expanded. These submitters included the Queensland Human Rights Commission, Queensland Legal Service, Caxton Legal Service, Respect Inc and the Scarlet Alliance. Equality Australia, for example, raised the issue of serious vilification or hate crimes committed on mistaken beliefs or stereotypes related to protective attributes. They said—

Take for example an offender who attacks a drag artist by wrongly associating them with paedophilia or grooming. This has been a common basis of attack recently experienced by members of our communities. For example, in January 2020, a group of university students charged into the Brisbane Square Library where a Drag Queen story time event was being held, chanting 'drag queens are not for kids'.

Debate, on motion of Mr Hunt, adjourned.

DEPUTY SPEAKER'S STATEMENT

Media in Chamber



Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Krause): Honourable members, I advise the House that the Speaker has approved the media gallery filming in the chamber during the introduction of private members' bills today.

EDUCATION (GENERAL PROVISIONS) (HELPING FAMILIES WITH SCHOOL COSTS) AMENDMENT BILL

Introduction



Dr MacMAHON (South Brisbane—Grn) (12.30 pm): I present a bill for an act to amend the Education (General Provisions) Act 2006 for particular purposes. I table the bill, the explanatory notes and a statement of compatibility with human rights. I nominate the Education, Employment and Training Committee to consider the bill.

Tabled paper: Education (General Provisions) (Helping Families with School Costs) Amendment Bill 2023 [1621].

Tabled paper: Education (General Provisions) (Helping Families with School Costs) Amendment Bill 2023, explanatory notes [1622].

Tabled paper: Education (General Provisions) (Helping Families with School Costs) Amendment Bill 2023, statement of compatibility with human rights [1623].

Today I am pleased to be introducing the Education (General Provisions) (Helping Families with School Costs) Amendment Bill 2023. State schools are meant to be free, but right now Queensland parents are having to spend thousands of dollars in fees and out-of-pocket costs every year to send their kids to state schools. This is because Labor has let Queensland state schools become some of the most underfunded in the country—the worst funded state schools of any state or territory except for the Northern Territory. Funding for Queensland state schools is falling short by \$1.7 billion every year—\$1.7 billion. This \$1.7 billion means crammed and understaffed classrooms. It means teachers burning out and kids struggling to keep up. It means families having to decide whether they will pay their next electricity bill or subject fees. It means teachers using their own already-too-low wages to buy their students basic resources so kids do not miss out.

In a wealthy state like Queensland—where our state government is sitting on a \$12 billion surplus, where corporate profits are soaring—there is no excuse for underfunding state schools, which is why today the Greens are introducing the Education (General Provisions) (Helping Families With School Costs) Amendment Bill to ensure that every Queensland state school is fully funded and truly free. No matter where a child grows up in Queensland, from Cooktown to Surfers Paradise, no matter

what their parents earn, we can afford to give every Queensland kid a great state school education for free. By ending the \$1.7 billion shortfall in annual minimum needs-based funding and boosting funding even further, we can:

- scrap state school service and subject fees;
- provide stationery, textbooks and resources so families are not out of pocket;
- hire the teachers and staff our schools need; and
- make sure no child misses out on excursions, school sports and cultural programs.

Right now, funding for Queensland's state schools is the second worst in the country. According to the Australian Education Union, the shortfall in minimum needs-based funding to Queensland state schools is \$1.7 billion every year. Under the national education standards the states are expected to contribute 80 per cent of minimum needs-based funding for schools with the other 20 per cent coming from federal government, but the Queensland government only contributes 69.26 per cent of needs-based funding. This underfunding means:

- kids going without the resources they need;
- fewer teachers and more crowded classrooms;
- worse students outcomes and poorer long-term prospects into adulthood;
- families under the pump struggling to afford state school fees and growing out-of-pocket costs; and
- children missing out on essential childhood experiences like going on school camp or playing sport.

Under Labor, more than one in 10 state school children are not funded to have their minimum education needs met. Over a decade this is equivalent to leaving an entire year level without education. Without adequate academic and social support at schools children are falling through the cracks and being set up for a lifetime of lower income, worse social and health outcomes, and increased likelihood of poverty and incarceration. The percentage of Queensland students meeting the minimum national standard for reading, literacy and numeracy is declining across almost all year levels and areas.

This is also about inequality. State schools educate 80 per cent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, 80 per cent of kids from low socioeconomic backgrounds, and the vast majority of students with disabilities and students from non-English speaking backgrounds. These are the kids Labor is short-changing by \$1.7 billion every year. Full funding would also mean that we would have a chance to make our state schools truly inclusive. The Queensland Collective for Inclusive Education said—

With the will, skill and funding, we know EVERY child can be supported to succeed at their local regular neighbourhood school with their siblings and friends.

Instead, this government is leaving behind the students and families who most need our support.

Because state schools are underfunded by \$1.7 billion every year—over \$2,000 per child—schools have no choice but to charge parents and carers for basic resources to plug this funding gap. Families are paying hundreds, if not thousands, of dollars every year for resources, laptops, software, school and subject levies, uniforms, excursions and extracurricular activities. As families struggle through a cost-of-living crisis, when many are struggling to pay rent or mortgage repayments, these costs stretch family budgets to the limit.

We surveyed over 700 families from right across Queensland earlier this year, and nearly half of these families said they had had to ask for help to cover state school costs for their kids. This means families going on payment plans with their child's school, going into credit card debt, having to borrow money from friends or relatives or seeking help from a charity just to pay state school expenses. One parent said—

My parents help me out. Even though I work fulltime in healthcare it's hard as a single parent.

Another parent said—

I take money out of my food budget to pay for things like sport and excursions when they come up.

Another said—

It is a constant juggling act to make sure my children have clothes and shoes that fit, the right resources and that they don't miss out on activities such as swimming lessons, excursions or school camps.

No parent should have to go into debt or skip meals just so their kids can get a state education, which is why the Greens are fighting to make sure Queensland state schools are fully funded. But this is the reality for Queensland families right now. One parent talked about how at their child's school there were fees to use a laptop or get a school ID. One family said they could not afford these fees so their kids just went without. Other parents talked about going without food or petrol so they could buy their kids uniforms when they grew out of old ones. Another parent talked about how their kid's school is in continual fundraising mode and how the pressure to pay for compulsory and optional items and activities is intense. Parents and carers talked about the high cost of essentials like swimming lessons, laptops or iPads. Parents talked about the ever-increasing cost of stationery. This is the experience of families sending their kids to state schools—schools that are meant to be free.

It is not just students and families who are being set up to fail but teachers as well. Queensland teachers do amazing work in underfunded schools, and in many ways our state schooling system rests on the hard work of teachers working longer hours and spending more and more money out of their own pockets. Teacher morale and retention rates are declining under increasing pressure to perform without the staff and resources they need. According to the government's own figures, there has been a 15 per cent increase in annual teacher resignations since 2018.

An annual survey of teachers by Monash University found that: one third of teachers were intending to change careers; two-thirds of teachers were dissatisfied with their job; 61 per cent felt personally unappreciated; and 91 per cent of teachers said they did not think politicians respected them. Why would they? Teachers in Australia work 15 per cent more than teachers in other OECD countries. They spend more time on documentation and admin than teachers elsewhere, and under their current pay agreement Queensland teachers are essentially receiving a real wage cut of 3.9 per cent.

It is clear that our teachers are incredibly passionate about the work they do. They work so hard to make sure their students get the opportunities they deserve, but by denying Queensland state schools the \$1.7 billion in annual funding needed to meet minimum education standards we are failing teachers and putting us on track for a shortfall of 1,700 secondary teachers by 2026. Here is what teachers are saying in the annual Monash survey of teacher perceptions. One said—

I would have said I'd teach until retirement but now I don't think I have more than two years left in me.

Another said—

Part of me loves teaching and would never leave, but the other part of me is so worn out I wonder how long I can stay.

Another commented—

I would like to stay but I genuinely don't know if I will be able to keep up this kind of workload.

The President of the Australian Education Union has said—

Underfunding of public schools is leading to unsustainable workloads for teachers and principals along with the need to use their own money to pay for the basics so that students don't miss out.

My office heard from the partner of a first-year teacher. This teacher was so excited to graduate and start teaching at a state school north of Brisbane. In her first semester this teacher spent thousands from her own pocket on furniture and resources for her students, most of them from poor families. She spent hours each night laminating exercise books and naming stationery she had bought for her students who would otherwise have gone without. She wanted so badly to teach and for her students to succeed, but before the end of her first year she resigned due to the unmanageable workload and returned to working in child care. Despite all the passion in the world for her job and her students, she, like many other teachers, could not cope in a state system that is underfunded by \$1.7 billion every year below the minimum needs-based funding.

The Australian Education Union found that teachers are spending on average nearly \$1,000 out of their own pockets every year for resources for their classrooms. Many teachers said that this was the only way to deliver a lesson and that students would miss out if they did not use their own money for these resources. Many teachers have reported to us that they also buy food for kids who come to school hungry. Teachers' working conditions are students' learning conditions, and Labor is failing in both.

We have an opportunity to change this. The bilateral funding agreement between the federal government and the states is being renegotiated over the coming months and we have an opportunity to set our kids and teachers up for success by fully funding Queensland state schools. We are introducing the helping families with school costs bill now so that the education minister has an opportunity to develop a clear plan to make every Queensland state school fully funded and truly free and to ensure that full funding is embedded from the beginning of the next bilateral agreement with the

federal government, not years down the track. The minister has said that state schools are on a path to full funding, but we cannot afford to wait any longer. We cannot afford to lock our state schools into another five years of underfunding. We cannot afford to let Queensland families go into debt with out-of-pocket expenses. We cannot afford to let kids go without the resources that they need.

The bill obliges the relevant minister to introduce subsequent legislation to ensure state schools are provided funding to meet state school students' minimum educational needs under the national standards framework and also cover the costs of providing to state school students free of charge resources, textbooks, stationery, personal computing devices, school uniforms, and sporting, cultural and academic programs. In introducing subsequent legislation to meet these objectives, the minister is to determine school funding in accordance with the amount of funding a school requires to meet the minimum education needs of its students as set by the Schooling Resource Standard. Costs above the Schooling Resource Standard for each school are to be determined by the chief executive in an annual report established by the minister.

Subsequent legislation to achieve these objectives and determine these costs would also oblige the minister and the chief executive to have regard to what costs will be incurred in ensuring the academic and extracurricular activities available to children are comparable between state schools and private schools. The chief executive is also to have regard to any additional costs associated with addressing the economic, social and geographical disadvantages of the students attending a school and any particular requirements of students with disabilities and other needs.

Providing kids with truly free and quality state education is affordable. Queensland is a wealthy state and ordinary Queenslanders deserve their fair share. If mining and energy companies are making record profits, if sales of luxury cars and yachts are going up, if the big banks and the mining industry are making a killing, then we can absolutely afford to fully fund our state schools. We can afford to scrap huge out-of-pocket expenses that families are paying, and we can afford to make sure that every Queensland kid gets a great education.

The benefits are so enormous that we cannot afford not to. Based on an estimate from the Australia Institute, continuing to underfund Queensland state schools will cost the Queensland economy up to \$6 billion a year by 2043. Underfunding schools will reduce government revenue by \$1.9 billion a year. In the long run, fulling funding schools pays for itself with a thriving economy and skilled workers who have had the benefit of a great state education. Last year the state government banked a \$12 billion surplus. We have the money. The only thing missing is the political will.

I have had the chance to speak with unions, school principals, parents, teachers and P&Cs about underfunding in Queensland state schools, and the overwhelming feedback is that our state schools need to be fully funded to give Queensland kids the best chance to lead rich, good lives. The Australian Education Union has said—

Full funding for public schools is the only way to ensure every child gets every opportunity to succeed. It means more one-on-one support for children, more time for teachers and better results.

The Gonski review was over a decade ago—a whole decade. The Australian Education Union has said—

There has now been a generation of children who have been denied full and fair funding for their entire school lives. This can no longer continue.

This cannot continue, and there is no reason for it to continue. Our state government right now is sitting on a \$12 billion surplus. Mining profits are soaring. Bank profits are soaring. Queensland Labor can well and truly afford to make our state schools fully funded and genuinely free. We can make sure that no kid shows up on the first day with only half their book list and hoping that other kids do not notice. We can make sure that no kid has a school uniform that does not fit because their parents have to wait for payday to get them a new one. We can make sure that no kid misses out on school camp, school sport or an excursion because their parents cannot afford the fees. Every single Queensland kid—no matter where they live or what their parents earn—should get the best possible start in life, and we can start today with this bill.

First Reading

Dr MacMAHON (South Brisbane—Grn) (12.45 pm): 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 Education, Employment and Training Committee

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Krause): In accordance with standing order 131, the bill is now referred to the Education, Employment and Training Committee.

CRIME AND CORRUPTION AMENDMENT BILL

Introduction

 **Mr NICHOLLS** (Clayfield—LNP) (12.46 pm): I present a bill for an act to amend the Crime and Corruption Act 2001 for particular purposes. I table the bill, the explanatory notes and a statement of compatibility with human rights.

Tabled paper: Crime and Corruption Amendment Bill 2023 [\[1624\]](#).

Tabled paper: Crime and Corruption Amendment Bill 2023, explanatory notes [\[1625\]](#).

Tabled paper: Crime and Corruption Amendment Bill 2023, statement of compatibility with human rights [\[1626\]](#).

Government members interjected.

Mr NICHOLLS: I note the catcalls and cries from those opposite. The LNP opposition is introducing this private member's bill to fix the Crime and Corruption Act 2001 because the Palaszczuk Labor government has failed to do so. Palaszczuk Labor is failing Queenslanders when it comes to transparency. Palaszczuk Labor is failing Queenslanders when it comes to acting with integrity. Palaszczuk Labor is failing Queenslanders when it comes to simply being honest. Palaszczuk Labor is failing to ensure that one of the fundamental checks and balances in our Queensland parliamentary system has the authority and power it needs to give Queenslanders the assurance they deserve that government is acting honestly and without corruption. By failing to act and by failing to act urgently, Palaszczuk Labor is acting only to protect itself, protect its Labor mates and protect its re-election prospects. It is as plain and simple as that.

Because Labor is acting so slowly—if indeed it will act at all—the LNP opposition is doing what this government should have been in a position to do almost immediately after the High Court decision was delivered in the *Carne* matter. We will act to fix the deficiencies in the CC Act and along the way implement other longstanding and outstanding matters recommended by past inquiries. We will act to restore the integrity that is so sorely missing under the Palaszczuk Labor government. The bill addresses the deficiency in the law identified by the High Court in the recent decision—

Mr HINCHLIFFE: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. There have been rulings made in this House about the way in which governments are addressed and referred to. The member for Clayfield has repeatedly referred to the Palaszczuk Labor government. There have been corrections made to others around similar descriptions. I seek your guidance.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Krause): I will take some advice on that. Thank you, member for Sandgate, for your point of order. I have heard various references to the Palaszczuk Labor government and it is my understanding that it is in accordance with the previous rulings of past Speakers and it is acceptable.

Mr NICHOLLS: The bill addresses the deficiency in the law identified by the High Court in the recent decision of the Crime and Corruption Commission v. *Carne*. Specifically, it addresses the deficiency in the reporting powers of the act found by the High Court. The bill also reverses a 2018 amendment that omitted the Director of Prosecutions from section 49 of the Crime and Corruption Act. It reverses the 2018 amendment, and this reversal was recommended by both the PCCC in its report No. 108, 57th Parliament, *Inquiry into the Crime and Corruption Commission's investigation of former councillors of Logan City Council*, and the commission of inquiry relating to the Crime and Corruption Commission that has recently reported. It also specifically makes provision for the release of CCC reports into former public trustee and well-known Labor identity, Peter Carne, and former Labor treasurer, former deputy premier and former member for South Brisbane, Jackie Trad. Both those reports should be published as recommended by CCC chair Mr Bruce Barbour, and both should have the protection of this House, as was thought to be the case by governments of all persuasions and the CCC for the last 26 years.

In the Carne case, the High Court confirmed the majority decision of the Queensland Court of Appeal that, the CCC having investigated a complaint of corruption against Labor mate Peter Carne, the task of the CCC was to decide whether proceedings or disciplinary actions should be considered. They found that if the CCC decides that the proceedings should be considered it may report, not publicly, but only to a prosecuting authority, a head of jurisdiction or the chief executive officer of a unit of public administration under section 49 of the act. Otherwise, there is no provision by which it is to report. As the CCC had completed its investigation into Mr Carne and decided not to proceed with criminal or disciplinary proceedings, the CCC was not empowered or required to make a report.

What we do know is that Mr Carne had been issued a show cause notice by the Attorney-General, Ms D'Ath, asking why he should not be sacked for serious allegations, including being intoxicated at work, absent without leave, conflicts of interest and bullying of staff. We also know he pocketed tens of thousands of dollars for study and over \$350,000 in salary from June 2019 while suspended on a show cause notice before resigning in July 2020, shortly before the extended due date for the show cause notice expired.

As a result of the decision in the High Court in the Carne matter, it is also the case that the report of another CCC investigation into the role of Jackie Trad in the appointment of former under treasurer Mr Frankie Carroll will not be released if the law is not changed. Again, this is despite Mr Barbour's strong position that it ought to be published. Remember, this is a matter where taxpayers have funded Ms Trad's case to prevent the release of the report. Indeed, so sensitive was Ms Trad that she sought and obtained an unusual order preventing even any mention of the matter from being reported on, and we still do not know the full cost to taxpayers of this indulgence granted by Premier Palaszczuk, Attorney-General D'Ath and also Ms Trad's close factional friend, former attorney-general Fentiman. We do know the costs for the CCC amount to over half a million in the Carne matter. Just last week, we saw the Premier throw the Attorney-General under the bus when she directly overruled the Attorney-General, who at that time tried to say that the costs of Ms Trad's matter would not be publicly released.

Now let's turn to what Ms Trad says about the CCC. She welcomes the outcome of the matter before the Supreme Court; she decries the 'unlawful' report of the CCC; she questions the way the CCC understands its responsibilities; and she refers to the CCC's 'unlawful conduct'. My, how the tune has changed! This is what Ms Trad said in *Hansard* on 20 November 2013—

It is incumbent on us to make sure that we maintain the CMC, not only because, as we have seen in recent days, it plays a critical function in terms of addressing the organised crime network in Queensland, but also because it plays an important role in terms of the misconduct inquiries that Queensland needs.

On 20 August 2019, Ms Trad said—

Unlike those opposite, we believe in the CCC.

Ms Trad again said—

It is this side of the House that has always fought for and always supported the CCC.

How interesting! Ms Trad is not so effusive when the investigation is turned onto her own actions—spending untold and uncounted and unreported thousands of dollars to prevent a report being made public.

According to information provided by the CCC to the Parliamentary Crime and Corruption Committee, the court's interpretation of the statute mean at least 32 reports of the CJC, the CMC and CCC and 256 media releases over 26 years would not have occurred. Some examples: the fake Tahitian prince who defrauded Queensland Health of millions of dollars; a report in 2010 of the police investigation into the police itself after the high-profile death in custody of Mulrunji on Palm Island; a 2015 report into transparency and accountability in local government in relation to the Ipswich City Council; a 2017 report involving two researchers at the University of Queensland prosecuted for falsifying a breakthrough study on Parkinson's disease; Operation Keller, relating to the Premier's former chief of staff; a media release in relation to Premier Palaszczuk and allegations in relation to section 60 of the Criminal Code and offences against members of this place; a 2021 report blasting the police for unlawful discrimination; the mangocube private email affair embroiling transport minister Mark Bailey; investigations into Ms Trad's investment property; and the 2020 report into Ms Trad's role in the selection of a principal at the new South Brisbane State High School.

This is important for transparency and openness and public confidence in the institutions of, and governance and administration of, this state, and this is confirmed by no less a person than the Chair of the CCC Mr Barbour himself. In a media release issued on the day of the High Court decision, Mr Barbour said—

The CCC and its predecessor agencies have historically reported on significant matters... Reporting has occurred when there has been a strong public interest in doing so and when there are issues uncovered in investigations that the public, public sector agencies and elected officials should be made aware of to raise integrity standards and to reduce corruption risks in Queensland.

It has done so on the understanding that it was empowered to report under its governing legislation...

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.

He went on to say—

It is for these reasons the CCC will be seeking urgent legislative amendments. I have today—

that is, 13 September—

written to the Attorney-General to initiate discussions on this issue.

Mr Barbour's evidence to the inquiry and other comments are on the public record. The question that remains unanswered is: why is the Labor government not acting? The mealy-mouthed excuse from the Attorney-General and the Premier today that the government is considering legal advice does not stand up to scrutiny. This government can act urgently when its political survival is at stake. Look at amendments to the youth justice laws, look at the adoption of the LNP's breach of bail laws, look at its urgent changes to the remand of youth offender laws in breach of its own Human Rights Act—all done in very short time. When it comes to protecting itself and its Labor mates, as in this case, it is as fast as treacle on a winter's day. It is known this matter has been coming now for over eight months. The High Court granted leave in December.

Queenslanders and this House might well ask: how much more time did the Attorney need? The reality is there is no justifiable excuse for not acting. Delays, prevarication and excuses will not hold water. We cannot let the perfect be the enemy of the good. We know what the problem is. We know how to fix it. The obligation of elected representatives in this place is to ensure the law works as intended and as understood for the past 26 years. A failure to act leaves Queenslanders in the dark. A failure to act will mean those wrongly accused in investigations or who have their name tarnished will not have the opportunity to have a public report clearing their names published. A failure to act will mean the antiseptic of sunlight will not be shone into all the corners of government administration. A failure to act will condemn Labor.

The test for this Labor government: will it act in the interests of Queenslanders and support the prompt passage of this bill, or will it act out of self-interest and delay and ultimately reject it? We must tarry no longer. I nominate the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee to consider the bill. I commend the bill to the House.

First Reading

Mr NICHOLLS (Clayfield—LNP) (12.59 pm): 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 Legal Affairs and Safety Committee

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Krause): Order! In accordance with standing order 131, the bill is now referred to the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee.

Sitting suspended from 1.00 pm to 2.00 pm.

MOTIONS

Suspension of Standing and Sessional Orders



Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE (Sandgate—ALP) (Acting Leader of the House) (2.00 pm), by leave, without notice: I move—

That, notwithstanding anything contained in standing and sessional orders:

- (a) the Minister for Health, Mental Health and Ambulance Services and Minister for Women be permitted to immediately move a motion without notice regarding the health policies in Queensland with the following time limits to apply—
 - Minister for Health and the Leader of the Opposition (or nominee)—5 minutes
 - 3 minutes for all other members
 - with the question being put after 1 hour of debate.

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

AYES, 50:

ALP, 49—Bailey, Boyd, Brown, Bush, Butcher, Crawford, de Brenni, Dick, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Furner, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Healy, Hinchliffe, Howard, Hunt, Kelly, A. King, S. King, Lauga, Linard, Lui, Madden, Martin, McCallum, McMahon, McMillan, Mellish, Miles, Mullen, Palaszczuk, Pease, Power, Pugh, Richards, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Scanlon, Skelton, Smith, Stewart, Sullivan, Tantari, Walker, Whiting.

Ind, 1—Bolton.

NOES, 35:

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

Gm, 2—Berkman, MacMahon.

PHON, 1—Andrew.

Pairs: D'Ath, Minnikin; O'Rourke, Lister.

Resolved in the affirmative.

Liberal National Party, Health



Hon. SM FENTIMAN (Waterford—ALP) (Minister for Health, Mental Health and Ambulance Services and Minister for Women) (2.06 pm): I move—

That this House:

1. notes the reckless decisions by the Newman LNP government to the health system, which included—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Members to my left, it has been made clear that we do listen to motions being put in this House. We will hear the motion and then we will leave you to it.

Ms FENTIMAN: I continue—

- (a) sacking 4,400 health workers including 1,800 frontline nurses;
- (b) closing the Barrett Adolescent Centre;
- (c) removing \$120 million in funding to Queensland health community organisations;
- (d) cutting \$45 million of mental health funding;
- (e) creating a waiting list for the waiting list;
- (f) cutting regional services.
2. notes the reported comments by the member for Mudgeeraba stating that she:
 - (a) insists doctors and nurses have nothing to fear under an LNP government;
 - (b) insists the Newman government's record on health is something she would again aspire to.
3. notes that the:
 - (a) shadow health minister called regional health workers duds;
 - (b) member for Burnett's public comments 'it's time we broke the back of unrealistic employee entitlement';
 - (c) member for Chatsworth has said 'we already know that we could prune things back'.
4. notes that the current members for Broadwater, Kawana, Mudgeeraba, Surfers Paradise, Everton, Clayfield and Glass House sat around the Newman LNP government cabinet and collectively made negative decisions impacting Queenslanders.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Members to my left, this is not the time to debate the motion. You will have an opportunity.

Ms FENTIMAN: I continue—

5. notes the former LNP Currumbin MP has described the LNP opposition as 'a whingeing, weary, policy-vacant bunch of ageing grumpy individuals'.
6. condemns the Crisafulli LNP opposition for having no positive plans for health care and wanting to take Queensland back to the Newman LNP government days of cutting, sacking and selling.
7. acknowledges the strong investment and support by the Palaszczuk government in Queensland Health.

Another sitting week, another Freudian slip from the LNP. It feels like only yesterday we were in here debating the member for Burnett's comments about breaking the back of unrealistic employee entitlements. Like clockwork, here we are again. The Leader of the Opposition must be getting tired of his MPs running around saying the quiet part out loud, revealing his secret plan for cuts because, sure enough, the member for Mudgeeraba has sat down with the *Courier-Mail* and laid it all out for us to see. She aspires to the Newman years. She aspires to 4,400 health workers getting sacked, closing the Barrett centre and failing to deliver one health infrastructure project.

Not content with just calling our health workers duds, she wants to fire them too, for good measure. In Mental Health Week, she is aspiring to return to the days of the only government in Queensland's history that cut funding from mental health. These are the member for Mudgeeraba's lofty ambitions. I am sure that she will pursue them with the same vigour and determination with which she pursues the rest of her reform agenda in this House. How can anyone ever trust the member for Mudgeeraba to govern Queensland Health when all she has managed to do in 14 years as an MP is introduce just one bill?

What has the member for Mudgeeraba been doing? Let me tell honourable members. She has been spending a lot of time getting kicked out of this chamber. In fact, since 2020 the member for Mudgeeraba has been kicked out of this chamber 18 times. That is every second sitting week that the member for Mudgeeraba is booted out of the chamber. Yesterday she was booted out for the entire day. That comes just days after Jann Stuckey attacked her former colleagues, saying that another truly disappointing trend—

Ms Bates interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Mudgeeraba, you will get your chance.

Ms FENTIMAN:—is the unacceptable parliamentary behaviour. She said—


In the LNP, getting kicked out of the House for shouting and screaming insults ... is seen as a badge of honour.

...

What a pity they don't spend the same amount of time developing policies.

She called the entire lot of them a whingeing, weary, policy-vacant bunch of individuals. We know that the Leader of the Opposition has a secret plan for cuts to health workers and for cuts to hospital infrastructure projects like our satellite hospitals.

(Time expired)

 **Mr CRISAFULLI** (Broadwater—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (2.11 pm): One thing is for sure—it has been a very bad week for the member for Waterford. One thing is for sure about the member for Waterford: when she is in a hole, she looks to her colleagues and says, 'I can get us out of this. Hold the shovel and give me the keys to the excavator because I am going to keep digging.' It has been a very bad week, but I will tell members what is really concerning. In a week when we have heard some of the biggest failures of the health system this state has seen, in a week where we would think the minister would be looking every single minute to find a way to fix the broken system, we would think that the member would be doing the following in this hour.

I would expect the health minister in an LNP government to pick up the phone and say, 'Are there victims who have reached out who have not been given the justice that they need when it comes to rape examinations?' This is what I would be doing in this hour. I would be asking the HHSs and senior people in the department what has been done to make sure that women have justice and that the broken system—that we said would be fixed by July and has not been—has been fixed. I would be


using the hour to ask: why is it that ambulance ramping remains at 45 per cent—the worst in the country? Why is it three times higher than when we came to office? That is what a good government would be asking in this hour.

A good government would be asking: why is it that waiting lists continue to soar and that Queenslanders are at the end of a broken system where they are not listened to and they do not get the treatment they deserve? We saw the minister come into this place and use a precious hour of her time to try and somehow claw a tiny win from a backbench that looked on her with disdain today. They felt sorry for her as she wilted under the pressure and continued to repeat the words 'six minutes'. It was robotic. The member for Pumicestone, who scored the greatest home goal this place has ever seen, caused the health minister to go into meltdown. The cherry on the cake was the water minister throwing her under the bus one more time—that was the icing on the cake.

Health in this state is in crisis. The only people who refuse to admit it is in crisis are the people who are charged with the responsibility of fixing it, so let me explain to members what needs to occur in this system. Firstly, we need better resources. That involves going to Canberra and saying, 'Where is the fifty-fifty funding?' This election was a referendum about fifty-fifty funding. The Premier, the Treasurer, a conga line of senior ministers said that it would be the defining moment of the election campaign. It has been crickets since. In fact, the only comment this government wants to deny more than Mr Albanese not giving fifty-fifty funding, concerns when he said, 'Governments do not get better in their fourth term'—that is the only comment they walk further away from.

Secondly, we need better triaging. How is it that people are being logjammed into EDs and frontline staff are not being listened to on the solutions they are putting forward? Thirdly, we need sharing data in real-time. I commit that within 100 days of an election of an LNP government Queenslanders will see how their hospitals are performing. That will enable not just the minister to hold them to account, but five million Queenslanders can hold the government, the senior public servants and indeed the minister accountable—that is the way to do it. Not by having a postage box in the member for Pumicestone's office to vet who can work for Queensland Health. It is about making sure that data is shared in real-time. Above all, it is about saying to doctors and nurses: we value you, we respect you and we are going to put you back in charge of your hospitals.

When I have doctors and nurses tell me about what it feels like to receive another text message asking them to do another shift, they are broken. They are battered; they are bruised; they are the victims of nearly a decade of poor planning. If members want proof that this government is not up to the job of fixing it, the minister has wasted an hour of our precious time to play a game, rather than to get justice for a broken health system.


 **Ms LAUGA** (Keppel—ALP) (2.16 pm): I am still in shock at the fact that we are having this debate in this place and the Leader of the Opposition has said that one of the ways that we can help fix our health system is by dedicating better resources. This is from the same man who sat around the cabinet table when Campbell Newman was the premier of this state and agreed to the sacking of 4,500 healthcare workers. He comes in here today and says that our health system needs better resources. Is that what he said around the cabinet table when they made that decision—'No actually, premier, we need more resources in health, not less.' Did the member stand up to the premier and those others around the cabinet table that day when they proposed to sack so many healthcare workers? I doubt that he did.

In Central Queensland alone, 197 healthcare staff were sacked—that is just in Central Queensland. Eighty-four health staff were sacked from the children's hospital. How can you possibly agree to sack 84 doctors, nurses and healthcare workers from the children's hospital? Those opposite keep saying, 'But that was years ago.' I can tell you that the nurses, doctors and healthcare workers do not forget. They were so hurt and devastated that they will never forget.

Back in 2015, in the lead-up to the state election, Rachel—an emergency department nurse from the Rockhampton Hospital—joined my campaign. She stood out on Thozet Road many a morning and afternoon with a sign asking people to 'toot to boot Newman'. She joined the campaign because of the devastation that she had witnessed at the Rockhampton Hospital emergency department when then premier Campbell Newman and the LNP sacked those 197 healthcare workers. For a minute, can we all in this House put ourselves in the shoes of those healthcare workers who work tirelessly to care for, protect and keep our community safe? To have a government come in and blatantly sack so many people who were there to care for the people of our state was so devastating, and their memories will run long.

It is even more devastating to have comments from the member for Mudgeeraba, and others in this House, calling regional healthcare workers 'duds'. It was the member for Chatsworth who said that we already know that we could prune things back. The former LNP Currumbin MP described the LNP—

(Time expired)

 **Ms BATES** (Mudgeeraba—LNP) (2.19 pm): I just cannot get over the fact that we are doing this two sitting weeks in a row, when the Minister for Health—

Mr Harper interjected.

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

Ms BATES:—could not substantiate her own motion and had to change it. What is it that the Minister for Health is so obsessed about? Every time I come in here it is 'the member for Mudgeeraba, 'the member for Mudgeeraba'. I am not going to get in the gutter with the Minister for Health like she did with Jackie Trad, because they would both beat me with experience every day of the week. Shannon Fentiman, the current Minister for Health, was the worst child safety minister we have ever seen. We know that there were 15 children who died under suspicious circumstances under her watch. As I said back then, she was a fraud, a phoney and a failure as a child safety minister, and nothing much has changed with her in health.

Mr Butcher interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Gladstone.

Ms BATES: I can tell members that what I will not aspire to is a Health payroll debacle of \$1.25 billion. I will not aspire to nurses not being paid and ringing up my office telling me that they need money to buy bread and milk to put on the table. I will not aspire to there being a 'Tahitian prince' to defraud Queensland taxpayers of \$16 million. After nine years of a Labor government we have had four health ministers—four dud health ministers. On top of that, we had an assistant minister for health from Mackay who did absolutely nothing when a part 9 investigation was going on at Mackay Hospital. I will not aspire to ambulance ramping at 45 per cent. I will not aspire to 58,000 on the surgery waitlist or 142,000 people waiting to see a specialist.

Mr Butcher interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Gladstone.

Ms BATES: I certainly will not aspire to a long dental waitlist that is now over 100,000. We have put our solutions on the table—better resources, seeing this government has not built bed numbers and those beds are not going to come online until 2026, and better triaging. We need to make sure we have real-time data like I can see in New South Wales right now but cannot see here in Queensland. We have already committed to real-time data in the first 100 days, to put doctors and nurses back in charge where they belong and to listen to the people at the coalface. Listen to the staff at Rockhampton Hospital, member for Keppel. I was there only a couple of weeks ago. Ambulance ramping is at 55 per cent. There were more teal uniforms inside that ED than there were Queensland Health staff and every truck Rockhampton had was on the ramp, so I am not going to aspire to that for Rockhampton.

Mr Saunders interjected.

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

Ms BATES: Bring on our Keppel candidate Nigel Hutton, who will do a much better job. I am not going to take any advice from the Minister for Health. I am afraid that she sat around the cabinet table for every one of these decisions, and the chaos and crisis that is Queensland Health is firmly at the feet of the Minister for Health.


Mr SPEAKER: Before calling the next speaker, member for Kawana and member for Gladstone, you are both warned for quarrelling across the chamber.

Mr Sullivan interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Stafford!

Ms BATES: Mr Speaker, I take personal offence at that comment and I ask that it be withdrawn.

Mr SULLIVAN: I withdraw.

 **Mrs GILBERT** (Mackay—ALP) (2.23 pm): I call on the member for Mudgeeraba to apologise to our regional health workers. They are not duds. Every health worker gets up every day and does their very best to care for Queenslanders. Our doctors, our nurses and our allied health workers are caring for Queenslanders, and I thank them. My community in Mackay can remember when the member for

Mudgeeraba came to Mackay on the very same day that the Minister for Health was meeting with women in Mackay to support them and to listen to their stories. What did the member for Mudgeeraba do? She held a forum along with the member for Whitsunday and asked for them to come along to the forum. A nurse who was new to Mackay turned up to see what was happening with women's issues. She got thrown out. I will tell members why she was thrown out: she did not have a bit of juicy gossip for the muckrakers. Because she did not have a complaint—she went there to find out what was happening with women's issues in Mackay—the muckrakers threw her out.


Ms Bates interjected.

Mrs GILBERT: This was a registered nurse who wanted to know what was going on. She went there in good faith and old muckraker just tossed her out. The health workers in Mackay talk to me all the time about the way that you come into their town and you throw mud at them all the time.

Mr SPEAKER: Direct your comments through the chair please, member. Pause the clock. Member for Mudgeeraba, I understand there is provocation. You have already had an opportunity to speak. It is now the member for Mackay's turn to speak.

Mrs GILBERT: They know that every time the member for Mudgeeraba gets up here and says that she has been to a hospital and she has a story, she goes in, she visits the workers and they talk to her about all sorts of different things and then she uses that against them. They are tired of the member for Mudgeeraba twisting their stories and making them look like they are not doing their jobs. They are sick and tired of it. The thing they fear the most is when the member for Mudgeeraba turns up, because they know that she is going to slam them in the news. That is just absolutely outrageous. They know that she is just there to be a troublemaker. What did she do when those opposite were in government? They sacked 32 health workers across the Mackay HHS. One might think that is not too many, but for a small HHS to lose 12 nurses is devastating. The member for Mudgeeraba has a lot to be sorry for and she should apologise to health workers.

(Time expired)

 **Mr BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (2.26 pm): The member for Mackay is right: the member for Mudgeeraba does visit hospitals. She visits hospitals in the member's electorate. However, the one thing that I disagree with her on is what the nurses are telling the member for Mudgeeraba. They are pleading with the member for Mudgeeraba to bring their issues onto the floor of the House because their local member, who was the assistant health minister, was not listening. They are pleading with the opposition—the nurses, the doctors, the paramedics. They are coming to the opposition and pleading with the opposition to raise the Queensland Health crisis. Is it any wonder why we have conducted over 30 health town hall crisis meetings across the state where people are coming forward and talking about the health crisis?

Make no mistake: this motion is for the Minister for Health to try and claw back a little bit of her leadership ambitions after the circus and chaos that ensued in the House in question time this morning. We saw the debacle of the health minister standing up for the member for Pumicestone, who says she wants to basically vet health employees—'Come to my office. I can vet them.' That is essentially what her Facebook post was all about. The health minister defended that—

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock.


Ms KING: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I find the member for Kawana's comments personally offensive and I ask that he withdraw.

Mr BLEIJIE: I withdraw. This morning the Minister for Health defended the actions and the Facebook post of the member for Pumicestone. The Premier then threw the health minister under a bus and then the health minister changed her story six minutes later. It was a complete embarrassment and it goes to the heart of the chaos and dysfunction of the Palaszczuk Labor government. It is a crisis. Why on earth would a government, after nine years in government in this state, not be able to move motions in here about its record? Rather, those opposite are going back to a government nearly 10 years in the past at the time of the next election. Do members know what? They talk about aspiring. I was in that government they talked about and I remember when the young kids were finally able to get their cochlear implants that the Labor Party did not get them. I was a part of that government when Lawrence Springborg as health minister got rid of and completed the dental waiting list—the long waitlist. People got the dental surgery they needed—unlike under the Labor Party under Anna Bligh and Anastacia Palaszczuk. At the time they could not do that.

Ms Bates: Ambulance ramping halved.

Mr BLEIJIE: The elective surgery waiting list went down and ambulance ramping went down 50 per cent so, yes, there are things we should aspire to—not what we have seen over the last nine years.

Government members cannot come in here and talk about their record because the Labor Party record in Queensland is bad. It is one of putting politics first, not patients. The Labor Party should absolutely be ashamed of its record. This motion is a break-glass-in-emergency motion for the health minister. She had such an embarrassing morning. It is basically pleading with the backbench: 'Look at me. I am not as bad as I looked this morning. Keep me in sight for leadership ambitions.' What a disgrace and a waste of time.

 **Mr HEALY** (Cairns—ALP) (2.30 pm): As the member for Kawana has asked what the Labor Party has done, let us talk about what we have done. Let us have a good, long, hard look at what we have achieved. Since the Palaszczuk government was elected we have employed almost 20,000 additional frontline health workers. We have opened more than 1,700 new hospital beds, with over 3,700 on the way across three new hospitals and 11 hospital expansions, including my hospital up in Cairns which is going to look spectacular. We are looking at a \$26 million expansion of our emergency department. There will be 96 new beds. They are just some of the things we are doing in that space. We are working with the Albanese government to deliver—

Mr O'Connor interjected.


Mr HEALY: I cannot hear you talking.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Bonney, you should know well that you cannot interject from a seat that is not your own seat unless you are in an acting position on the front bench. Please move and stop your interjections.


Mr HEALY: The member for Bonney should know a lot of things and I am here to tell him that this government is doing outstanding things to assist the people of this great state. Let us talk about Jann Stuckey for a minute because Jann has made a wonderful contribution. I want to remind everybody of the tears when she was leaving this place. Everyone on that side said she was a big asset and it was a huge loss. Where would she get words like 'whingeing', 'weary', 'policy vacant'?

Ms Bates: We are all such good friends of hers.

Mr HEALY: Yes, I can tell. This morning the member for Clayfield said if you want a friend in politics on your side get a dog. What I find interesting is that your leader spoke about letting doctors and nurses make decisions and data sharing. There was no policy. There was not a mention about finance in any way, shape or form. He was just speaking very broadly with no details. This is what you do when you do not know what you are doing. We are also delivering on the pharmacy scope of practice trial which will help Queenslanders access a range of common medications like the contraceptive pill and UTI treatment through community pharmacists. That is working out well. We are making health care more accessible. There are significant challenges out there and we do not deny that. Every jurisdiction in the country is well and truly aware of it. We have policies and we have outstanding outcomes. We have legislated termination of pregnancy and voluntary assisted dying to give Queenslanders the choice they deserve. We have expanded the nurse navigator program and made the positions permanent to meet local HHS needs. This is what you do: you deliver for people; you do not stand in a room and bark at people. The success we have is out there, not in here with you.

 **Mr JANETZKI** (Toowoomba South—LNP) (2.33 pm): The division that heralded this motion interrupted a most beautiful visit that I was having with a little country school called Drillham State School. They were in the House today. They have just left the chamber. We had a very diligent attendant, Emma, who was taking them on their parliamentary tour and was doing a wonderful job. They are now meeting with the member for Callide. I grew up 800 metres down the road from my dear cousin on Jondaryan Nungil Road on the way to Brymaroo. She has gone on to live at Drillham where she has married a young man and they have kids. I was just talking to those kids from Drillham State School and I was wondering what kind of health services the children at Drillham State School will grow up with. Drillham is on the border between the electorates of the member for Warrego and the member for Callide. If you want to have a baby in Drillham you are going to have to go to Dalby or Roma. Do members know why? It is because Chinchilla maternity services are on bypass. What does it say when this government has closed 37 maternity services in Queensland in the last 25 years? They can come in and talk all they want about health services, but that is their record on maternity services in the bush.


Let us think about the fifty-fifty health funding that was well mentioned before the last election. It was like the world would be ending if we did not get fifty-fifty health funding. The boys from Logan were going to solve it all. They were going to come through with the funding and all the health services would be remedied and we would be living in a brand new world. It has been pretty quiet since the election of the treasurers from Logan. It has been extraordinarily quiet. The other reason it has been quiet since the election of the treasurers from Logan is the Health and Hospitals Plan was so trumpeted by the Treasurer—we have the new hospitals and upgrades to all the hospitals—but does the House understand what has been set aside in the budget in the last two years for the Health and Hospitals Plan? Five per cent of total funding for the Health and Hospitals Plan has been delivered in the budget in the last two years. The government can announce all it wants, but when that is the track record that this government seeks to stand on, we fully understand that what we need is an election of the Crisafulli government where we can deliver world-class health services no matter where you live in Queensland.

 **Mr McCALLUM** (Bundamba—ALP) (2.36 pm): It is a pleasure to follow the shadow Treasurer who mentioned our landmark Health and Hospitals Plan which is delivering better health care right across Queensland through better health services, through more good jobs for our frontline health staff and through our infrastructure Big Build which is delivering state-of-the-art health care right across Queensland, including in Ipswich where it is delivering a major upgrade to the Ipswich Hospital that will see 200 new beds, an expanded emergency department and a new 50-bed acute mental health facility that is nearing completion. We have already opened the satellite hospital in South Ripley that is taking care of our local community. We have another 174 public beds on the way in partnership with the Mater at Springfield and we are committed to building a new residential rehabilitation facility.

All of this is at risk under the LNP. There is no greater threat to health services in the state of Queensland than an LNP state government. We know this because last time they were in government they sacked 4,400 health workers and cut vital healthcare services. This is because they do not respect our hardworking health staff and they do not respect the jobs that they do. Why else would their shadow health spokesperson call our regional health workers duds? Why else would the member for Burnett say it is time we broke the back of unrealistic employee entitlements when it comes to health workers? How is this backing the hardworking nurses and midwives at the Bundaberg Hospital that provide services to constituents when they are ill? He wants to cut their pay and conditions, their sick leave, their overtime and their maternity leave.

At least he had the good graces to apologise, unlike the member for Mudgeeraba when she called our regional health workers duds. The puff piece—the little profile piece—in the *Courier-Mail* about the member for Mudgeeraba was an absolute beauty. I congratulate her on kicking the durries. Well done on getting match fit for the election. The member, however, dropped a couple of bombs by insisting that the Newman government's record on health is something that she would aspire to, promising widespread cultural change within Queensland Health, putting everyone—

(Time expired)

 **Mr MICKELBERG** (Buderim—LNP) (2.39 pm): This is just the latest pathetic attempt to play politics by a health minister who is out of her depth. Just as she did in her last portfolio and the one before that, the health minister takes her riding orders from Jackie Trad. She is Jackie Trad's apprentice. This is out of Jackie Trad's playbook, page No. 1. We see it time and time again.

We could talk about substantive issues here today, such as the fact that Queensland hospitals were on tier 3 150 times in a quarter. They could not cope 150 times in a quarter. Seven thousand hours were lost on escalation in one quarter. We could be talking about that but what are we talking about? Pathetic little motions that are designed to throw mud on this side by a government that has been in the wilderness for 10 years! Half of us on this side were not even a part of the former government that they complain about. I was not here.

An opposition member interjected.

Mr MICKELBERG: I take the interjection. I was not here; I was overseas defending the nation when the LNP was last in government.


Do members know what the people of my electorate want? They want action and change. When I go to Rockhampton, people tell me that they are disgusted that their hospital has the highest ambulance ramping in regional Queensland and could not cope 15 times in a single quarter. What did the member for Keppel have to say about that? Nothing! The member for Keppel came in here with a written, rehearsed speech—I will give her credit: at least this time she was not sat down within the first two minutes—but she did not once address the substantive issues affecting her community. I contrast that with the actions of Nigel Hutton, the LNP candidate for Keppel. That man has been doorknocking

parts of Rockhampton, North Rockhampton and Yeppoon. He has been listening to constituents. When he listens to those constituents they tell him that they are concerned that the health system is not coping. The health system is not coping and the member for Keppel's answer is to come in here and play politics.

We are wasting an hour of our time when the Minister for Health could be focusing on substantive issues that will make a difference. We have ambulance ramping at 45 per cent. When this government came to power it was at 15 per cent. The figure has increased three times since this government came to power. There is a long waitlist. It was at zero when this government came to power. What is it now? It is at record levels, and this government does not care! They would rather play politics. They care more about what something looks like than how it really is. They care more about the spin than the substance.

Chaos and crisis are besetting the government. We saw it in question time as the left were quickly jockeying to try to fix the Minister for Water's answer, which threw the member for Pumicestone under the bus after she had already had a rough morning. Premier Palaszczuk came in here to try to ask the Minister for Health about what was actually going on—

(Time expired)

 **Mr MELLISH** (Aspley—ALP) (2.42 pm): It gives me great pleasure to speak on this motion about the substantial risk that the LNP pose to health care on the north side of Brisbane and, indeed, across the state. If we want to know what the LNP would do to health care in our part of town then past behaviour is the best predictor of future behaviour. What was their track record within the Metro North health district? They sacked over 1,400 staff, which was the largest sacking in any of the health and hospital service areas, including over 730 nurses. I remember when I was doorknocking in Geebung in 2017. I came across an ex-nurse who had been sacked by the Newman government and had not worked since. He was in a bad way because, through no fault of his own, he had been told by the LNP that his state no longer needed him and that his community did not need his skills. The way they treated staff was shocking and it was worst in health.


The LNP closed the Barrett Adolescent Centre without replacement, even though their own expert committee recommended they keep it open. In 2020 I was very pleased to see the opening of its replacement. We built Jacaranda Place, which is located next to Prince Charles Hospital in the electorate of Stafford. When I was last there I spoke with some teenagers who told me how grateful they were that they had somewhere to go when they were doing it really tough.

As a north-side member I am proud that since 2015 we have boosted our Metro North HHS by an additional 3,800 staff, including over 600 doctors and more than 2,000 nurses. Prince Charles Hospital is set to undergo a \$360 million expansion project that will see our local hospital receive a new dedicated acute services building, an expanded adult and paediatric emergency department and 94 new additional beds. That is an outstanding commitment.

What would the LNP do if they were in power? It was very concerning to hear the LNP shadow health minister, the person who wants to be health minister, say that the Newman government's record on health is something they aspire to. What a terrible record to aspire to. Maybe the shadow health minister has an amazing track record as a minister and we can take her word for it that she would be a good minister for health. I had a look and, frankly, it is a bit frightening.

The member for Mudgeeraba got off to a bad start. People may remember that within weeks of taking office, in what was seen as one of the first of many bad decisions by the Newman government, they scrapped the Premier's Literary Awards. They created weeks of bad press to save \$250,000. Then there was the plagiarised speech episode, which she casually blamed on a public servant, made them take the blame and then sacked them. Then there was the Ethics Committee investigation, the director-general of Transport scandal, the nepotism issues and issues with the lobbyist register. She even frogmarched her own chief of staff, under escort, from the executive building to try to save her own skin.

When I was looking this up, I thought I was looking at the scandals of half a dozen ministers over five or six years, not the scandals of one minister over less than a year. However, all good things come to an end. The member was too much for even Campbell Newman, who rejected her as a minister and she duly resigned. In the spirit of a John West canned tuna ad, how bad do you have to be to be rejected by Campbell Newman? That is who aspires to be their health minister.

 **Mrs FRECKLINGTON** (Nanango—LNP) (2.45 pm): I was sitting here listening to members opposite—all of the backbench speakers and the assistant ministers—and I was thinking about the definition of a bad week, such as the health minister and the Premier have had this week. They also

had a bad week the last sitting week and the one before that. For the health minister I thought I would google the definition of a 'bad week', and these came up: 'Don't let a bad week make you forget all the good things in your life' and 'A bad week is just a bend in the road and not the end of the road'.


I think last sitting week the health minister forgot about the bend in the road when she came in here and said, 'Hang on a minute! I am head of the left. I have to fix up what I'm doing in the House. I'm going to put a motion in the House. I'm going to move another motion. I've had a really terrible day so I'm going to move a motion.' Then she thought, 'I wonder what that motion could be about. It can't be about the health system in Queensland because we know that right now in Queensland that is very poor. It can't be about the record of the Palaszczuk government when it comes to the health system because that is abysmal. What can we do? We could talk about a government that has been in the wilderness for nearly a decade.' That is where the poor health minister has come to.

It has been a terrible week. We saw the member for Pumicestone thrown under the bus not once but probably two or three times in question time.

Mr Langbroek: They drove over her and then reversed.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: I take that interjection. The poor member for Pumicestone was run over and then they reversed the bus and ran over her again. One has to wonder why. Obviously the member for Pumicestone made the Facebook post, but that is not what I am trying to get at here. My point is that the Premier threw her under the bus and then decided to throw the health minister under the bus. The health minister got up and tried to fix the problem by saying, 'I support the leader.' She said, 'I don't know what the Premier said but I want to be the premier so I'm going to support the Premier' and then knifed the left in the back. Who was run over again? It was the member for Pumicestone! It was then the turn of the Minister for Water and the question was pretty simple: is a desalination plant going to be built on Bribie Island or within the Pumicestone electorate? What did the water minister do? He looked over to his left colleague and thought, 'I'm sorry, but the health minister is having such a bad week that I'm just going to pile it on.'

We know that the Minister for Health is the wannabe head of the left, if she is not already. The Minister for Health wants to be the premier and that is why the Premier let her move this motion. It is an own goal by the health minister—and come in spinner, I say.

 **Mrs MULLEN** (Jordan—ALP) (2.48 pm): I am pleased to rise in support of the motion moved by the Minister for Health. There is a famous quote regarding the definition of insanity that I think is apt when describing the potential of the member for Mudgeeraba ever becoming the Queensland health minister. When you know a political party's record and values when in government, when you know the performance and ethics of the member when she was a minister and when you read or hear the comments that the member has made and continues to make then it really would be insanity to give the LNP power in Queensland and to elevate their shadow health minister.

The LNP ripped \$1.6 billion from the Queensland Health budget. They cut regional health services. They slashed \$120 million from funding for critical health organisations in our communities including child and family therapy services, not to mention closing the Barrett Adolescent Centre, which had devastating consequences.

Where organisations were offered funding, they were formally gagged from ever criticising the then government—outrageous and an affront to freedom of speech and expression. The LNP sacked more than 4,000 health workers. In total, they sacked 14,000 Queensland public servants. There is no denying this. There is no trickery and no spin; it is the truth.

There was never any remorse for their decisions nor the way it was done, which was particularly devastating for so many. I would have thought at least the member for Mudgeeraba would have understood the devastation and hurt, having been sacked herself by Premier Campbell Newman, but maybe it is not the same when you are only in a role for such a very short time. The member for Mudgeeraba had a limited and hardly illustrious tenure as a minister, but in that time she misled the parliament and got caught up in a CCC investigation and a QIRC matter—the workers' friend; no wonder she chooses to only support and promote a fake union. She was busy doing everything except her job, but sometimes people can change.

Mr Mickelberg interjected.


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

Mrs MULLEN: We should always try to give them the benefit of the doubt, but self-awareness is clearly not a virtue of the LNP nor the member for Mudgeeraba, because her comments and actions as the shadow minister for health clearly show that nothing has changed. Regional health workers are

duds, according to the shadow minister. Hospital workers are on notice, according to the shadow minister. As foreshadowed by the member for Burnett, she has not ruled out cutting the pay and entitlements of health workers. She has also refused to ask her own leader how they will fill that \$7 billion black hole if they reverse our progressive coal royalties which we are using to invest in significant health infrastructure. I am very pleased that the member is looking after her own health, but what about the health of Queenslanders? Where are the LNP's policies? Perhaps, as she said last week, you do not need to reinvent the wheel when you have the Newman's government's records to aspire to—just cut and paste. After all this, I say to the Leader of the Opposition—

Honourable members interjected.


Mr SPEAKER: Please resume your seat. Member for Mudgeeraba, I have tried to give you some guidance. I know you are being provoked, but there is no excuse for the continual interjections. You are warned under the standing orders. The member for Bonney is also warned under the standing orders.

 **Mr MOLHOEK** (Southport—LNP) (2.51 pm): I would back the member for Mudgeeraba over the member for Waterford any day. Yes, we have heard members on that side of the House criticise the member for Mudgeeraba for the number of times she has been thrown out of the House. Yes, yesterday she was suspended from the House for a day, but that is because she is passionate and finds it difficult to sit there and listen to the drivel that gets dished up day after day week after week in this House by the Labor government of this state. This Labor government is absolutely out of touch with the everyday needs of Queenslanders in respect of health needs. We have seen their failures listed time and time again. The Queensland Audit Office has provided multiple reports about their failure to plan for the workforce, IT failures, systemic failures within the health system, ambulance ramping and address seriously First Nations health issues across the state. Quite frankly, with the way this state is going in terms of labour force planning, particularly in rural, remote and regional Queensland, it is going to become entirely a FIFO state.

Last week I had the privilege of attending the Remote Australians Matter Conference in Charleville. Who was there from the Labor Party? No-one was there. Last week, 200 delegates gathered in Charleville from across rural and remote Queensland for a conference to address the health concerns of Queenslanders and who was there from the Labor Party? Not one single person was there. At the end of the conference I just happened to be standing in the main street of Charleville and a couple of police officers wandered into the coffee shop where I was patiently waiting for a coffee. I asked the police officers whether they had been invited to attend or had the opportunity to participate in the conference. Do members know what did they say? They were denied the opportunity to attend the conference because the police department would not cover the \$150 registration fee for them to attend. They went on to say that Queensland Health workers were told they were not allowed to attend the Remote Australians Matter conference.

Across this state we have seen a diminishing workforce. In the opening remarks of the conference they talked about the fact that the workforce is diminishing. In fact, across the rural and remote Queensland workforce in this state and within allied health services, more than 10 per cent of positions are vacant. I spoke with directors of medical services and nursing services at that conference and they told me that on many occasions they are struggling to find people who want to take on these jobs unless they are allowed to fly in and fly out.

(Time expired)


 **Mr SAUNDERS** (Maryborough—ALP) (2.54 pm): I rise in support of the motion moved by the Minister for Health. What a great health minister we have in this state. If you close your eyes you can imagine the opposition's health minister. They talk about chaos. It would be unbelievable. Thanks to the member for Kawana who said that we should talk about local hospitals. I want to talk about the Maryborough Hospital. Can you believe that the LNP government closed the pathology department at the Maryborough Hospital? They said, 'You can take the blood down by taxis.' The only people who liked it were the taxidrivars because they had a constant stream of taxis from Maryborough to Hervey Bay. Guess who opened the pathology ward? It was the Palaszczuk Labor government. I will repeat that for the tone deaf opposite: it was the Palaszczuk Labor government. Who built the new A&E at the Maryborough Hospital? All together members: the Palaszczuk Labor government. That is who did that. The only thing you could get at the Maryborough Hospital under the LNP was a bandaid, if that.

Since the Palaszczuk Labor government came to power, we have opened all the wards and increased the A&E. We are doing up the mental health unit at the Maryborough Hospital. Those opposite were the only government in the history of the great state of Queensland to cut funding to mental health, but look at what we are doing. They never apologised. The member for Burnett and the

member for Mudgeeraba say the nurses like them. We must be talking to different nurses because they would not win a popularity contest in my electorate. If the vote were taken now, I can assure members opposite that it would be negative and not positive. A goat with a hat on would win because they are not popular.

Since the Palaszczuk government came to office there has been over an 80 per cent increase in Wide Bay health funding. We have more ambos. Not only that, we now have ambos dealing with mental health issues. They go around when people are having mental health issues. That is unbelievable. We have nurse navigators. The list goes on and on. Since coming to power, the Palaszczuk government has reinvigorated health in the Maryborough electorate. If people visit the hospital now, they will find staff. We did not cut staff. Across the Wide Bay, those opposite cut 345 staff.

We hear the member for Callide always talking about midwifery services and babies being born on the side of the road. Who cut nursing and midwifery support and education? All together members: the LNP Newman government. That is who cut the funding. Members opposite have more hide than Jessie the elephant to come in here and talk about health.


 **Dr ROWAN** (Moggill—LNP) (2.58 pm): I rise to address the motion moved by the Minister for Health and Minister for Mental Health, the member for Waterford. It is 2023 and we feel like we live in a parallel universe where each week we come in here and the Labor government just has another diversion. They cannot talk about their record since 2015 because they have a pitiful record when it comes to health in this state. Let us go through their record as to what is actually happening. Ambulance ramping in this state is at 45 per cent. When they were elected to government, it was at 15 per cent. There has been a threefold increase in ambulance ramping right across the state. It does not matter whether it is at the Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital, the PA or in regional Queensland. We have longer surgical waitlists. Look at the absolute debacle of the forensic and scientific laboratory where this government has recklessly abandoned women in this state who are victims of serious sexual assault. We also have the health workforce crisis that is burning right across Queensland, whether that is recruiting doctors, nurses or allied health professionals. They have had no workforce planning since 2015 when it comes to delivering what is needed in our public hospital system across Queensland.

Let's talk about rural maternity services and the issues around Biloela, Chinchilla, Cooktown and Gladstone. I heard the member for Toowoomba South talk about the number of closures in Queensland under this Labor government. It is just outrageous, but it is like the Beattie and Bligh Labor governments before them. Then you have clinical governance issues in relation to Mackay and Caboolture. I hear through whistleblowers that the Metro North Hospital and Health Service Executive has decamped to Caboolture. They have gone to Caboolture. I wonder why they are up there. This week we have even seen people call out the Labor government in relation to what is happening with mental health patients and the lack of beds. All the time there are whistleblowers coming to our shadow minister for health, who has been Queensland nurse of the year and also Telstra businesswoman of the year. They are coming to our shadow health minister and all of our town hall meetings and telling us how bad this government is—just like the Beattie and Bligh Labor governments. They had their triple P program before. Do members remember the Jayant Patel saga, the \$1.2 billion payroll fiasco and the fake Tahitian prince episode? The Palaszczuk government is just like the Beattie and Bligh Labor governments. The LNP has some terrific ideas and policies when it comes to changing our health system.

Government members interjected.

Dr ROWAN: I hear them saying, 'What are they?' Better resourcing, better triaging, sharing data in real time, and putting doctors and nurses back in charge. That is what the AMAQ, the Rural Doctors Association of Queensland and professional associations are saying. They are looking for those solutions. The LNP will deliver on those solutions and they will do a lot better than this state Labor government.

(Time expired)

 **Mr HARPER** (Thuringowa—ALP) (3.01 pm): This proud Palaszczuk Labor government backs our health staff. We do not sack our health staff. I say to the Leader of the Opposition and the shadow health minister and member for Mudgeeraba: you need to own your mistakes of the past. I remind people in my electorate, in our hometown of Townsville, every single day that 400 of the 4,400 health staff who were sacked in this state were part of the Townsville health network. I knew some of them personally. You need to own your mistakes. Those opposite have never apologised for sacking those staff. The Labor government has replaced them. In Townsville we have replaced 337 nurses, 208

doctors, 110 health professionals and 65 more paramedics. That is 700 health staff we put back in after the damage of the LNP. I speak with health staff in our city all the time. I have dear friends who work at the Townsville University Hospital. They remember the days of—and they never want to go back those days—‘you have nothing to fear’.


We all remember the days when you could go to an ambulance station and there would be a forward-facing contact where you could go and do your first aid training. In 2014 I was the officer in charge of the Hugh Street Ambulance Station. All of our first aid trainers were sacked. Our baby capsule fitter, Dennis, had been with us for 20 years. He was sacked. He was a broken man. He came into my office and he was crying. If you have ever been to a job where a baby survived an accident because of the capsules we hired out but a parent or grandparent succumbed to injuries, you know the value of those capsules. You could not put a price on them.

People often ask me, ‘Why are you here, Aaron? Why did you go into parliament?’ Johnathan Thurston came in to get his baby capsules fitted. He did that with all of his kids. He said, ‘Aaron, this is wrong. Dennis can’t lose his job. He’s part of the community.’ So a petition was started, and within 24 hours 700 mums had signed it. I signed it. My assistant commissioner of the day, Rodney Walz, the former assistant commissioner up there, received a phone call from the Leader of the Opposition. The now member for Broadwater was then the member for Mundingburra. Rodney Walz came down to see me and he said, ‘The member wants your head on a platter.’

‘Nothing to fear’; do members remember that? He threatened to sack me for speaking out against the Newman government, which sacked people in our state. I will remind people every single day that that is why I am in this House—because I was an angry ambo—and I will stand up for health workers in our city every single day. The LNP need to apologise for what they did but they never will. It is in their DNA.

(Time expired)

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): I call the member for Callide. You have two minutes.

 **Mr HEAD** (Callide—LNP) (3.04 pm): I will certainly get up to talk about a bit of history and the health record of the Queensland government. The Moura aged-care extension was announced by the Palaszczuk Labor government about four years ago. To date, there has not been a dollar spent on the construction of that facility. What is the health minister doing about that? The community of Moura is a big coalmining and union town. It underpins the Queensland economy and pays a lot in taxes. Instead of building that aged-care extension and making it happen like they said they would four years ago, the minister is in here moving motions about a government that is nearly 10 years in the past. They are so focused on the past that they are failing Queenslanders every single day. They are failing to deliver services and they are failing to deliver maternity services in Callide. I do not have one maternity ward in Callide because of the failures of the Palaszczuk Labor government.

What else has the health minister been doing instead of her job? She has been writing up motions instead of doing her job. The community of Gin Gin is being neglected. The community of Gin Gin came to me because there was a doctor there who wanted to stay in that community. What did the health minister do when I wrote to her several weeks ago? She did not do anything. That doctor has packed up, left town and gone to greener pastures. I do not blame that doctor for packing up and leaving, because this government has neglected him. He had very reasonable requests, but they could not get him a contract so he packed up and left. This government is all about announcements. What else should the health minister be doing? I would certainly encourage the health minister to be honest with communities. The community of Biloela deserves better health facilities. It deserves a maternity ward. Several weeks ago I asked a question on notice about the state of the hospital’s theatre, because the government is hiding something from the community of Biloela.

(Time expired)

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

AYES, 49:

ALP, 49—Bailey, Boyd, Brown, Bush, Butcher, Crawford, de Brenni, Dick, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Furner, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Healy, Hinchliffe, Howard, Hunt, Kelly, A. King, S. King, Lauga, Linard, Lui, Madden, Martin, McCallum, McMahon, McMillan, Melliish, Miles, Mullen, Palaszczuk, Pease, Power, Pugh, Richards, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Scanlon, Skelton, Smith, Stewart, Sullivan, Tantari, Walker, Whiting.

NOES, 34:

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

PHON, 1—Andrew.

Ind, 1—Bolton.

Pairs: D'Ath, Minnikin; O'Rourke, Lister.


Resolved in the affirmative.

CRIMINAL CODE (SERIOUS VILIFICATION AND HATE CRIMES) AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Resumed from p. 2920, on motion of Ms Linard—

That the bill be now read a second time.

 **Mr HUNT** (Caloundra—ALP) (3.11 pm), continuing: I was referring to the submission from Equality Australia. They said—

... a group of university students charged into the Brisbane Square Library where a Drag Queen story time event was being held, chanting 'drag queens are not for kids'. The event caused extreme distress for children and parents in attendance.

It seems ever the case that drag queens are the target of the ignorant who deal exclusively in malice. Fortunately, the department was able to provide some measure of reassurance. In relation to crimes committed on the basis of mistaken or false beliefs or stereotypes related to projected attributes, DJAG stated—

The way the provision—

meaning section 52B—

is drafted at the moment is that the offence ... To the extent whether or not an attribute which is falsely attributed to a group is captured, I suppose practically speaking that would come down to the facts and circumstances of the case. The department's position is that it is broad enough or open enough as is to potentially capture such circumstances, but it would really be dependent on the facts and circumstances of an individual case.

The bill further proposes to increase the maximum penalty for serious vilification from six months to three years, and many of the submitters were supportive of that change. The Queensland Human Rights Commission stated that the current maximum penalty of six months imprisonment does not reflect the seriousness of the offence or community condemnation of the act, while Multicultural Australia considered that the maximum penalty appropriately reflects the seriousness of the offence and aligns with the incitement of violence laws.

The Multicultural Queensland Advisory Council stated that the maximum penalty should be reserved for serious forms of vilification and there should be greater utilisation of restorative pathways, focusing on rehabilitation. The Queensland Human Rights Commission noted that, while the maximum penalty is less than three years imprisonment, police are unable to obtain the necessary warrant to preserve online and telecommunication evidence.

In the same way, the test set out in section 52B relating to circumstances of aggravation for particular offences is that the offender was wholly or partly motivated to commit the offence by hatred or serious contempt for a person or group of persons. On this point, Multicultural Australia stated—

We particularly support the introduction of the test for the application of the circumstance of aggravation in clause 52B as one based on the whole or partial motive of the offender. We consider that this test provides clarity and guidance for police and the community about hate crime—

One element of the bill that I particularly applaud is that the bill proposes to introduce a new section 52C, prohibited symbols, into the Criminal Code, which establishes a framework to proscribe symbols or images that are representative of an ideology of extreme prejudice against a relevant group. The offence is intended to capture a broad range of circumstances, including the public display of tattoos and the public distribution or publication of prohibited symbols online. Naturally it is understood that there will be a need for exemptions for this new section. They will include: a genuine artistic,

religious, educational, historical, legal or law enforcement purpose; a public interest purpose; or to oppose the ideology represented by the prohibited symbol. Hate symbols can cause significant distress, particularly to persons from persecuted communities. In the context of the Nazi Hakenkreuz, the report also noted a submission from the Queensland Jewish Board of Deputies that public displays of such hate symbols—


... impacts the sense of safety and security of all Queenslanders, including those who are members of groups and communities that have historically been the targets of Nazi policies of genocide, mass murder and other forms of persecution, such as Jews, Roma people, the disabled and LGBTIQ people.

The public display of symbols that are solely or substantially representative of an ideology of extreme prejudice against particular groups causes significant harm. Such symbols represent hate, genocide and trauma.

It seems beyond staggering to me that, even in this day and age when everyone is essentially carrying a library in their pocket, we have to recycle a few key points to those who champion absolutely unrestricted free speech. So just to reiterate to those who apparently spent their history lessons eating glue, Nazis were bad. To those who follow their beliefs today, they are bad too and they absolutely do not have the right to spread their vile ideology in 21st century Australia.

I said at the outset that we are not all the same, that we are in fact stupendously different and that difference is and should be a constant source of wonder, but there are centuries of conditioning to overcome. The Latin word for enemy is 'hostis', from where we get the word 'hostile'. The Latin word for foreigner is also 'hostis'. From early antiquity, we have tended to think that that which is foreign is to be equated with that which is to be feared—fear which so easily boils down into hate. This bill will not eliminate that hate but then it does not have to. If I could paraphrase the poet Robert Browning, in this instance our reach should exceed our grasp. This bill will hold haters to account, and for that reason I commend it to the House.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Martin): Before I call the next speaker, I remind the House that the following members are on warnings: the members for Thuringowa, Maryborough, Gladstone, Kawana, Buderim, Mudgeeraba and Bonney.


 **Ms BOLTON** (Noosa—Ind) (3.17 pm): On 31 January 2022 the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee tabled report 22 titled *Inquiry into serious vilification and hate crimes*. This was in response to a request from the Legislative Assembly for our committee to inquire into the nature and extent of hate crimes and serious vilification in Queensland and whether there was evidence of increasing instances of this, as well as the effectiveness of section 131A of the Anti-Discrimination Act 1991 and other existing Queensland laws responding to hate crimes.

The final report made 17 recommendations covering legislative amendments and other actions for the government to undertake. This bill, the Criminal Code (Serious Vilification and Hate Crimes) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023, implements four of the report's recommendations, as well as increasing the existing penalty for the offence under section 131A. First, it addresses what 'protected attributes' will be the basis for the anti-vilification law that is currently in the Anti-Discrimination Act and that will be relocated to section 52A of the Criminal Code. Our committee recommended that government should ensure anti-vilification provisions in both civil and criminal laws cover the attributes of race, religion, gender and/or sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and/or gender expression, sex characteristics and/or intersex status, disability and medical status including HIV AIDS status.

An incident having occurred in the chamber—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Martin): Members, we will suspend the proceedings of the House and resume upon the ringing of the bells.

Sitting suspended from 3.20 pm to 3.28 pm.

 **Ms BOLTON**: This recommendation was supported in principle by the government, noting that there is a Queensland Human Rights Commission review underway which may also impact on this. Many stakeholders made submissions supporting overall the amendments as well as making specific recommendations. The Queensland Law Society submitted that age should be a protected attribute; the Caxton Legal Centre argued for sex, disability and age; the QHRC argued for impairment; and Scarlet Alliance and other sex worker representative organisations argued for employment status. The

department responded by saying that all of these will be considered in the context of the response to the QHRC report *Building belonging*. Nonetheless, while we are waiting for that response, by putting forward this bill the government has reopened the issue.

The LASC report No. 49 on this bill recommended that the government consider some possible additional attributes, particularly age and impairment; however, my statement of reservation emphasises that this bill should go beyond this and implement in full the original report No. 22 recommendations.


The second issue identified is the definition of a 'public act'. This is relevant as vilification is a public act, so how this is defined is important. In the law it is defined as 'communication in public' or 'conduct observable in public'. The QHRC raised whether the definition of 'public act' encompassed closed environments such as schools, workplaces and hospitals, and highlighted cases where closed environments were not considered communication to the public, although these areas could be considered areas of public life. The committee report on the bill recommended that the government consider amending the bill to include closed environments.

Thirdly, the bill introduces a new section of the Criminal Code which provides a framework for banning of prohibited symbols representative of ideologies of extreme prejudice, with the Nazi swastika as an example. This is a beneficial change, although the way it is being undertaken has raised concerns as it proposes that the symbols will be set out in regulation by the minister. This means in effect that they will have no scrutiny nor debate by parliament. This is acceptable for regulations in relation to minor matters such as time frame, forms or administrative arrangements; however, in this case the regulations go to the heart of the bill—what symbols are banned. As the Queensland Council for Civil Liberties said in their submission, this violates the fundamental principle that the key concepts creating criminal liability should not be made by regulation. The decision to criminalise conduct should be made by the parliament to ensure democratic accountability.

The fourth main amendment in the bill is an increase in the penalty for the offence of serious vilification from six months imprisonment to three years imprisonment. One consequence of this is that the police will now be able to obtain personal details of otherwise anonymous vilification online. This will be of real benefit in combating online hate speech, as will all of these legislative changes that impact Queenslanders, the police and judicial officers as examples. It is important that the government provides sufficient funding for education and training to assist in the rollout of the changes.

I thank our chair, the member for Toohey, and my fellow members of the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee for their efforts. I also thank our extremely hardworking secretariat and all Queenslanders who participated in this inquiry. We heard so many heartbreaking stories of what has been perpetrated on fellow Australians from hatred and fear. In addition, we watch in horror what is currently happening overseas and grieve for all who have lost and may lose loved ones, and we send our deepest sympathies. More than ever, it is so important to develop greater compassion and understanding for our differences, especially during our early formative years. This can be achieved via mandatory components in our curriculum on personal wellbeing, relationships and inclusivity in religious education. Our chamber should also lead the way by including other faiths in our morning rituals.

Inclusion must be more than a word in our policies and legislation. It must be an action we do every day in every way. I believe that our former chair, Duncan Pegg—or 'Peggy', as we knew him, and now up above—would be looking down and agreeing, as he demonstrated inclusion every day. This bill may not address everything that needs to be addressed; however, it is a start.

 **Ms BUSH** (Cooper—ALP) (3.32 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the serious vilification bill. I am really pleased with the work that our committee has done in this space both on this particular bill and on our report No. 22, which followed the public inquiry we held into hate crime and vilification. Through those hearings we heard, regrettably, how extremists and hate groups are on the rise in Australia and around the world, leading to an increase in hate speech, which in turn leads to an increase in hate crime. We have witnessed that particularly since COVID-19 and it has regrettably continued.

The threat assessment by the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation in February 2020 was that the terrorism threat in Australia now includes a growing and more organised right-wing extremist threat. Anti-discrimination legislation plays such an important role in setting the standards of behaviour and in providing avenues for recognition and redress for unacceptable conduct. Thanks to this government, Queensland now has some of the strongest responses to prevent and respond to hate crime and vilification.

Our committee undertook a comprehensive parliamentary inquiry at the end of 2021, hearing from those impacted and their advocates right throughout the state. Our committee tabled its report in January 2022, making 17 recommendations covering areas like strengthening protections for victims, expanding the range of behaviours that could be considered hate crimes, exploring restorative justice strategies for greater victim participation and public education campaigns.

This bill legislates four of those recommendations: recommendation 7 to remove the requirement for Crown Law officer consent to prosecute under section 131A of the Anti-Discrimination Act; recommendation 8 to introduce a statutory aggravation regarding hate and serious vilification; recommendation 9 to relocate the offence of serious vilification to the Criminal Code; and recommendation 16 to prohibit the display of hate symbols. Collectively, these amendments will make it easier to prosecute vilification and hate crime while increasing the available maximum penalties to better reflect the long-lasting impact that these offences have on their victims.

I would like to start my contribution on an amendment that clearly demonstrates our government's commitment to categorising and treating hate crime as the serious and violent hate crime it is. The relocation of section 131A, the offence of serious racial, religious, sexuality or gender identity vilification, from the Anti-Discrimination Act to the Criminal Code signals clearly to investigators and prosecutors that this is no longer a civil but a criminal act. As the Queensland Human Rights Commissioner advised the committee in our report 22, it will be a means of increasing police awareness and use of the offence and it will offer victims the recognition they told us they needed.

Secondly, the bill removes the requirement that the consent of the Attorney-General or the Director of Public Prosecutions must be obtained before a proceeding can be commenced while also relocating the provision. These amendments were generally supported by submitters, with Full Stop Australia suggesting this would remove an administrative bottleneck for the prosecution of serious vilification offences which will hopefully allow such offences to be dealt with more expeditiously.

I want to talk about sentencing because sentencing of offenders serves many purposes. It gives recognition to victims harmed. Sentencing can be a specific or a general deterrent. It can also be a public denunciation of the act. This bill addresses recommendation 8 in our report, increasing the available maximum sentence for these types of crimes from six months imprisonment to three years. This better reflects the seriousness of the offence and the impact these offences have on their victims. It also better reflects community condemnation of these types of crimes, recognising that vilification and harassment of others based on characteristics of sex, gender, race, religion, sexual preference or any other protected attribute has no place in Queensland.

This amendment enables telecommunication warrants to be issued under federal legislation. As our committee noted in report No. 22, a serious contravention of a law under the Telecommunications Act is limited to offences for which there is a maximum penalty of at least three years imprisonment. This amendment will allow the Queensland Police Service to apply for a stored communications warrant when investigating a suspected breach. Additionally, the amendments add a circumstance of aggravation to the offences of going armed as to cause fear, threatening violence, disturbing religious worship, common assault, assault occasioning bodily harm, threats, unlawful stalking, intimidation, harassment or abuse, wilful damage, public nuisance and trespass. This circumstance of aggravation will increase the maximum penalty where the offender is motivated, wholly or partially, by hatred or serious contempt for someone or a group of people based on their race, religion, sexuality, sex characteristics or gender identity.

In relation to the advancement of recommendation 16, we have had recent examples of individuals and groups of people displaying Nazi salutes or Nazi symbols or paraphernalia. I think most of us would agree that the deliberate display of what are objectively hateful and triggering symbols is an intentional act of violence against others. Not only does it have no place in Queensland, but every step should be taken to allow law enforcement to prosecute those involved, and that is what this bill will achieve.

The offence will carry a maximum penalty of six months imprisonment. Unlike other jurisdictions that have specified prohibited symbols in legislation, our framework will proscribe symbols by regulation. This will mean that our laws can cover a broader range of hate symbols and will be able to respond to new symbols or hate movements if they, unfortunately, do emerge.


During our committee hearings there was a lot of consideration given to this aspect of the bill and the granting of the powers to the minister to prescribe via regulation what would constitute hate symbols. The bill requires that before proscribing a symbol, the minister must consult with the CCC, the

Queensland Human Rights Commission and the Police Service. The minister must also be satisfied that the symbol is widely known by the public or by members of a relevant group as representing ideology of extreme prejudice.

The offence is intended to capture a broad range of circumstances. There is also a non-exhaustive list of excuses to the offence including if the display or distribution is for genuine artistic, religious, educational, historical, legal or law enforcement purposes; a public interest purpose; or to oppose the ideology represented by the prohibited symbol. While the bill does not proscribe a prohibited symbol, we have announced our intention to ban symbols related to Nazi and ISIS ideology.

Finally, I want to acknowledge the advocacy and the tenacity of all of the stakeholders throughout Queensland who have made contributions both to these bills and to the cause over quite a substantial period of time. I know a lot of people have been acknowledged by other speakers. I would like to acknowledge the Cohesive Communities Coalition and particularly acknowledge Christine Castley and Rita Jabri-Markwell as co-chairs of the coalition. I have had the pleasure of working with Christine in other areas of work. She is a formidable advocate. She is absolutely killing it in her role as CEO of Multicultural Australia. We are really fortunate to have her here in Queensland.

I, of course, thank the secretariat and my parliamentary colleagues for their work and collegialism on the bill. These reforms are another great stride towards creating a safer society for all. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr KRAUSE** (Scenic Rim—LNP) (3.40 pm): This bill deals with vilification on the grounds of someone's race, religion, sexuality and various other attributes of a person, in addition to other issues. At the outset, as other members have, I wish to place on the record my support for the people of Israel who have been subjected to cruel violence in past days as a result of the despicable and outrageous terrorist action by Hamas.

Mr Power: Hear, hear.

Mrs Gerber: Hear, hear.

Mr KRAUSE: I take the interjections from the members for Logan and Currumbin. It was alarming, to say the least, to see the actions of protestors in Sydney who saw fit to hijack an occasion for Sydney's Jewish community with threats of violence, expressions of hate and open encouragement for the violence being visited upon Israeli families, including many in Australia's Jewish community who are connected to Israel. The fact that the New South Wales police encouraged Jewish community members to stay home is also alarming and should be questioned. It highlights the problems when the state gets involved in decisions about who has the right to say what. Why did the New South Wales police not call upon supporters of Hamas to stay away instead, given that the New South Wales government had decided to support the Israeli community by lighting up the Opera House? There are a lot of questions about that saga, but the events of recent days show one thing: we are extremely lucky to enjoy the freedom and peace that we have in Australia. This is a peace that has not been born out of legislation; it has been born out of our culture of tolerance and respect for different views and opinions, religious beliefs and choices about how people live their lives.

Some submitters to this bill questioned the impact legislation can have in promoting tolerance and allowing a space for people to be able to enjoy freedom in their lives and enjoy their choices in life. The point expressed is that laws can only do so much; the rest is very much up to us and the culture of discourse that our community tolerates and, importantly, does not tolerate.

There have been concerns raised that this bill endangers freedom of speech and the freedom to express an opinion that others may find hateful. This bill moves an existing offence—one that has existed for quite some time—concerning serious racial, religious, sexuality or gender identity vilification from the Anti-Discrimination Act to the Criminal Code. This move does not create that new offence but shifts its location in statute. The bill also provides that when certain offences—assault, disturbing religious worship, going armed to cause fear and wilful damage—are committed, they can be subject to a greater sentence where there are circumstances of aggravation, including because the offences were committed because of someone's religious belief, sexuality or a range of other reasons.

A new concept being legislated in this bill is the proscribing of hate symbols, which the Attorney-General will be empowered to do after consulting with various parties. This fell out of one of the recommendations from the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee about hate speech and vilification in a report tabled prior to my membership of that committee. There has been a lot of discussion about the potential for the swastika—the evil symbol of Nazi Germany—to be designated as a hate symbol under this law. I consider that a determination of this type would enjoy broad support from the

community; however, valid concerns have been highlighted about the mechanism in this bill as it applies to designated hate symbols including the fact that a minister—a politician, an MP—is responsible for that determination through a mere regulation. In other jurisdictions it is passed into an act, a more rigorous process that requires more extensive consultation. This is a shortcoming of this law. The committee heard that in Victoria such determination is put in legislation.

The Queensland Council for Civil Liberties took issue with this provision, noting the danger that governments may use this law for political reasons against their political enemies. For what it is worth, I find the hammer and sickle flag highly offensive as well, owing to the millions of people killed as a result of communist oppressions and the suppression of freedoms by communist regimes, yet banning that flag has not been discussed by this government or more broadly in the community. A future government, however, could do that. The consultation requirements in this bill appear to be a mere fig leaf for a lack of rigour in this process, particularly in Queensland where we usually have majority governments, no upper house and a huge range of opinions. I consider that a better option would be to have symbols determined as hate symbols by a supermajority of this House, not merely by regulation. This would mean that banning a symbol would need to enjoy bipartisan, if not multipartisan, support. It would allay many concerns about this process potentially being used for political purposes.

I have to ask: what does the CCC have to do with determining whether or not something is a hate symbol? It is a major crime and corruption fighting body, not an arbiter of what is a hate symbol in society. Why are multicultural or religious groups not included in these consultation requirements, if they are to be maintained?

Huge concerns were raised by the Queensland Law Society, the Council for Civil Liberties, the Caxton Legal Centre to a certain extent, and other submitters about the 'obscure wording' that could see a criminal offence being charged for the display of a hate symbol. The test in this bill is that the proscribed symbol—let's say the swastika—is displayed in a way that 'might reasonably be expected' to cause offence to someone. The civil liberties council objected to this purely on the basis that such an offence lacks any element of intent and that criminal offences should contain an element of intent. What does 'might reasonably be expected to offend' actually mean? The two words 'might' and 'reasonably' effectively mean that it is very uncertain in this law who will be committing an offence by the display of a proscribed symbol. Someone could be charged without knowing that they were going to be charged with an offence and then they would need to be relying on the defences provided in this bill. The Law Society's written submission on this point was explicit. It said—

It is not clear what the intent of this phrasing is or the judicial test it creates.

It submitted that the new section 52D was premature and unsatisfactory. It does create an uncertainty in the criminal law that I consider will need to be addressed by future legislative reform, although, sadly, it will likely take the unjust imposition of criminal processes upon individuals to bring about such reform. The government has been warned, yet it has chosen to ignore calls to insert an objective test into the offence. I note that, while the QLS written submission in the first instance said that the provision was obscure, they were a little bit unsure about it during their oral evidence to the committee but later made a supplementary submission in which they did call for an objective test to be put in this legislation. As I said, the government has been warned.


The Caxton Legal Centre also noted that there was a low threshold for criminalisation when it came to the display of proscribed symbols. This is especially because in the civil realm when it comes to incitement—there was another recommendation about this in the legal affairs committee report—there remains a high threshold for civil action to be taken around incitement. That is not being amended by this bill. When this bill passes, we will be in a situation where there is a lower threshold of conduct for a criminal offence than there is in relation to civil action being taken for a similar type of action. That is the wrong way around.

I would also like to highlight the skewed nature of the Queensland Human Rights Commission's submission in one aspect. The commissioner, under my questioning, told the committee that he considered the subjective test I outlined earlier to be 'broadly appropriate in balancing various interests'. However, in the written submission special emphasis was placed on the experience of at least one staff member in a hospital situation who found the display of a Nazi symbol offensive. It was submitted that hospital situations should be included in the definition of 'public displays' in order to ensure that where staff members were offended the conduct would fall into the criminalisation process for the display of prohibited symbols.

This highlights the deficiency of the subjective test in its application. One generally does not have a choice about who treats them in hospital, and so if you happen to be someone who has a tattoo that is proscribed why should you be subject, potentially, to a criminal charge for displaying it while in

hospital on the basis that it might reasonably be expected to offend someone? How would anyone know? More importantly, the effort of the Queensland Human Rights Commission to highlight this seemingly out-there example and yet wave through the blindingly obvious problems with the subjective test about this offence speaks to the sometimes misdirected priorities of that commission.

This bill has particular positive elements. Vilification offence is not a new offence but it is being relocated. Providing for circumstances of aggravation as outlined for offences relating to disturbing religious worship, assault, wilful damage and others when those offences are committed because of various attributes is a positive move for people with those attributes where they are victims of crime. However, the implementation and impact of other parts of the bill will need to be carefully watched and reviewed in the future, bearing in mind all of the substantial and well-founded concerns raised by the Law Society, the civil liberties council and others in the process.

 **Ms PUGH** (Mount Ommaney—ALP) (3.50 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Criminal Code (Serious Vilification and Hate Crimes) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill which makes it a serious offence to vilify someone on the basis of race, religion, sexuality, gender or gender identity. Other speakers have already spoken extensively about the committee report and the legislation itself, so I will start, as members have often noted that I do, with a story.

The week that this bill was introduced a really disturbing incident took place for my community and involved one of my beloved Centenary Stormers soccer teams at one of their away games. For context, many of the players at the Stormers—it is coming up to about half of the players now—have come to the club from a wonderful local charity called Pushing Barriers. Members of the House may be familiar with its work, but I am very proud to say that it originated in Mount Ommaney.

Pushing Barriers provides the opportunity for migrant families, specifically refugees, to play sport by helping them with fees and most importantly for a lot of these families it provides volunteers and a car for the children to get to the games using a volunteer service which is growing year on year. Of course, many of these parents do not have a car to drive their kids or they are busy with other commitments. In the case of some of the young adults they do not have their own car yet, so they cannot get to the games easily. I am pleased to say that the charity and its volunteer base have grown significantly over a relatively short period of time. As I said, the total proportion of Stormers players who are refugees has increased significantly because there are now so many volunteers willing to drive these kids. It is wonderful—it is brilliant—to have an organisation that understands the importance of helping new Queenslanders to integrate into our community through the unifying medium of sport, because sport is the great equaliser, as Queenslanders know.

When I heard this story, I was horrified. According to the account of the Stormers coach who was there that day, the opposing club—and I will not say who—called the Centenary Stormers team players all manner of vile racist names. They were abused based on their race and it was very obvious. None of the terms that were used were even remotely parliamentary and they deeply hurt the young players. As members might imagine, it caused an incident because these young players spoke out about being spoken to that way and they were not happy about it. I was contacted that day by one of the coaches of the team who was heartbroken about the disgusting behaviour that they had experienced. This legislation goes to the heart of incidents like that and says loudly and clearly that it is just not acceptable. This legislation will also protect other vulnerable groups including our trans community and other groups that are at risk of being marginalised or vilified.

I cannot protect my community from having people think these thoughts, but we can protect members of our marginalised communities from people being allowed to say them. In curtailing people from saying these hateful things, we then of course stop people from hearing them, from absorbing them and then potentially thinking that it is reasonable to say these things. I was speaking with my good friend the member for Caloundra, who is on this committee. We were reflecting on this legislation and I was talking about how the principle of the Overton window comes into play, and that is part of why this legislation is so important. For members and people listening who might not be familiar, the Overton window is the range of policies that are politically acceptable to the mainstream population at a given time. It is also known as the window of discourse. I was reflecting, as I am sure all members of this House were, on world events this week with the tragedy that is unfolding and I know that all of our thoughts are with the people of Israel.

For me it really brought to mind the work of internationally renowned researcher Brene Brown. I am sure that there would be members of the House who are familiar with her work—I know a number of members have read her work—and in particular her observations about the dangers of dehumanising language which this legislation covers off on really beautifully. Brene covered the topic of dehumanising

language in her book *Braving the Wilderness* which I read earlier this year, but I will give a brief run-down from her website because I think it really goes to the heart of why this legislation is so important. Brene writes—

David Smith, the author of *Less Than Human*, explains that dehumanization is a response to conflicting motives. We want to harm a group of people, but it goes against our wiring as members of a social species—

the human race—

to actually harm, kill, torture, or degrade other humans. Smith explains that there are very deep and natural inhibitions that prevent us from treating other people like animals, game, or dangerous predators. He writes, 'Dehumanization is a way of subverting those inhibitions.

Dehumanization is a process. I think Michelle Maiese, the chair of the philosophy department at Emmanuel College, lays it out in a way that makes sense, so I'll use some of her work here to walk us through it. Maiese defines dehumanization as 'the psychological process of demonizing the enemy, making them seem less than human and hence not worthy of humane treatment.' Dehumanizing often starts with creating an enemy image. As we take sides, lose trust, and get angrier and angrier, we not only solidify an idea of our enemy, but also start to lose our ability to listen, communicate, and practice even a modicum of empathy.


Once we see people on 'the other side' of a conflict as morally inferior and even dangerous, the conflict starts being framed as good versus evil. Maiese writes, 'Once the parties have framed the conflict in this way, their positions become more rigid. In some cases, zero-sum thinking develops as parties come to believe that they must either secure their own victory or face defeat. New goals to punish or destroy the opponent arise, and in some cases more militant leadership comes into power.

Mr Hart: It's a bit like the parliament, isn't it?

Ms PUGH: Indeed, member for Burleigh, it can sometimes sound a little bit like the parliament. I thought it was really important to frame it in that way because dehumanisation is what we are trying to prevent here, because it starts with language, as Brene says. Dehumanisation starts with language and it evolves from there, but we are trying to stop it at the start with this legislation.

It is really timely that we are debating this legislation this week with the Voice vote just days away because proponents on both sides of the debate have been exposed to dehumanising language. This is not just undignified; it is dangerous. Dehumanising those we disagree with leads to a breakdown in the social fabric, and the Voice debate sadly has been a horrific example of this. Whatever the outcome on Saturday, dignity and decorum in the debate have been damaged, and that is to the detriment of every single one of us. No-one benefits when hateful voices in a debate are elevated. I should be able to stand, as I proudly do in this House, and say that I support the Voice and anyone in my community or Australia should be able to respectfully do the same. I am so lucky that in my life I have not personally experienced many of the kinds of discrimination that this bill seeks to prevent. I am very privileged in that regard. However, from the testimonies to the committee it is crystal clear as to why this legislation is required. As I think I have outlined quite clearly, when hateful ideas are allowed to take hold in our communities, our community becomes more dangerous for everyone.

In the time I have left I want to reflect on the contribution of the former member for Stretton, our good friend Duncan Pegg—my good friend and yours, Deputy Speaker. I had the privilege of working for Duncan when he was in his first term and he would proudly tell anyone who would listen that he represented the single most multicultural electorate in the whole of Queensland and he had a fabulous array of restaurants to prove it. Duncan was a true champion for legislation protecting multicultural communities. I can remember many times when he stood in this House to call out racism when and where he saw it. I know that he would be so proud of this legislation. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Dr ROWAN** (Moggill—LNP) (4.00 pm): I rise to address the Criminal Code (Serious Vilification and Hate Crimes) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023. There is no place in our society for those who wish to cause extreme harm and are motivated by serious hatred and contempt of others, be it on religious, racial, sexuality or identity grounds. Equally, there is simply no place in our society for the display or distribution of heinous symbols of hatred and discrimination that vilify and harm others. It is within this context that the Queensland parliament is considering this legislation.

It must also be noted that the Queensland parliament is debating this legislation at a time when Australia and the world are seeing a sudden rise in the display and use of abhorrent symbols of violence on the basis of race and religion with the recent appalling and deplorable actions of the Hamas terrorist organisation. The images of hatred we have seen from rallies across Australia in support of Hamas terrorists in recent days must be condemned. Elected representatives in particular cannot stand silent or be soft or even reserved on this matter. There can be no ambiguity and no hesitation to call out the appalling actions we have seen and continue to see with respect to the Hamas terrorist organisation and various rallies in support of it here in Australia.

On 29 March 2023 the former attorney-general and minister for justice introduced this legislation into the Queensland parliament specifically to amend the Anti-Discrimination Act 1991, the Criminal Code Act 1899, the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000 and the Summary Offences Act 2005. As articulated by the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee in report No. 49 of the 57th Parliament, the objective of the legislation is to specifically implement recommendations 7, 8, 9 and 16 of the committee's previous report No. 22, *Inquiry into serious vilification and hate crimes*. In its detailed consideration of this legislation, the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee identified a number of matters and issues raised by various stakeholders, along with matters pertaining to legislative compliance including the Legislative Standards Act 1992 and the Human Rights Act 2019. Other issues identified included but were not limited to the attributes that are to be protected, the definition of a public act in the context of serious vilification, the removal of the requirement for a Crown Law officer's consent, the increase in the maximum penalty to three years imprisonment, as well as a number of issues related to prohibited symbols, including a prohibition by regulation not legislation, the reversal of the onus of proof, impacts on freedom of expression and allowing police to search a person or vehicle without a warrant. I also note there were other matters raised pertaining to the need for training and education and improved data collection and reporting in relation to serious vilification and hate crimes. Accordingly, in its report tabled on 30 June 2023 the committee made nine recommendations, including that the legislation be passed, with further recommendations so as to ensure that the legislation is implemented in a manner that achieves its objectives.

Central to this legislation is a new prohibited symbols offence where the public display, public distribution or publication of prohibited symbols in circumstances that might reasonably be expected to cause a member of the public to feel menaced, harassed or offended is banned unless the person has a reasonable excuse. Such symbols of hate that have already been canvassed for prohibition—and rightly so—are those related to both the Nazi and ISIS ideologies. I note also that existing offences will be amended so as to provide for a new circumstance of aggravation for offences including common assault, going armed so as to cause fear, threatening violence, assault causing bodily harm, wilful damage, trespass and public nuisance. Importantly, those who commit these offences while motivated either in full or in part by hatred or serious contempt based on race, religion, sexuality, sex characteristics or gender identity will face increased penalties including longer custodial sentences.

These laws serve as a shield against hatred, vilification and discrimination, enabling individuals to freely live where they are not subject to harm based on their race, religion, gender or sexual orientation. Such laws provide protection for our most vulnerable communities whilst also serving as a powerful deterrent, dissuading potential offenders from engaging in discriminatory and hateful acts. Indeed, the intent of this legislation has been broadly supported by stakeholders who contributed to the consideration by the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee including the Queensland Law Society, Queensland Family and Child Commission, PeakCare, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Service, Equality Australia, the Caxton Legal Centre, the Multicultural Queensland Advisory Council and Multicultural Australia.

That being said, and as I referred to earlier in my contribution, there are a number of matters and concerns that have been raised in relation to specific provisions of this legislation. In particular, I wish to reflect on the prohibited symbols offence. It is important to understand that, contrary to the practice of other jurisdictions, there are no specific symbols that are banned within this legislation. Rather, this legislation provides for the relevant minister to make a determination on such symbols through regulation instead. Whilst the minister will be required to consult with the chairperson of the Crime and Corruption Commission, the Human Rights Commissioner and the Commissioner of the Queensland Police Service before the minister proscribes a prohibited symbol by regulation, a number of submitters raised important concerns. As outlined in the committee's report, Professor Graeme Orr, an expert in parliamentary and electoral law at the University of Queensland, submitted—

... it is not clear why the ordinary principle that criminalisation of conduct is a matter for Parliament is not followed in this Bill. Legislating to ban particular symbols would involve more representative and public debate about public misuse of such symbols. It would provide a pre-emptive veto of any misuse of executive proposals to prohibit such symbols. Such debate might in itself be educative in condemning extreme symbols, as well as limiting the potential for executive misuse of the power in the Bill.


Similar sentiments were shared by the Queensland Council for Civil Liberties, which reiterated its view that the fundamental principle that creating criminal liability should not be made by regulation and that the decision to criminalise conduct should be made by the parliament to ensure democratic accountability.

As a number of pivotal world events have demonstrated, particularly over the last few years, there can often be much conjecture as to what can fairly be considered as messages or symbols of genuine hate as opposed to just being messages or symbols that one may find uncomfortable or

disagreeable. That is why there are those who are concerned that such laws can potentially be unevenly applied and even lead to overreach and unnecessary censorship. It is therefore crucial that these laws are enforced and exercised fairly and impartially, maintaining an appropriate balance between protecting individuals from hate speech and preserving the right to express unpopular or controversial opinions.

In concluding my contribution today I wish to reaffirm the Liberal National Party's absolute stance against any form of vilification and strong support for such vilification to be eliminated. Robust hate crime and vilification laws are important to safeguard the principles of equality and respect in a diverse society. Queensland and Australia can be proud of our rich heritage and diverse multicultural communities. They are cause for celebration and never vilification. Whilst concerns about freedom of expression and potential overreach are understandable, there must be a careful and nuanced approach to this legislation in order to strike a balance that protects both individual rights and the collective wellbeing of our society in its entirety.

Finally, I want to thank all stakeholders who contributed to the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee's consideration of this legislation and the committee members including the deputy chair, the Liberal National Party's member for Currumbin, as well as the member for Scenic Rim and members opposite. I acknowledge the shadow minister, the member for Clayfield. Given the events of a little bit earlier, I acknowledge the members for Greenslopes, Thuringowa and Lytton and the security services for the assistance they provided.

 **Mrs McMAHON** (Macalister—ALP) (4.09 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Criminal Code (Serious Vilification and Hate Crimes) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. I commend the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee for its report No. 22, *Inquiry into serious vilification and hate crimes*, which was tabled in January last year. The bill before the House gives effect to four of the 17 recommendations from that report. I note the previous contributions of members in relation to the amendments that outline the process for proscribing prohibited symbols. I think we can all agree that there is hate in some of the symbols that we have seen. What will be proscribed in legislation will have a good and lasting impact on the peaceful amenity of Queensland, particularly for some of the more persecuted members of our community.

I was proud to be a member of the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee that inquired into and reported on the Human Rights Bill that was passed last term. For a jurisdiction to have a human rights act requires a level of social maturity and a level of social responsibility. It is the hallmark of a society that seeks to value all members of society equally, regardless of the diversity of the population. The Human Rights Act refers to a number of protected attributes, that is, characteristics that signify a level of vulnerability within a broader community. A mature, sophisticated community and society appreciates and embraces diversity. It understands the richness that comes from it and those with such attributes. We are determined to ensure that everyone is treated with equal levels of dignity and peaceful amenity.

I note my office, and probably those of others, received correspondence around the concept of freedom of speech, particularly the freedom of misinformation under the guise of freedom of expression, as our federal colleagues consider some bills. I note that there is tension within the larger concepts of human rights. One that was acknowledged at the time of the introduction of the Human Rights Act is the right to freedom of expression and the right to freedom from discrimination. It is important to note the comments made by the then anti-discrimination commissioner and now Human Rights Commissioner, Scott McDougall, about the balance between freedom of speech and freedom from discrimination. That was echoed in the Queensland Human Rights Commission submission on this bill, which states—

International law requires that given the significance of the right to freedom of expression, restrictions must be exceptional, subject to narrow conditions, and strict oversight. Any limitations must meet three conditions: legality, legitimacy, and necessity and proportionality.

... the right to freedom of expression carries with it special duties and responsibilities, and may therefore be subject to restrictions ...

Overall, the Queensland Human Rights Commission—which steadfastly believes in and promotes the rights and freedoms of individuals, and the right to freedom of thought, conscience, religion and beliefs—considers that the amendments and the new offences provided for in this bill satisfy the criteria for restricting these rights.

Queenslanders deserve to have a life free from discrimination, a life of safety and security in their homes and in public life and a life free from violence and intimidation. Put simply, freedom of speech does not override a person's freedom from discrimination and vilification. I note that within the

Queensland human rights framework there are two types of vilification: unlawful vilification and serious vilification. The first is a civil matter dealt with by the Human Rights Commission. The second is a criminal matter dealt with by police. That is what this bill focuses on.

It was interesting to note that, during the inquiry, the committee heard that since 2021 there had been only five charges laid for serious vilification in Queensland under the current framework—five. Considering the amount of animosity and debate that has occurred in public spaces since that time, that is a remarkably small number. The reasons cited were twofold: firstly, being under the Anti-Discrimination Act, police were unfamiliar with the offence; secondly, even if police were aware of the offence it required written approval from the Director of Public Prosecutions. Police would instead opt for the lesser and more generic public order offences, making it difficult to track and record hate offences in Queensland and difficult to ensure that that level of offence was appropriately dealt with.


It should be noted that when introduced the Queensland Human Rights Act did not include provisions for an offence, unlike other jurisdictions. What we have in this bill is the mechanism that creates the offence provision in the Criminal Code under new section 52A. Serious vilification is what this bill is referring to. Serious vilification uses a threat of harm to a person or their property or incites others to threaten physical harm to a person or their property.

I note that the amendments also include circumstances of aggravation in a range of Criminal Code offences. I understand that several submitters asked for an additional extension to those offences. Certainly I think there is benefit in including offences such as wilful damage graffiti. When I was a police officer that was probably the most common form of racial vilification that we would encounter. Now there will also be circumstances of aggravation in section 6 of the Summary Offences Act, that is, general public disorder offences.

I would like to refer to the irony of submitters using this inquiry into serious vilification to argue their right to freedom of expression. They felt that this bill would deny their freedom of belief and speech to loudly and publicly deny the existence and rights of other groups of people, that is, to dehumanise and to negate their existence. What cannot be denied is the violence and vitriol that follows from that. Hate speech is not just about offending or insulting someone. Those offences exist already. At its core, hate speech is about dehumanising, silencing and negating a person's or group's human rights based on a range of characteristics. I would ask those who are outraged or concerned about the curtailing of their freedom of expression or freedom of belief how often they are singled out in public because of the colour of their skin, their practised religion or presumed religion or because of who they hold hands with.

Many people within those communities are already marginalised and vulnerable. They come from a place of fear. They come from a history of trauma. They know they are different. Believe me, they know. We cannot know the strength it takes to step into a society when you are markedly different and there is prejudice against your mere existence. We cannot know of the anxiety that exists when just leaving the house every day and to then be confronted with visual and verbal displays of animosity and hate that questions your very existence, let alone your peaceable existence.

In this Mental Health Week, we need to examine the impact we, as legislators in this place, have on the wellbeing of Queenslanders. Every piece of legislation we pass has an impact. Ensuring that Queenslanders who are vulnerable and who are the target of hate and violence are safe is a key role for people in this House. It is a key role. One of the main reasons why I stood to be a member of this House was to pass legislation like the one before us today. This is a bill that I am proud to commend to the House.

 **Mr LANGBROEK** (Surfers Paradise—LNP) (4.17 pm): I rise to speak on the Criminal Code (Serious Vilification and Hate Crimes) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023. I thank the committee for their deliberations. As the shadow minister for multiculturalism, I know firsthand how diversity in Queensland and across the nation is our greatest strength. The impact of discrimination and sexual harassment can be profound and devastating at an individual and societal level. It can damage psychological health and wellbeing, create social exclusion, and have financial and economic consequences for the person themselves as well as for organisations, businesses and industry.

As members may recall, in March this year laws were introduced to ban the display of hate symbols associated with Nazi and ISIS ideology. As recently as May 2022, in my electorate of Surfers Paradise, a Neo-Nazi group distributed anti-Semitic flyers in letterboxes and stuck flyers to poles outside the Temple Shalom. The Temple Shalom is a synagogue that is located about 200 to 300 metres from my office on the Isle of Capri. This happened at the time when the Jewish community was honouring Holocaust Remembrance Day. I remember I was at the Home of the Arts on the Gold Coast when we commemorated that particular night.

I will table an article by Breanna Morris-Grant in the *Gold Coast Bulletin* dated 2 May 2022 titled 'Nazi symbols to be made illegal after parliamentary inquiry, multiple Gold Coast incidents'. In this article it was revealed that among those to receive a flyer which referenced a neo-Nazi group was a person whose family survived the Holocaust. The article quotes Rabbi Adi Cohen, whom many members here will have met last night along with his wife, Gila, at the event of the Parliamentary Friends of Israel, co-chaired by the members for Chatsworth and Sandgate. That was an interesting event, attended by a Hungarian survivor of the Holocaust. Rabbi Adi Cohen is quoted in the article, which states—

'The days that the Jews were victims are over,' ... 'I will not be intimidated. I will not give up to terrorism or to fear. And I will do my best (to ensure) that my congregation will be safe.' ... This is a place of sanctuary, a place of worship and spirituality, not a place of fear and hate.

'We will not allow hate politics to define who we are or dictate the way we operate.'

I can confirm that, having been to a number of functions at the synagogue with the local federal member, Angie Bell, and local councillor Darren Taylor. Of course, his words are particularly apt at the moment given current events in the Middle East and in Australia. These words have never been more pertinent.

Tabled paper: Article from the *Gold Coast Bulletin* online, dated 2 May 2022, titled 'Nazi symbols to be made illegal after parliamentary inquiry, multiple Gold Coast incidents' [1627].

I will table another article titled 'Australia's leaders condemn "abhorrent" scenes after anti-Jewish chants filmed at Sydney rally'. This is an article by Daniel Hurst, whom many will remember from our own media gallery, Paul Karp and Tamsin Rose. It is speaking about the events of the last couple of days. I table that article.

Tabled paper: Article from the *Guardian* online, dated 10 October 2023, titled 'Australia's leaders condemn 'abhorrent' scenes after anti-Jewish chants filmed at Sydney rally' [1628].

I also table an article from the *Courier-Mail* referring to the legislation we are dealing with now titled 'Crackdown on hate crimes Nazi symbols'.

Tabled paper: Article from the *Courier-Mail* online, dated 10 October 2023, titled 'Crackdown on hate crimes, Nazi symbols' [1630].

Finally, I table an article from the *Age* of today's date titled 'Synagogues, Jewish schools heighten security'.

Tabled paper: Article from the *Age* online, dated 10 October 2023, titled 'Synagogues, Jewish schools heighten security' [1629].

It states—

Multiple Jewish schools and synagogues across Australia are beefing up security, in response to violence raging in Israel.

The article quotes Community Security Group, CSG, saying—

The community is on heightened alert in light of the war in Israel ... increasing its physical presence and have staff and volunteers working around the clock, behind the scenes, to secure the community and stay in touch with police.

The article quotes someone saying—'Our Jewish schools are all doing everything they can to support their students and staff, many of whom have Israeli family members and friends impacted by this terrible situation.' I certainly hope that we do not see any incidents like that here. Rabbi Cohen's wife, Gila, teaches at the Jewish school here in Brisbane.

The genesis of this legislation was in January 2022, when an inquiry into the pressing issues of serious vilification and hate crimes yielded a comprehensive set of 17 recommendations. The bill before us today stands as the vehicle through which four pivotal recommendations are brought to life. This bill endeavours to breathe life into recommendations 7, 8, 9 and 16 of the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee report. I will briefly touch on these.

Recommendation 7 calls for a thorough examination of the feasibility of removing the requirement for written consent from a Crown Law officer before initiating a prosecution for serious racial, religious, sexuality or gender identity vilification. Recommendation 8 aims to introduce a statutory aggravation concerning hate and serious vilification into the Criminal Code Act 1899 and Summary Offences Act 2005 to apply to criminal conduct. Recommendation 9 advocates for the relocation of section 131A, addressing serious racial, religious, sexuality or gender identity vilification, from the Anti-Discrimination Act 1991 into the Criminal Code. Recommendation 16 urges the establishment of a criminal offence that unequivocally prohibits the display of hate symbols, encompassing those associated with ideologies such as Nazism and ISIS, albeit with specific exceptions. The bill's overarching objective is to elevate the maximum penalty for the offence under section 131A of the Anti-Discrimination Act, aligning it with the gravity of such offences.

There are a number of key issues surrounding this bill. Firstly, there is the matter of 'protected attributes'. The call to include age and disability as protected attributes under specific sections has resonated widely. While this bill refrains from direct alteration of these attributes, it does provide clarity by defining a 'public act' and relocating section 131A to the Criminal Code.

Concerning prohibited symbols, it is imperative to clarify that this legislation refrains from specifying banned symbols outright. Instead, it grants the minister the authority to make decisions on symbols through regulation. These discretionary powers vested in the minister have raised concerns among some, who argue that it is imperative to ensure relevant groups and stakeholders are consulted in this process.

The introduction of a new offence under section 52D has sparked debate as it encompasses a wide range of circumstances, including the public display of tattoos and symbols online. The issue of prescribed offences for circumstance of aggravation has sparked substantial deliberation. Stakeholders have proposed the inclusion of sexual offences, contending that sexual violence can be motivated by hatred based on sex, gender and race. The department, however, has framed this as a policy matter left to the discretion of the government.

The bill introduces a 'public act' definition into the Anti-Discrimination Act. This is an essential element for effective prosecution. Nevertheless, concerns have surfaced regarding the need for additional clarity, particularly to encompass the realms of social media, workplaces and educational institutions.

A diverse array of organisations, including the Multicultural Queensland Advisory Council, Multicultural Australia, Queensland Law Society and the Queensland Family and Child Commission, have generally expressed support for the bill's overarching intent. The Queensland Law Society, whilst supportive of the bill's objectives, has raised questions about the increase in penalties and has highlighted the need for civil law reform to effectively combat vilification and hate crimes. Conversely, the Queensland Council for Civil Liberties has taken a different stance, opposing sections 52C and 52D. It emphasises the importance of preserving freedom of speech, even for those with dissenting views.

This bill is a critical step in addressing the pressing issues of serious vilification and hate crimes. While it has garnered significant support, it is essential to acknowledge the ongoing debates and concerns surrounding certain provisions. We must carefully deliberate on the implications of this legislation to strike the delicate balance between protecting our communities and upholding our freedoms. Hatred, prejudice and discrimination have no place in our community, and this bill signifies a meaningful stride toward building a more inclusive and harmonious Queensland.



Mr KELLY (Greenslopes—ALP) (4.27 pm): Words matter. Symbols matter. They can unite us. They can divide us. Words and symbols can create joy and love or they can create hatred and division, or worse. It is appropriate that this parliament seeks to ensure that words and symbols are not weaponised against certain groups in society. It is also appropriate that this parliament—in fact, I would argue that it is essential—protects freedom of expression and encourages the free debate of ideas within our society.


Like many in this House, I grew up in an era when words and symbols were often used in ways that caused hurt, harm and offence. Sometimes that was just done casually—not necessarily with malintention, instead being utterances of commonly held social prejudices. Women, Aboriginals, homosexuals, people with disabilities, people living with mental illness, immigrants, refugees and people on welfare were all the subject of verbal abuse, both intentional and unintentional. A quick scan of many popular seventies or eighties TV shows will reinforce my points on this matter.

Fortunately, the world has moved on. It is very far from perfect but it has moved. Much of this we know is due to various legislative mechanisms, particularly the various anti-discrimination laws that have encouraged and supported broad societal change. While there have been changes in some of these areas, if offensive things are said it is often done through ignorance rather than malintent and it is often correctable. If there are words and symbols used to engender hate, fear, humiliation, control or worse, it is often done with the full intent to cause these things.

I was very pleased that the Ukrainian Community of Queensland made a submission outlining the use of a symbol that has been used in our own state aimed at causing people to hate them or causing Ukrainian people to live in fear. Their submission outlines a situation where the use of the symbol in question has led to violence, both in this state and other states in Australia. This symbol is used intentionally, but, honestly, if I had seen it a few years ago I would not have recognised it as being

a hate symbol or recognised the fear it can engender in people who are Ukrainian. I certainly know that now. That demonstrates why it is important that this legislation provides the capacity to evolve, as, sadly, the range of hate speech and symbols also continues to evolve.

I have been to the Holland Park Mosque, Queensland's oldest mosque, following attacks on the mosque by people who spray-painted hate symbols and hateful words on the mosque—and worse. I have been to the Greenslopes synagogue and watched people enter the synagogue for services with increased security which has had to be put in place to ensure the community is not subjected to violence after threats of such. I have seen firsthand the impacts these things have on good people who attend the mosque and the synagogue, and I want to thank the leaders of both communities who work hard to ensure they are places of peace and contemplation. I am pleased to say that our entire community comes together whenever there is an incident of this nature. It reinforces that we are a community of tolerance and peace, but that same community wants the sort of protections this bill will bring. They do not want to have to come together anymore and show support. Our community wants this to stop. We want people who act in this manner to be held accountable for this abhorrent behaviour, and I believe this bill takes a significant step in that direction. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr ANDREW** (Mirani—PHON) (4.31 pm): I rise to speak on the Criminal Code (Serious Vilification and Hate Crimes) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. According to the Premier, the changes made by this bill will give us the strongest set of hate speech and hate crime laws in the country. One of the bill's stated goals is to make it easier to prosecute people for serious vilification or hate speech in Queensland. In order to achieve this, the bill amends the state's Anti-Discrimination Act, removing the necessity for the Attorney-General's consent prior to the commencement of a prosecution, and relocates section 131A of the act to part 2 of the Criminal Code.

The inclusion of hate speech offences in the Criminal Code opens the door for politically motivated and vexatious complaints to be made against certain individuals and groups, particularly those who do not go along with the political establishment's woke agenda. The bill increases the maximum prison sentence for public acts of hate speech from six months to three years. Public acts are defined as 'any form of communication to the public, including by speaking, writing, printing, displaying notices ... or by electronic means', which means people's social media posts will also be policed. As stated in the explanatory notes, part 4 of the bill empowers police officers—

An honourable member interjected.

Mr ANDREW: I am not taking interjections—'to stop, detain and search a person or vehicle without a warrant and seize evidence of the commission of an offence created by this Bill'. There are also provisions reversing the onus of proof, which means that defendants will be presumed to be guilty until proven innocent in a court of law. The bill gives no clear definition of hate speech or hate crime nor does it provide any test for how such offences are to be identified or measured.

In her introductory speech to parliament the Attorney-General said that the new laws will 'protect members of our LGBTIQ+ community from hate crimes and hate speech'. Elsewhere in her speech she cited the example of someone being misgendered in hospital as an example of a possible hate crime captured under the bill. If misgendering someone is to be regarded as an offence under this bill, then clearly the parameters for hate speech are to be drawn very widely indeed. Something as simple as stating a belief that men cannot breastfeed could put you on the wrong side of this bill.

In other key changes, the bill will allow the Attorney-General to ban a symbol or image without having to go through parliament. That is the beauty of these so-called framework or umbrella bills for governments. Loosely drafted, they give no more than a broad policy outline that can then be filled in at a later date via regulation. It makes umbrella legislation the perfect vehicle for mission creep, leaving governments with plenty of scope for a more expanded criminalisation of speech over time.

The bill therefore creates a new head of power for banning symbols and images but provides no details as to which symbols and images will be prohibited under the new laws. In fact, the only symbols mentioned in connection with this proposed bill have been the Nazi swastika and the ISIS flag. This is a common trick by governments when seeking to introduce oppressive powers. The formula is to create an association in the public mind between the proposed legislation and an already reviled out-group for whom most people already feel extreme distaste. This ensures that no-one will feel compelled to speak out against the new powers in case they are accused of defending the reviled group and their abhorrent ideology. Of course, once the bill passes those new powers can be expanded much more widely until every group the government sets out to target has been captured.

Giving an attorney-general the power to designate a hate symbol is therefore extraordinarily dangerous. It violates what is regarded as a fundamental democratic principle; that is, key concepts creating criminal liability should not be made by regulation. It also creates a situation where the government may choose to pursue an ideological agenda and a means with which to target a particular group that disagrees with the government's policy agenda as a hate group and to ban its logo or flag as hate symbols—all without any recourse to normal parliamentary processes.

Proposed section 52D also creates a new offence relating to the public display, public distribution or publication of a prohibited symbol in a way that might reasonably be expected to cause a member of the public to feel menaced, harassed or offended. By criminalising behaviour that might be expected to cause someone to feel menaced, harassed or offended, the bill embeds a highly subjective element at the core of Queensland's hate crimes legislation. In doing so, it sets a very low bar for criminality, especially given the highly subjective nature of words like expected, harassed, offended and menaced.

According to the bill's explanatory notes, this new offence is intended to capture a broad range of circumstances, including the public display of tattoos and the public distribution or publication of prohibited symbols online. The bill purports to provide a number of free speech safeguards by allowing exemptions for those who can prove their conduct consists of a reasonable and genuine contribution to literary, artistic, political, scientific, religious or academic discourse. Those seeking to exercise their rights under this clause, however, should be warned that the burden of proof will be on them to prove that their offence is not an offence under the act and that their defence is reasonable and genuine. If they fail to do so they face six months in prison. How many artists, journalists, collectors or academics do you think will be prepared to take such a risk? I think not many.

Finally, the bill adds a circumstance of aggravation to offences under the Criminal Code, including offences such as trespass, public nuisance, wilful damage, harassment, abuse, intimidation, unlawful stalking, threats and common assault. Under the proposed new subsection 52B, the circumstance of aggravation is applicable where a person was wholly or partly motivated to commit the offence by hatred or serious contempt for a person or group of persons. In the past, criminal provisions that applied to an offence of serious vilification included the element of actual incitement of hatred for a person or group. Under this bill, however, an offence can be branded a hate crime and a prison sentence substantially increased on the basis of subjective interpretation alone.

In fact, the whole notion of criminal offences being aggravated by hateful feelings or motives will take Queensland further into the territory of thought crimes. People will be punished more severely not for what they have done, but for what they were allegedly thinking or feeling at the time. How can any justice system consistently or fairly identify signs of contempt or hatred for a prescribed group as the motivating catalyst behind a criminal act? Who or what defines hate, and who can say what another person was thinking or feeling when they committed a crime or offence? It also makes the reversal of the onus of proof doubly reprehensible, given such accusations will be almost impossible to defend in court. It will end in hate crime status being judged purely on the basis of the prescribed group status of the offender and victim, leading to a two-tier justice system and the obliteration of equality before the law.


I believe that this is a dangerous bill. It will have an incredibly chilling effect on not only people's speech but their thoughts as well. The bill supposedly allows for reasonable and genuine contributions in the context of literary, artistic, religious, educational, historical, legal or law enforcement purposes or for a public interest purpose, but who decides this? How will terms like 'reasonable' and 'genuine' be defined or measured? All are inherently subjective. As the Queensland Council for Civil Liberties said in its submission on the bill—

... the fact that someone might be offended is not an appropriate ground for restricting speech as too many things offend people.

The bill's religious protections are also very uncertain. Ostensibly, religion is included as a protected characteristic, but it is extremely unlikely that anything in this bill will protect a Christian where their beliefs may come into conflict with the new gender ideology. Anyone who thinks otherwise should consider the case in Finland where a politician is being prosecuted for tweeting out a Bible verse in response to her church's sponsorship of a pride event. Free speech is far too important for us to stand by and watch it being cancelled in this way. That is why I will be asking the opposition to review this bill if they get back into power at the next election.

A free citizenry should be able to criticise their government's policies without fear of persecution and imprisonment. It seems to me that the real goal of bills such as this one is to strongarm people into conformity with a state authorised narrative and ideology that cannot, in any real sense, be challenged. It is not only possible but also extremely likely that such laws will be radically abused in the future.

As for being vilified, as a South Sea islander I know exactly what that is like but we still need to have free speech. Some people say that 'Kanaka' is a bad word. We actually wear that as a badge of honour. We understand it, but it is very difficult to capture what is here in this bill when it is arranged and how it is going to pan out.

 **Mr MARTIN** (Stretton—ALP) (4.40 pm): I rise to support the Criminal Code (Serious Vilification and Hate Crimes) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. The bill amends the Anti-Discrimination Act 1991, the Criminal Code, the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act and the Summary Offences Act. I start by acknowledging all of the multicultural Queenslanders who contributed to this legislation. The reforms are a direct result of their hard work and advocacy. Sharing their experiences of hatred and vilification can be difficult, so I thank all of those community members who shared their stories.

I want to single out a few people in particular and acknowledge their contribution to this bill. The first is Clement Sham, the President of the Queensland Chinese Forum. He is known to many members of this House. He is also the principal solicitor at Firths lawyers here in Queensland. He stated that 'this bill isn't just another law, it's the real beginning to advance multiculturalism'. Ali Kadri, the CEO of the Islamic College of Brisbane, which is located in the Stretton electorate, and a member of the Cohesive Communities Coalition, said—

When it comes to vilification and racism people can often ignore it unless it is violent or calls for violence. But words can often cut deeper and are much harder to heal than a bruise. These laws will help us ensure our society is free of racial vilification and treat it as it should be treated—as a crime.

Christine Castley, the CEO of Multicultural Australia, said—

This Bill will have real impact and it will change lives for the better. It will send a clear message that everyone has the right to be safe and that, as a Queensland community, we stand together to stand up for your right to live your life without fear that you will be harmed or vilified because of your race, faith or cultural background.

I want to mention the contribution of the former member for Stretton, Duncan Pegg. Some members in this place might remember an adjournment speech Duncan gave back in 2021 about an incident that happened in Sunnybank Hills. Members would know that Duncan liked to say on every occasion that he was proud to be the member for the most multicultural electorate. He said it all the time. I have tried to ease off a little bit, but I am still very proud of it.

Mr Russo: Can you verify that last statement?

Mr MARTIN: I can verify it. He was open to the fact that, even though we have a very successful multicultural electorate, sometimes people in Stretton do the wrong thing. A disturbing incident happened when a resident of Sunnybank Hills put highly offensive signs on their front fence. Essentially they were Islamophobic and were attacking the Muslim community. There was a picture of a pig with words like: 'Bikini or burqa? Your choice'; the word 'Islamic' crossed out; 'Islamic is un-Australian'; 'Our culture, not yours!'; and a big sign on their fence that said 'Ban Islam'. Duncan reported that to the police at the time. Unfortunately, the police attended and then came back to the electorate office and said that what they had put up was not a criminal offence. Duncan spoke about that in this place. He said—

I reported the incident to police a month ago and I have been following up on the investigation. Unfortunately, none of these signs and stickers have been removed as yet. I hope that will happen very soon. Quite frankly, if it does not breach the law, we need to change the laws on racial and religious vilification and hatred because, in my view, this very clearly meets that criteria.

I think Duncan would be very happy that we have seen this legislation through.

I have mentioned a few of the community members who have contributed to this legislation. I would like to thank everyone who contributed their experiences and also their expertise. Too many members of our diverse communities continue to experience the negative impacts of hatred and bias, which is why we need laws that adequately protect our communities. We need to make it clear that racial vilification has no place in Queensland and no place in Australia.

Our hate crimes and vilification frameworks must reflect modern community standards and reflect the wonderful diversity of which we are all so proud. Hatred and bigotry in all of their forms must be called out and stamped out at every opportunity. The Palaszczuk government is committed to doing that by strengthening and protecting the rights of every Queenslanders, no matter who they are or where they come from.

Multiculturalism benefits all of us. The diversity that it brings is a strength to my local area and it is a strength to the whole of Queensland. Our multicultural communities are made up of fantastic, hardworking people of many different backgrounds, cultures and religions. People have come from all over the world to settle in our vibrant, diverse and multicultural community. In the suburbs of Stretton,

that is so evident. In fact, the Stretton electorate has the highest proportion of people who speak a language other than English at home. These are people who value hard work, family and, importantly, education. This can be seen in the Census figures. Along with the diverse range of backgrounds and languages, the people in Stretton outperform the Queensland average when it comes to higher education.

For many in my local area, the journey here was about securing a better life, and that is true of so many people I know in Stretton. They are people from many different backgrounds. So many of them tell me the same story. They tell me how proud they are of their children, that they are doing well in school, and that they have ambitions and hopes for their kids. It is a place where I see multiculturalism working, and it is a place where people of all different backgrounds can come together to celebrate each other's cultures.

However, as I said, unfortunately, there are some people who do not do the right thing. Even in the electorate of Stretton, people can be targeted simply because of the colour of their skin or their religion, and that is why we need laws to deal with serious vilification and hate crimes. These changes do not unfairly or unreasonably affect people's free speech. Ultimately, everyone accepts some limitations on speech. A notable example of this is defamation laws which balance people's right to protect their reputation from unfair attack. Like defamation laws, racial vilification laws have also been around for a long time. The changes in this bill simply update and reflect the community standards of our growing multicultural community.

We often talk about Australia being a harmonious multicultural country. There is great value in this and it is something we should protect, but we cannot take it for granted. We must keep working on it. We do not want to go down the route of disharmony where communities become more and more polarised, which we have seen in other countries around the world. More importantly, we do not want a situation where people get blamed for all of the problems of the world because of their religion or the colour of their skin.

The changes in this bill are proportionate and in response to a real concern. The new laws in this bill will increase the maximum penalties for hate crimes, make it easier to prosecute vilification and ban the public display of hate symbols. I thank the former attorney-general and now Minister for Health, as well as the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee for their work on this legislation. Following their extensive inquiry, the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee made a number of recommendations to the Palaszczuk government which are either supported or supported in principle. This legislation implements four of the committee's recommendations. The first recommendation is to remove the requirement for Crown Law officer consent to prosecute under section 131A of the Anti-Discrimination Act. The second recommendation is to introduce a statutory aggravation regarding hate and serious vilification. The third recommendation is to relocate the offence of serious vilification to the Criminal Code. The fourth recommendation is to prohibit the display of hate symbols. These amendments will make it easier to prosecute vilification and hate crimes while increasing available maximum penalties to better reflect the long-lasting impact these offences can and do have on their victims.

The bill removes the requirement that the consent of the Attorney-General or Director of Public Prosecutions must be obtained before a proceeding can be commenced under section 131A of the Anti-Discrimination Act, and also relocates the provision to the Criminal Code. Furthermore, there are increased maximum penalties for serious vilifications from six months imprisonment to three years, and this better reflects the seriousness of the offence and the community expectations. It also allows telecommunication warrants to be issued under federal legislation so that police can more easily establish who is responsible for online offending.

The bill also adds a circumstance of aggravation to the offences of going armed as to cause fear, threatening violence, disturbing religious worship, common assault, assault occasioning bodily harm, threats, unlawful stalking, intimidation, harassment or abuse, wilful damage, public nuisance and trespass. This circumstance of aggravation will increase the maximum penalty where the offender is motivated, wholly or partly, by hatred or serious contempt for someone or a group of people based on their race, religion, sexuality, sex characteristics or gender identity.

I am very happy we have seen this bill through from the speech that Duncan made back in 2021 to today. I am very happy to support this bill and commend it to the House.



Mr McDONALD (Lockyer—LNP) (4.50 pm): I rise to speak on the Criminal Code (Serious Vilification and Hate Crimes) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. I start off my contribution where the new member for Stretton left off and pay tribute to former member of the House, Duncan Pegg, who was a gentle fellow who not only brought some colour to this House but also brought a lot of caring for the multicultural community. I was pleased to be able to share a number of conversations with Duncan,

particularly when there was some lovely food on offer. It is a great thing that we have these laws coming into the House. With the example that was given and myself being a former police officer, for those in the House who do not know, having to deal with some of these terrible crimes, it is a good thing to see some balanced laws brought in that police will be able to use in certain circumstances that they may find themselves.

We on the LNP side of the House certainly do not condone in any way, shape or form vilification and agree that it should be called out, and education around these issues is a vital part of the solution.

One of the problems with hate crimes and vilification is that we cannot control what people think. We can look to see what people are doing and their behaviour regularly lends to what those people are thinking. There is a very strong link, the scholars and psychologists will say, and that behaviour does give an insight into those thought patterns. It is certainly a very great challenge, though, to be able to capture the intelligence around these matters. I know if we had the ability to capture intelligence, then some terrible events that happened in Wieambilla recently would not have happened and a couple of young constables would still have their lives. That is a challenge.

In terms of hate crimes and being able to deal with them as a community, it is alright for us here in this House to move some amendments to make changes so that police then have the ability to deal with this, but it is also very important that we ensure there are the necessary educational opportunities in the community, to empower the community, as well as intergovernmental cooperation—and I am talking about local, state and federal government cooperation as well as interstate cross-government areas—so that when police are dealing with these offenders, then the justice and Attorney-General areas support it.

I can tell members that one of the recommendations in this bill which does away with the request for consent of Crown law is something, as a former police officer, I would love to see right across a suite of laws. It is an absolute impediment to police being able to deal with matters for an application—often a very time-consuming, detailed application—to be made to Crown law to be able to get approval to take action in these matters. If those sorts of controls were removed and there were an ability for police to take action, I can tell members that there would be a lot more effort by police to achieve positive outcomes, not just in this area, but right across a whole suite of different laws. I commend the removal of that application process.

As I said before, it is vitally important that we have the necessary education and community empowerment when it comes to cultural change. Whilst these laws are important, the trouble is that it is all about the culture in a community. A definition of 'culture' can be, 'It is what we do around here.' If it is okay for a community to say, 'This is allowed; we do allow these things to happen,' then we need to change that culture and people need to understand that it is not right to see these things happen.

A very recent example of this is the continuation of the Friends of Israel event that happened yesterday. In the face of the terrible tragedy around the world, a train of thought could have been that we could have postponed that. I commend the member for Chatsworth and those involved in the Friends of Israel event yesterday because we cannot put aside good things. I was on hand to listen to the guest speaker, Suzi Smeed, talk about her journey and her parents' and grandparents' journey from that terrible place. I mention that because one of the areas of conversation for this bill was around the Nazi symbol and the hate crimes that some people try to promote. I am sure, having dealt with a number of these people, that they do not have a concept in their mind of how damaging those things can be. It becomes a trendy matter where they become involved with others in white supremacist activities and many genuinely do not understand the criminality of that behaviour. I think it is vitally important that those who do have mental health issues around these matters get the support that they need. Again, people get carried away in a peer situation and are easily led by others. They need to understand. We, as a community, need to make sure that those conversations are had across our community.

It is unfortunate that many of these crimes are committed against our multicultural community. I want to give a shout-out to Adele Wadleigh and her team in the Lockyer Valley, and also the Lockyer Valley and Somerset regional councils, for their investment in multicultural activities in our communities right across the Lockyer and Somerset that make up the Lockyer state electorate. A lot of those events are multicultural and food-based, with plenty of colour, dance and song. Our communities are richer for the contributions of our multicultural community. I certainly enjoy getting along to those, as many members in the House do, because they are regularly some of the best and most fun things that we get up to. I cannot help but think about the Diwali celebrations that I get to attend on behalf of our leader on occasion, and the colour and food that is on display in those arenas. It is important for our multicultural community to know that we as a parliament here have listened to the submissions and have made a number of recommendations that this bill enacts.

I thank also the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee for their consideration of the bill. The conversation I had with the deputy chair, the member for Currumbin, was very helpful in understanding some of the nuances and why some of the opportunities for this bill did not get up, but I think it is a great sign that there was not a statement of reservation completed for the bill, and it shows the genuine spirit of cooperation that was had in order to achieve the bill.

I was interested in the member for Mirani's contribution just a few moments ago where he talked about his own background of the Kanakas and his pride in wearing that name. I have some great Indigenous friends who actually call me 'white fella' and they are 'black fella', and they use those names in the context of a genuine friendship relationship. As a community, we can take a lot of learning and respect from treating each other with kindness, listening to each other and dealing with each other in that context, because you could use exactly the same words in a different context and it will actually be very offensive to people.

I gave a shout-out earlier to our multicultural community in the Lockyer and the wonderful events they contribute to. I would also like to pay tribute to Dr Mohammad Sultan and the leadership he provides in our Islamic community of Lockyer. Whilst he does not live in the Lockyer, he certainly supports a lot of the activities that are held there. There were a number of terrible incidents that happened to the Islamic community in Gatton a short while ago. I was pleased to be a part of the conversation to make sure the community understood that not all of the Islamic community are extremists or terrorists by nature. We were able to do some really good community education in that space. Our community is richer for people who want to make sure that the ladies in their life are respected and treated as equal and seen to aspire. I think when a community does not want to see the women in their lives aspire, we do not want to see that culture in our communities. I commend the bill to the House.

Debate, on motion of Mr McDonald, adjourned.

MOTION

Cost of Living



Mr BERKMAN (Maiwar—Grn) (5.01 pm): I move—

That this House:

1. notes that:
 - (a) the cost-of-living crisis is hitting Queenslanders hard, with transport costs a major contributor. According to the Australian Automobile Association, Brisbane households currently spend an average of 18 per cent of their incomes on transport, including fuel, registration, car loans and insurance, with Townsville households spending an average of \$355 per week.
 - (b) Brisbane public transport fares are among the highest in the country.
 - (c) according to TransLink data, weekly patronage on its South-East Queensland services has fallen by 16 per cent from pre-COVID levels in 2019.
 - (d) the Queensland government failed to meet the 2022 deadline for all train stations to be compliant with federal disability standards as required under the federal Disability Discrimination Act, and around a third of train stations across South-East Queensland are still not fully accessible.
 - (e) transport emissions are the third largest source of greenhouse gas emissions in Australia, with emissions from cars and light commercial vehicles contributing 11.6 per cent of annual emissions, and are also the fastest growing source of emissions in the country.
2. calls on the government to:
 - (a) commit to increase the general public transport concession to make public transport free for all users.
 - (b) commit to a binding, fully funded plan to make all of Queensland's train stations 100 per cent compliant with federal disability standards.
 - (c) increase investment in public transport frequency and connectivity including through investment in new routes and dedicated bus lanes along major transport corridors.

This motion has a really simple premise: that public transport is a vital public service, just like health care and education, that Queenslanders deserve to be able to access regardless of their income or their postcode. It is a simple premise with a raft of benefits for Queenslanders, from reducing congestion and emissions to giving our cities back to people, not cars, and relieving cost-of-living pressures. Queenslanders are dealing with crippling inflation and stagnant wages, and high transport costs are only making things worse. Brisbane households are spending an average of 18 per cent of their income on transport including fuel, insurance, registration and some of the most expensive public transport in the country.

Earlier this year 70 per cent of respondents to a local survey by my federal colleague Elizabeth Watson-Brown said that public transport is too expensive and they supported a fare-free trial. However, whenever I stand here and make a demand for basic services for Queenslanders I am called an idealist. It is the same old cries of, 'It's not really free; someone has to pay for it,' or it is just downright too expensive as far as the government is concerned. However, this government will spend \$8 billion on a desalination plant, announced overnight, and they will spend \$2 billion to knock down and rebuild the Gabba stadium, knocking down a heritage listed primary school on the way. Someone has to pay for that, but it seems it is always the community who pays, not the government's banking, gas and property developer mates.

The government can make public transport free, frequent and accessible. Government already covers around 83 per cent of the cost of public transport, and we are simply saying that it should increase it slightly to cover 100 per cent of that cost. The gap would be about \$270 million in fares last financial year, which is only around three per cent of the whole transport budget in Queensland. An amount of \$6 billion is spent every year in building and maintaining roads, so \$275 million is small change for a government that wasted \$371 million on a privatised ticketing system or \$60 million this year on additional enforcement officers.

We have seen a major spike in the number of fines and warnings handed out to people who are clearly struggling to afford the exorbitant public transport fares in a cost-of-living crisis. Punishing Queenslanders who are struggling financially is not the answer. They need our help. We should help them with free public transport instead. This is not without precedent. Olympia in Washington saw a 20 per cent increase in users in the month immediately after scrapping public transport fares. Malta and Luxembourg both offer free public transport, as does the vast majority of Estonia. Germany has slashed some fares by 90 per cent to reduce fuel use in private vehicles. The benefits to Queenslanders would be felt in their hip pockets, in their homes and in the environment.

An adult go card user in Brisbane travelling between my electorate and the CBD to work each day would save at least \$30 a week in fares, not to mention the cost of fuel in their private vehicle, parking and time spent sitting in traffic. The average speed during afternoon peak hour on Coronation Drive is just 10 kilometres an hour. We can only reduce congestion by getting people out of their cars, which would mean people have more time to spend with their families and engage in activities outside of work.

On current trends, transport is projected to be Australia's largest source of greenhouse gas emissions by 2030, with 60 per cent of the transport sector's current emissions coming from cars and light commercial vehicles. Getting cars off our roads would result in not just creating the kinds of places we want to live in but also ensuring they remain livable. Queensland is and will continue to be hit particularly hard by climate change, and we should be leading the nation with bold and creative solutions like this.

The evidence shows that free public transport would increase use. For example, the New South Wales Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal found that fare-free public transport in Sydney would increase patronage by 40 per cent. We do not want a free bus that hardly ever shows up or a train that is free but not accessible to everyone, so that is why we are calling for network improvements at the same time. We want to see a high-frequency bus on every major road corridor in South-East Queensland. We want more frequent trains on the passenger network plus the long list of overdue expansions. We also need a time-bound commitment for fully accessible train stations in Queensland.

Public transport patronage still has not recovered from COVID-19. We are still sitting at 153 million trips a year in South-East Queensland compared to 189 million pre COVID. Again, getting those numbers back up would mean fewer cars on the road, less traffic and lower emissions.

This motion is not pixie dust. It is sensible, relatively cheap reform that Labor should support. Public services like schools and hospitals are beloved by Queenslanders because at least in theory they are freely available to all, and public transport should be no exception to that.



Hon. MC BAILEY (Miller—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads and Minister for Digital Services) (5.06 pm): I move the following amendment—

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

- '1. acknowledges national cost-of-living pressures experienced by Queensland families and the targeted cost-of-living support provided by the Palaszczuk government;
2. notes public transport patronage is growing consistently post pandemic;

3. notes the Palaszczuk government has:
 - (a) taken strong action to make public transport more affordable on many occasions since 2016;
 - (b) implemented the Fairer Fares package saving commuters \$325 million;
 - (c) limited many public transport fare increases to well below the CPI;
 - (d) continued the rolling program of train station accessibility upgrades;
 - (e) delivered thousands of park-and-ride spaces making accessing our public transport network easier in outer suburbs and locations;
 - (f) brought rail manufacturing back to Queensland, building the most accessible fleet of trains in our state's history, in the Maryborough region;
 - (g) made 50 NGR trains disability compliant;
4. notes the Palaszczuk government is continuing to deliver record levels of transport investment, building a better and more accessible network including:
 - (a) duplicated the Gold Coast line between Coomera and Helensvale;
 - (b) Gold Coast Light Rail stages 2 and 3;
 - (c) Cross River Rail;
 - (d) on-demand transport;
 - (e) Logan and Gold Coast faster rail;
 - (f) Sunshine Coast rail duplication;
 - (g) South East Busway extension;
 - (h) new bus routes, including in Townsville and on the Gold and Sunshine coasts;
 - (i) bus priority on the eastern corridor;
 - (j) Northern Transitway;
5. acknowledges the rollout of the nation-leading Smart Ticketing across Queensland delivering the biggest single integrated ticketing system in the world.'


The Palaszczuk government is building a public transport legacy on a scale this state has never seen. Whether it is bus or train, this investment into public transport will deliver better services, create thousands of good jobs and result in a balanced transport network. Honourable members need only to look at that list to see—and I know that I have only two minutes and 30 seconds to speak—that this motion from the Greens party denies the reality that it is this government that is 100 per cent funding Cross River Rail, a whole new line. The motion implies that we are not building a new rail line when we actually are. We are doing a double-track duplication in Logan and Gold Coast Faster Rail between Kuraby and Beenleigh to allow faster, more competitive express trains to one of the great growth areas in South-East Queensland. The Sunshine Coast duplication is well and truly underway and we are doing the hard yards on the Sunshine Coast direct line, in partnership with the Albanese federal government. Previously we have not had a partner to do that. Now that we do, we are not missing that opportunity. We are connecting light rail through Helensvale to stage 1, which is integrated with the heavy rail line, and we are doing stage 3 from Broadbeach to Burleigh.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr BAILEY: The LNP interject, but they do nothing on public transport every time they are in power. They do absolutely nothing, other than order trains that are made overseas and are not disability compliant and gut cities like Maryborough. We are still fixing the LNP order trains to this day.

Our government is also doing a lot of station upgrades. There is a long list of those, including in the electorates of Greens' party MPs. Auchenflower station is fully upgraded and accessible. We are doing new platforms at Boggo Road and we are rebuilding an entirely new station at Dutton Park, on the edge of my electorate and the South Brisbane electorate. We are doing a lot in terms of station accessibility upgrades. No state or jurisdiction is going to meet the 2032 goal—that is a simple fact. We are seeing that now more than 80 per cent of commuters have an accessible station. We are adding to that number through Cross River Rail and through our Queensland Rail program.

What we are looking at here is patronage returning. We already passed 100 per cent for light rail compared to pre-pandemic levels. As you would expect, we are seeing consistent improvements across our networks as people migrate back to public transport. I am very proud of our public transport record; it is phenomenal. The Greens party should acknowledge and endorse it rather than criticise it, because their economic policies are simply to make everything free, which makes no sense whatsoever.

 **Dr MacMAHON** (South Brisbane—Grn) (5.11 pm): Access to public transport determines how much money Queenslanders have left for groceries at the end of the week or whether people can get to work or school on time. It determines how connected we can be as a community. Transport dictates

where we can work, the friends and family we can visit, the doctors who can treat us and how much time we have with family at the end of the day. Yet transport in Queensland, especially public transport, is so far behind the rest of the world.

Despite what the minister has said, for most Queenslanders, we still have a public transport system that is woefully behind other countries. We have designed our public transport system in such a dismal way that, for the vast majority of Queenslanders, the cost and effort of individually buying, fuelling, servicing, insuring and parking your car is still the only choice. This is an enormous burden on the household budgets for many Queenslanders. Fuel was at \$2.30 over the weekend. Car insurance premiums are up from last year and, despite the rising cost of private vehicle ownership, our dismal public transport system means that it still is not a viable alternative for the majority of Queenslanders.


Queensland's public transport system, even in the south-east, provides some of the poorest coverage of any public transport network in the world. Much of the network is slow and infrequent. If people have limited mobility, good luck finding a train or bus station that they can access, or services that announce the stops that are coming up. For all this, Queenslanders also have the extraordinary privilege of paying some of the highest costs for public transport anywhere in the world. For many people, there is no choice but to take public transport—no matter the cost or inconvenience. It is not a choice for kids whose parents are working early morning shifts or workers who have medical conditions who are not able to drive or workers who are struggling to cover the cost of rent, let alone the cost of car repayments.

For many people, public transport is their only way to get around and so investing in a better public transport system and making it free really is a no-brainer. It is something that we could afford and that we could be doing in Queensland. Free, fast and frequent public transport would provide enormous cost-of-living relief to existing users and to future users who would be able to rely on their cars less. Encouraging new patrons with better and expanded services free of charge would provide enormous benefits, not only to those who make the switch but to the rest of the community as well. Every time someone chooses to take the bus instead of the car it reduces congestion, it reduces the environmental costs and, combined with a walk to the bus stop, it offers health benefits as well.

The better our public transport is, the more people will use it and the better our roads will be for everyone else who needs them. It is better for those people who do not have a choice about whether or not they drive—tradies who need their tools at work, nurses doing home visits or pensioners who need to drive to the shops. Best of all, free, fast and frequent public transport essentially pays for itself. When people catch public transport, they are often on their way to spend money or make money—both of which support local economies and benefit the government's bottom line. Often people are on their way to see loved ones, to volunteer at sporting clubs or to watch a gig or a game of footy. Public transport makes our communities more vibrant, boosts small businesses and makes our communities more connected as well.

One way that the government could pay for free public transport would be to scrap the \$2.7 billion Gabba redevelopment. This could fund free public transport in Queensland for around seven years. This would be a much better investment for Queenslanders than a single stadium that will come at the cost of a school and a park that has growing opposition from Queenslanders who are appalled that, in the middle of a cost-of-living crisis, a single stadium would be the focus of a Labor government. The government could easily save that money and put it into a public transport system that is fit for purpose and free for Queenslanders to use. Right now public transport is so inconvenient and expensive that car ownership is a rational choice for so many people.

In my community, the Save Our Ferries team have been campaigning for more ferry services in Kangaroo Point. Locals have been campaigning for the 192 to run on nights and weekends and have been pushing for intersuburban services that mean people will get between suburbs without having to go into the CBD. Queenslanders deserve free, fast and frequent public transport and Queenslanders with disabilities deserve access to public transport. I commend my colleague for the motion.

 **Ms BUSH** (Cooper—ALP) (5.16 pm): I rise to support the minister's amendment to the motion. I love hearing the Greens party talking about emissions caused by transport. This is the same party whose solution on aircraft noise will dump 50 million litres of additional fuel burnt in this year alone. It is quite extraordinary. I do think it is great that the member for Maiwar has raised the issue of public transport in the House. The member for Maiwar and I are neighbours. As such, I appreciate that our constituents do care about this issue. Ensuring we have a comprehensive, reliable, convenient and accessible public transport service and infrastructure is something that all communities care about, including ours.


The population growth in Queensland, and South-East Queensland particularly, is extraordinary. I doorknock regularly in my community and it is not lost on me how many people have moved into our area in the last few years, and why would they not? It is the most wonderful place in Queensland to live. One of our strengths is our proximity to the city. We have an ability to access world-class public transport, whether it is my local 362 bus—whose route was recently extended for the benefit of Ashgrove residents who want to catch a train to work via the Milton or Auchenflower train stations—or using a combination of public and active transport. We do have a fantastic network of dedicated bike paths throughout my electorate. I speak regularly to residents of varying fitness levels who are able to get in and out of the city to work on these.

The Palaszczuk Labor government is investing record amounts in public transport and, unlike the Greens, we can deliver. Some members like to promise the world to their community and to Queensland, but you could drive a bus through their track record of delivery. Our commitment to drive down the cost of public transport is clear. Right now we already cover 80 per cent of the cost of every bus, train, tram and ferry ticket sold in Queensland. Up until the pandemic, we did have record patronage on South-East Queensland's services and, for the member's benefit, after COVID many people are now working from home and so they are not on buses and they are also not on the road, which is a great thing.

One hundred per cent of revenue from ticket sales is invested back into public transport services to build safer, more reliable and more accessible public transport for all Queenslanders—this is what people in my community talk about. It is not so much about the cost of public transport, but the importance of extending it and making it even more convenient. That is where the revenue for the ticket sales is going, and people in my community understand that. It is how we are investing in public transport expansion in Brisbane and in regional Queensland. We are building new infrastructure and upgrading existing infrastructure across the state. We are investing in accessibility upgrades at stations across the network, including the Auchenflower station which I recently had the pleasure of opening with the minister. I note it is, in fact, in the member for Maiwar's electorate. It would be great if the member could talk about that station a bit more to his constituents. It is reliable, safe and it is accessible, which is important given its proximity to the Wesley Hospital.

Across the Queensland Rail network and Cross River Rail, we are absolutely focused on delivering station accessibility upgrades to the whole public transport network. Under the Station Accessibility Upgrade Program, upgrades at 12 stations have been completed. As part of Cross River Rail, we are delivering more accessibility upgrades across stations between Dutton Park and Salisbury and new accessible stations at Boggo Road, Woolloongabba, Albert Street, Roma Street and the Ekka station. All stations now have lifts installed to help with boarding as well as hearing augmentation loops, new tactile surfaces to better navigate the stations and active transport enclosures to enable customers to ride and safely store their bikes and scooters at the end of their ride to the station.

The Greens talk about free public transport in Luxembourg and Estonia. I appreciate that a Google search will reveal a few jurisdictions that have implemented free public transport, but there is no reliable evidence that these policies have increased patronage over the long term or driven down congestion. They are not comparable jurisdictions. Queensland is a huge state, and the implementation of a free public transport policy has to be delivered with consideration to geography and consumer behaviours. The South-East Queensland public transport network is one of the largest in the world—more than 10,000 square kilometres across eight zones. We are continuing to add to that and to ensure it is accessible to all Queenslanders.

 **Mr SAUNDERS** (Maryborough—ALP) (5.20 pm): I rise to support the amendment proposed to the motion and moved by the Minister for Transport and take the opportunity presented by this motion to discuss the ways in which the Palaszczuk Labor government is improving access to the public transport network throughout the state. Let me begin with the botched order of trains ordered by the Newman government. We could extend the sittings, because I want to talk for hours on what it did with the NGR trains. Those opposite exported jobs when they ordered trains to be built overseas and shipped into Queensland—and we know what happened—when there was a perfectly capable workforce in my electorate.

The decision by the Newman government hit the Maryborough community very hard. In fact, as I have often said, it made us the Detroit of Australia in Queensland. Not only did the LNP not care about jobs when it ordered these trains; it did not care about accessibility. The trains were delivered and were not compliant with national disability standards—something that the Palaszczuk Labor government has

had to rectify. If the LNP wants to talk about cost blowouts, it should start with the \$335 million it is costing to refit the 75 NGR trains at the Downer facility in Maryborough. The trains are being refitted at Downer on time and on budget and the workers at Downer are doing a tremendous job.

As mentioned by the minister, I am proud that workers at Downer in my electorate have refitted 50 out of the 75 NGR trains to improve accessibility, with between eight and nine train sets in Maryborough at any time being upgraded. As the Downer staff are pulling the NGRs through Queen's Park, people line up and take photos. They are very proud of the work they are doing to the NGRs. They are very proud that they are refitting these trains that were made overseas. We on this side of the House believe in making public transport services more accessible for all Queenslanders, and we also believe in local jobs. We do not believe in outsourcing or exporting our jobs, particularly the train jobs that I love in my electorate.

Respect for people with a disability and a commitment to local jobs are two values noticeably absent from those opposite. Not only am I immensely proud of the work being done in my community to retrofit the NGR trains; I am absolutely delighted that we are building 65 brand new passenger trains through the Queensland Train Manufacturing Program. Let us begin! This is absolutely great. They will be the best accessibility trains ever built in Queensland. They are going to be fantastic because we have already developed a strong working relationship with accessibility advocates. We knew who to talk to when we wanted to learn how to make these trains more accessible. Believe you me, I have sat through plenty of meetings with the minister to talk about accessibility to ensure that everyone can board and exit these trains safely. I must commend the minister because he has done a fantastic job. He and his staff have done a fantastic job of making sure that happens. These trains will enter service with wider aisles. The trains will have the ability to lean into platforms like buses can, and this is a great thing for people with a disability, wheelie walkers, prams et cetera. The trains will also have the ability to board and deboard people. We are going to put in a platform which is going to be fantastic for people to access the trains.

The member for Chatsworth—and this is very interesting—said that this is like flushing money down the proverbial toilet. We know about his tough love. We know that the member for Chatsworth wants to give us tough love. I have said to him before, 'I don't want your tough love. Neither do the people of Queensland and neither do the people who use the new trains built at Torbanlea.' They do not want his tough love. They want to be able to access and board these trains safely. As the member for Maiwar said, we want people to use these trains throughout Queensland and particularly in the south-east corner. We do not want the member for Chatsworth's tough love. We want to support local jobs and we want to make sure these trains are accessible for all people in the south-east corner.

I want to thank the minister and the Premier for their support for my community. It has been unwavering. I want to put that on the record. I thank the minister and the government for extending the train contract at Torbanlea to 35 years. It has given my community and the young people in my community a job—a career—and will make them stay in our community. Thank you, Minister, and thank you, Premier.

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

AYES, 48:

ALP, 48—Bailey, Boyd, Brown, Bush, Butcher, Crawford, de Brenni, Dick, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Furner, Gilbert, Grace, Healy, Hinchliffe, Howard, Hunt, Kelly, A. King, S. King, Lauga, Linard, Lui, Madden, Martin, McCallum, McMahon, McMillan, Mellish, Miles, Mullen, Palaszczuk, Pease, Power, Pugh, Richards, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Scanlon, Skelton, Smith, Stewart, Sullivan, Tantari, Walker, Whiting.

NOES, 35:

LNP, 31—Bates, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Camm, Crandon, Crisafulli, Frecklington, Gerber, Hart, Head, Janetzki, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Mander, McDonald, Mickelberg, Millar, Molhoek, O'Connor, Perrett, Powell, Purdie, Robinson, Rowan, Simpson, Stevens, Watts, Weir.

Grn, 2—Berkman, MacMahon.

KAP, 1—Dametto.

PHON, 1—Andrew.

Pairs: D'Ath, Minnikin; Harper, Nicholls; O'Rourke, Lister.

Resolved in the affirmative.

Question put—That the motion, as amended, be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

Motion, as agreed—

That this House:

1. acknowledges national cost-of-living pressures experienced by Queensland families and the targeted cost-of-living support provided by the Palaszczuk government;
2. notes public transport patronage is growing consistently post pandemic;
3. notes the Palaszczuk government has:
 - (a) taken strong action to make public transport more affordable on many occasions since 2016;
 - (b) implemented the Fairer Fares package saving commuters \$325 million;
 - (c) limited many public transport fare increases to well below the CPI;
 - (d) continued the rolling program of train station accessibility upgrades;
 - (e) delivered thousands of park-and-ride spaces making accessing our public transport network easier in outer suburbs and locations;
 - (f) brought rail manufacturing back to Queensland, building the most accessible fleet of trains in our state's history, in the Maryborough region;
 - (g) made 50 NGR trains disability compliant;
4. notes the Palaszczuk government is continuing to deliver record levels of transport investment, building a better and more accessible network including:
 - (a) duplicated the Gold Coast line between Coomera and Helensvale;
 - (b) Gold Coast Light Rail stages 2 and 3;
 - (c) Cross River Rail;
 - (d) on-demand transport;
 - (e) Logan and Gold Coast faster rail;
 - (f) Sunshine Coast rail duplication;
 - (g) South East Busway extension;
 - (h) new bus routes, including in Townsville and on the Gold and Sunshine coasts;
 - (i) bus priority on the eastern corridor;
 - (j) Northern Transitway;
5. acknowledges the rollout of the nation-leading Smart Ticketing across Queensland delivering the biggest single integrated ticketing system in the world.

MOTION

Revocation and Dedication of Protected Areas



Hon. LM LINARD (Nudgee—ALP) (Minister for the Environment and the Great Barrier Reef, Minister for Science and Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (5.32 pm): On behalf of the Minister for Housing, I move—

1. That this House requests the Governor in Council to:
 - (a) revoke by regulation under section 9 of the Marine Parks Act 2004 the declaration of parts of a marine park;
 - (b) revoke by regulation under section 30 of the Nature Conservation Act 1992 the setting apart and declaration of the entirety of one timber reserve and one State forest, and parts of four State forests;
 - (c) dedicate by regulation under section 29 of the Nature Conservation Act 1992 the revoked areas of the aforementioned State forests and timber reserve as three new conservation parks, part of two existing conservation parks and an addition to one existing national park;
 - (d) revoke by regulation under section 32 of the Nature Conservation Act 1992 the dedication of parts of one national park and parts of two conservation parks;

as set out in the Proposal tabled by me in the House today, viz

Description of areas to be revoked

Great Sandy Marine Park	An area of 0.3214 hectares, under, and within 30 metres of the public boat ramp on the north bank of the Kolan River adjacent to the caravan park near Miara Road, Miara, illustrated on the attached sketch as 1.
Great Sandy Marine Park	An area of 0.11 hectares, under, and within 30 metres of the public boat ramp identified as W041 near Burkitt Street, Bargara, illustrated on the attached sketch as 2.

Great Sandy Marine Park	An area of 0.5196 hectares, under, and within 30 metres of the public boat ramp identified as W031 near the Esplanade, Innes Park, illustrated on the attached sketch as 3.
Great Sandy Marine Park	An area of 0.1299 hectares, under, and within 30 metres of the public boat ramp identified as W011 and the public pontoon identified as W012 on the north bank of the Elliott River near McIntosh Avenue, Riverview, illustrated on the attached sketch as 4.
Great Sandy Marine Park	An area of 0.0632 hectares, under, and within 30 metres of the public boat ramp identified as HB56 and the public pontoon identified as H1374 on the south bank of the Burrum River near Ross Street, Burrum Heads, illustrated on the attached sketch as 5.
Great Sandy Marine Park	An area of 0.4743 hectares, under, and within 30 metres of the barge ramp identified as HB13 on the north bank of the Mary River on the eastern side of North Head near North Esplanade, Bingham, illustrated on the attached sketch as 6.
Great Sandy Marine Park	An area of 0.0429 hectares, under, and within 30 metres of the public boat ramps identified as MB40 and MB41 on the west bank of Big Tuan Creek near Bottlebrush Road, Tuan, illustrated on the attached sketch as 7.
Great Sandy Marine Park	An area of 0.0036 hectares, under, and within 30 metres of the public boat ramp identified as TI81 near Boat Ramp Drive, Tinnanbar, illustrated on the attached sketch as 8.
Great Sandy Marine Park	An area of 0.3439 hectares, under, and within 30 metres of the public boat ramp adjacent to Log Dump camping area in Tuan State Forest, near Tinnanbar Road on the north bank of Kauri Creek, illustrated on the attached sketch as 9.
Great Sandy Marine Park	An area of 0.2153 hectares, under, and within 30 metres of the public boat ramp identified as WI21 at the mouth of Teewah Creek near Toolara Road, Toolara, illustrated on the attached sketch as 10.
Great Sandy Marine Park	An area of 0.6179 hectares, under, and within 30 metres of the barge ramp identified as WI50 near Bullock Point Road, Bullock Point, illustrated on the attached sketch as 11.
Great Sandy Marine Park	An area of 0.2092 hectares landward of a line starting at the intersection of the marine park boundary and the parallel of latitude 25°14.687' south, then running progressively westerly along a geodesic to the point of 25°14.702' south 152°48.700' east and then southerly along a geodesic to where the mainland at Highest Astronomical Tide intersects the meridian of longitude 152°48.721' east, that is under and adjacent to the public boat ramp at Point Vernon identified as HB38, illustrated on the attached sketch as 12.
Great Sandy Marine Park	An upstream area of the Kolan River Park containing an area of 7.1192 hectares, near Avondale, associated with relocation of the upstream boundary of the marine park approximately 400 metres downstream, to exclude significant public infrastructure i.e., a rail corridor and weir, from the marine park, as illustrated on the attached sketch.
Great Sandy Marine Park	An upstream area of the Mary River containing an area of 10.9882 hectares, near Beaver Rock, associated with relocation of the upstream boundary of the park in this waterway approximately 330 metres downstream, to a location that can be more clearly defined, as illustrated on the attached sketch.
Great Sandy Marine Park	Two areas at the upstream limit of Snapper Creek containing an area of 5.1213 hectares, at Tin Can Bay, to provide separation between the marine park and significant public infrastructure, i.e., a sewage treatment plant, as illustrated on the attached sketch.
Wickham Timber Reserve	An area of about 198 hectares described as lot 766 on FTY1420 excluding lot 766 on AP6326 (to be described as lot 766 on AP23772), for dedication as part of the existing Plunkett Conservation Park, as illustrated on the attached sketch.

Beerwah State Forest	An area of about 129 hectares described as lot 1 on AP22457, for dedication as the new Mooloolah River Conservation Park, as illustrated on the attached sketch.
Deer Reserve State Forest	An area of about 994.9696 hectares described as part of lot 637 on FTY1905 (to be described as lots 1, 2 and 638 on AP23775), for dedication as the new Deer Reserve Conservation Park, as illustrated on the attached sketch.
West Cooroy State Forest	An area of about 1150 hectares described as lot 234 on FTY879 (to be described as lot 234 on AP23773), for dedication as the new West Cooroy Conservation Park, as illustrated on the attached sketch.
Luttons State Forest	An area of about 61.4536 hectares described as part of lot 766 on FTY559 (to be described as lot 1 on AP23774), for dedication as part of the existing Glass House Mountains Conservation Park, as illustrated on the attached sketch.
Mount Mee State Forest	An area of about 16.9031 hectares described as part of lot 893 on FTY1883 (to be described as lot 5 on AP23776), for dedication as part of the existing D'Aguilar National Park, as illustrated on the attached sketch.
Daintree National Park	An area of 8.5687 hectares, described as lot 10 on SP296958 and lots 91 to 94 on W3451, as illustrated on the attached sketch.
Kamerunga Conservation Park	An area of 0.821 hectares described as parts of lots 254 and 734 on NR7826 (to be described as lots 100 and 101 on SP339709), as illustrated on the attached sketch.
Tallebudgera Creek Conservation Park	An area of 0.0493 hectares described as part of lot 1 on WD804791 (to be described as lot 2 on SP340173), as illustrated on the attached sketch.

2. That Mr Speaker and the Clerk of the Parliament forward a copy of this resolution to the Minister for the Environment and the Great Barrier Reef, Minister for Science and Minister for Multicultural Affairs for submission to the Governor in Council.

Queensland's marine parks and terrestrial area estate encompasses more than 21.5 million hectares, which is more than three times the total land area of Tasmania. This parks estate hosts our state's most important conservation and cultural values. Our government acknowledges the invaluable contribution protected areas and forests provide for Queensland. This includes affording protection to our iconic and threatened species, unique cultural heritage, ensuring vital forest resources are managed sustainably, offering unforgettable tourism experiences and providing Queenslanders with their most treasured recreational opportunities. Our protected area estate is also a major contributor to Queensland's economic prosperity. It attracts more than 50 million visits per year, including significant visitors travelling from around the world. This injects billions of dollars into the Queensland economy and supports thousands of jobs across the state.

We have continued to make unprecedented investments in our protected area estate for its ongoing protection and expansion. This includes the commitment made last year of \$262.5 million in funding over four years—the single largest investment ever towards expanding the estate. The government also recently announced the outcomes of the zoning plan review for the Great Sandy Marine Park which will significantly improve the protection of marine habitats and threatened species. Importantly, the rezoning of the Great Sandy Marine Park will also enhance the Wide Bay-Burnett region's enviable nature-based and recreational fishing lifestyle and economy.

Today I bring to the House a number of proposals that ultimately further expand the terrestrial protected area, or parks estate, and protect critical habitat for our native species. Of the terrestrial revocation proposals being debated, six will deliver on the first part of the Palaszczuk government's commitment to transfer 20,000 hectares of state forest land to protected area under the Native Timber Action Plan. This will afford stronger legislative protections and management for crucial South-East Queensland habitat for threatened species, including our iconic koala.

The other terrestrial and marine revocation proposals being debated in the House today are appropriate, sensible actions that are linked with balanced public interest outcomes or necessary management of the estate. Revocation proposals that could impact our terrestrial or marine protected areas are never taken lightly and are only accepted where it is demonstrated to provide a greater benefit to the state's interests. I will outline the four terrestrial protected area revocation proposals. Then I will move on to the six terrestrial protected area transfer proposals and, finally, the marine park revocation proposals.

Two revocations relate to Daintree National Park and are agreed acts in the Eastern Kuku Yalanji 2021 National Parks Land Transfer Indigenous Land Use Agreement. This is the formal agreement for the Eastern Kuku Yalanji handback where the state handed back the Daintree National Park to its traditional owners in a joint management arrangement. The first proposal is to revoke an area comprising around eight hectares to allow the land to be granted to the Eastern Kuku Yalanji people as Aboriginal freehold. In July 2010 Cairns Regional Council and Rainforest Rescue entered into a cooperative management agreement for the use of this land as a native plant revegetation nursery. Following the deamalgamation of Douglas Shire Council from Cairns Regional Council in 2013 the land and nursery continued to be managed by Rainforest Rescue with the support of the QPWS. As part of the Eastern Kuku Yalanji handback it was agreed that use of the site would continue as a nursery to support revegetation projects in the Daintree and ownership of the land would be granted to the Jabalbina Yalanji Aboriginal Corporation as freehold. Jabalbina has entered into a conservation agreement with the state to declare a nature refuge covering around seven hectares, ensuring impacts to the protected area estate are minimal post revocation.

The second proposal is to revoke an area comprising around half a hectare due to changes to the ambulatory boundary of the Daintree River. This proposal will have no impacts on the conservation values of the park as the land is underwater and not currently subject to any management regime. The third proposal is to revoke around 0.8 hectares of Kamerunga Conservation Park to allow for part of the Cairns Western Arterial Road upgrade project. The road upgrade project is a three-stage, jointly funded project of the Commonwealth and Queensland governments to duplicate the road between the Redlynch Connector Road and the Captain Cook Highway, with construction of the first stage expected to begin in mid-2024. The upgrade project will address capacity concerns for one of only two crossing points of the Barron River north of Cairns and would be the only alternative access route between Cairns CBD, the northern beaches and the Atherton Tablelands when the Captain Cook Highway is closed. This is a key infrastructure project for Far North Queensland, supporting the region's growth, economy and public safety. The revocation is expected to have minimal impacts upon Kamerunga Conservation Park as the on-ground condition of the impacted area is disturbed due to annual rainfall events that cause soil and vegetation loss along the banks of the river. Consultation has occurred with other relevant parties to support the revocation and no objections were received.

The fourth proposal is to resolve a historical access issue for the residential properties in Vantage Point Drive in Burleigh Heads. The proposed revocation area from Tallebudgera Creek Conservation Park contains an area of around 0.05 hectares and will be converted to freehold and transferred to the council of the City of Gold Coast who were trustees of the area prior to its dedication as a protected area. The revocation will resolve a long-term access issue for several adjacent residential property owners that has existed since 1989. Council was previously trustee for the area and had an informal access arrangement with property owners along Vantage Point Drive, allowing the landholders to use a physically constructed concrete driveway through the reserve to access the rear of their properties. Council considers that the residents justifiably believed they had lawful property access and that terminating the access route would be unreasonable as the landholders have made decisions regarding their properties based on this understanding. The revocation will have negligible impacts on the conservation values of Tallebudgera Creek Conservation Park as the use of the area would be unchanged.

The remaining terrestrial revocation proposals are part of an initiative that would see the early upgrade of over 2,500 hectares from state forest into protected area. The proposed revocation area of the entirety of Wickham Timber Reserve, an area of around 198 hectares, will enable the area to be upgraded to conservation park tenure, further supporting the protection of threatened or near threatened species. The upgraded area will be amalgamated with the existing Plunkett Conservation Park. The proposed revocation of part of Beerwah State Forest, comprising an area of around 129 hectares, will allow the area known locally as Ferny Forest to be upgraded to conservation park tenure, supporting the protection of threatened species, including greater glider, koala, glossy black cockatoo and the Christmas bells flower. The upgraded area of Beerwah State Forest will be dedicated as the new Mooloolah River Conservation Park.

The proposed revocation of part of Deer Reserve State Forest, an area of around 995 hectares, to conservation park tenure will support the protection of threatened species, including the koala. The upgraded area of Deer Reserve State Forest will be dedicated as the new Deer Reserve Conservation Park.


The proposed revocation of the entirety of West Cooroy State Forest, containing an area of about 1,150 hectares, to conservation park tenure will also protect habitat for several threatened species. The upgrade of state forest will be dedicated as the new West Cooroy Conservation Park. Transferring this area to conservation park will strengthen the protection of the critically endangered scrub turpentine, which is at significant risk due to the impact of the devastating fungal disease Myrtle rust.

The proposed revocation of parts of Luttons State Forest, containing an area of around 62 hectares, to conservation park will again support the protection of threatened species. The upgraded area of Luttons State Forest will be amalgamated with the existing Glass House Mountains Conservation Park. The proposed revocation of part of Mount Mee State Forest, comprising an area of around 17 hectares, to national park tenure will boost the protection of threatened species including the Bahrs scrub croton, central greater glider, koala and rib-fruited malletwood. These upgrade proposals form the first tranche of forest transfers, along with a number that I have not had time to mention, under the 20,000-hectare commitment.

I am proud to be part of a government that is also investing in the protection and expansion of not only our terrestrial land but also our Great Sandy Marine Park. There are a number of small revocations here that will allow about 26 hectares out of 600,000 hectares to be revoked from national park as part of updating our zoning plan and the boundaries there in order to remove a number of existing pieces of boating infrastructure. It will also assist in providing clearer boundaries to the existing marine park, a request from those who use the marine park. Hopefully, that will assist those who use the park now and in the future.

I am satisfied that sufficient environmental assessment has been undertaken and there is significant justification to support all of these proposed revocations. I commend the motion to the House.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Before I call the next speaker I will run through the list of members on a warning. The members for Thuringowa, Maryborough, Gladstone, Kawana, Buderim, Mudgeeraba and Bonney are all on a warning.

 **Mr O'CONNOR** (Bonney—LNP) (5.41 pm): Mr Deputy Speaker, I will be on my best behaviour for the rest of the day. The opposition will not be opposing this revocation motion. In my contribution I will talk about the specific blocks of land that it is adding or removing from our protected estate but, thankfully for members, I will not be too repetitious of what the minister has just outlined. I will then make some general comments about the broader topic of conservation that the motion covers, in particular the government's management of our protected estate and why this needs to be considered and raised when we are discussing adding new protected areas in Queensland.

Firstly, this is a pretty basic thing but unfortunately it does not always happen: I want to thank the minister for allowing me to have a briefing on this motion. The member for Burnett tagged along as well. I walked past him and said, 'This relates to your electorate, Benno. You should come along too.' We appreciated that briefing and I thank the minister very much.

I will start with the changes to the Great Sandy Marine Park. It includes 11 revocations of small parcels of land to remove infrastructure such as boat ramps from the protected estate. Those pieces of marine infrastructure are mostly owned and maintained by the council and the Department of Transport and Main Roads. This motion is to basically speed up the approval process for management activities. It will mean that whoever is responsible for the asset will have an easier and quicker process for works permits and management plans for small maintenance activities such as dredging or other general upgrades.

The largest portions of land in the motion before us relate to state forests. I am sure that the shadow minister who covers forestry, the member for Gympie, will make an excellent contribution. He has been talking up his contribution, which he has told me will be very good. It will be about the government's failure to sustainably manage the industry and the impact that has on our timber supply, which is very important in the housing crisis we are dealing with.

The largest parcels of land are in the Beerwah State Forest or, as the locals call it, Ferny Forest. The member for Glass House, who knows a thing or two about the environment portfolio, will talk about that and Deer Reserve north of Somerset Dam, which connects other protected estates.

There are three very small revocations related to Kamerunga near Cairns for the Western Arterial Road duplication. As the minister said, that is an important piece of infrastructure. There are four blocks of land that for some years have been underwater in the Daintree River. Those are apparently historical titles that were part of a failed logging township from the late 1800s. I guess their removal is just

administrative. Another minor administrative revocation is in Tallebudgera, relating to the small driveway for three local properties in the great electorate of Burleigh. That change was figured out with the council over the past couple of years.

Queensland's environment is worth protecting. The practical side of action on climate change requires us to protect more of our state's biodiversity. We are the most biodiverse state in the nation and one of the most biodiverse jurisdictions in the world. From our rainforests through to our wetlands and beaches, we have an obligation to do everything we can to ensure they are conserved for future generations. The main way we can do that is through protected areas and conservation.

Eight years ago the government made a promise to protect 17 per cent of Queensland, but on this Labor is all talk. In those eight years the proportion of Queensland that is protected has increased by barely half of one per cent. When they made that commitment the protected area estate was 7.8 per cent, which was the lowest of any jurisdiction. We are now at 8.38 per cent, which is still the lowest of any jurisdiction. In last year's budget the government put forward funding to increase the public protected estate, but that funding is back-ended and once again their commitment is left wanting. Over half of it will not be spent until after the next election.

There seems to be a continued refusal to take the opportunity of increasing the private protected area estate. I note in this motion that some of the land being revoked from the Daintree National Park will become Aboriginal freehold land and a nature refuge, which I welcome. However, of the funding committed in last year's budget to expand the protected estate, which I just mentioned, none will go towards growing or better managing private protected areas such as nature refuges.

If we want to genuinely grow the protected estate, the fastest way is to focus on our private protected areas. We need to better explain to landholders how this system works. Joining the conservation estate is an opportunity for landholders and it protects our environment. It is a win-win. When a landholder reaches a conservation agreement with the government to have a nature refuge on their property, it does not lock it up and prevent them from doing other things. They can still have cattle grazing. Ecotourism is allowed and carbon farming, of course. It is not a case of locking up land and leaving it. The land does not become sterile for the landholder and they still have the freedom to do other activities.

The risk to so much of our agricultural land in this state is large companies buying it up for the carbon it contains and just leaving it. That benefits no-one. It takes away vital food production areas as well. We can have both. We can incentivise landholders to protect the areas on their properties that are worth protecting through private protected area agreements and still keep that land productive. It is all about choice. We need more Queensland landholders to choose to take part in our private protected area system. However, without proper management there is little incentive for them to do this.

Whether it be the public or private protected area estate, we also regularly see that the government is failing in management. There is no benefit for our environment when land is locked up and left to be overrun by weeds and other invasive species. Invasive species have a devastating impact on our conservation estate. We cannot even quantify the number of feral pigs across our state, but it is certainly in the millions. The closest estimates I have seen are three million to four million plus. Where feral pigs and other invasive animals such as foxes and feral cats are left to run rampant, there is widespread destruction in our national parks and surrounding areas are also impacted. There are very few landholders across the state who have not told me that a national park is the worst neighbour they can have. Bushfires are another major concern, and we will continue to keep a close eye on the resources provided to manage that risk. It should not be the case that landholders do not want to be a neighbour to a national park; however, we know that under Labor that is the situation we are in.

We welcome Queensland's conservation estate growing and the contribution this motion is making to that, but any increase must come with an increase in the standard of management and the resources provided for environmental management. Our Parks and Wildlife Service should be viewed as an essential service delivery arm of government. They are experts in environmental management. We need more rangers and they need to be better resourced.



Ms KING (Pumicestone—ALP) (5.49 pm): What a pleasure it always is to follow the member for Bonney in these debates. It is always enjoyable to see him finally off the leash, allowed to talk about his single LNP approved topic. He is over there laughing because he knows perfectly well he is not allowed to talk about climate change, about emissions, about land clearing in any genuine way or about koalas as that would upset the property sector. It is great to see him off the leash and able to lay in on our protected area estate. The work that we on the Health and Environment Committee do looking at

changes to Queensland's protected area estate and management of Queensland's protected area estate is an important part of our work. It is something that I take seriously and I value the opportunity to be part of.

Our protected area estate in Queensland, contrary to the comments of the member for Bonney, is vast and it is ever growing, particularly in the term of the Palaszczuk Labor government since I was elected. Our protected area estate requires ongoing management and adjustments for balancing competing priorities locally. That is what the motion before the House today goes to. These proposed revocations and inclusions are not contentious. In fact, they increase and enhance the size and the integrity of our protected areas and contribute to the overall growth of Queensland's precious protected area estate.

These matters in the motion today include enormous increases to the size of our protected area estate. One set of parcels is over 2½ thousand hectares. Notably, in the Great Sandy Marine Park we are seeing an increase of 40,000 hectares—an increase of over seven per cent in the size of the Great Sandy Marine Park. The member for Bonney's ongoing commentary about insufficient increases in the size of our protected area estate in Queensland I would submit are completely groundless. We have a number of separate proposals before us today. One package of six proposals seeks to revoke land from the forestry estate to designate as protected areas for the first time. That includes: the entirety of Wickham Timber Reserve, which the member for Logan tells me he has gone bush walking in a few times and is very beautiful; the West Cooroy State Forest and portions of Beerwah State Forest; Deer Reserve State Forest; Lutten State Forest; and Mount Mee State Forest. Some of those are up to the north of the Moreton Bay region that I am proud to represent.

Together these parcels comprise over 2½ thousand hectares. They make a significant addition to our protected area estate. They also have an important history as part of our commitment to ending hardwood forest harvesting in South-East Queensland. Again, we saw the member for Bonney with one foot either side of that barbed wire fence that is being the LNP shadow environment spokesperson. On the one hand he is calling for an increase in the size of the protected area estate and on the other hand he is grumbling about our moves to continue to protect our precious wild spaces and reduce hardwood forestry gathering into the future. They do have an important history as part of the South-East Queensland agreements that ended hardwood forestry gathering and they provide crucial habitat for native species, including koalas. They are high-priority areas for inclusion in the protected area estate.

The adjustments to the Daintree National Park are also very positive. They come under the Eastern Kuku Yalanji handback agreement and involve, on the one hand, as the member noted, the revocation of a small area that has been inundated by natural changes to the course of the Daintree River, but, more importantly, over eight hectares that will be granted as Aboriginal freehold tenure to the Jabalbina Yalanji Aboriginal Corporation to support a native plant revegetation nursery. The change is accompanied by a conservation agreement that will ensure the protection of the parcel's conservation values into the future.


Moving to the proposal to revoke 0.8 of a hectare of the Kamerunga Conservation Park, I note that that supports the \$300 million Cairns Western Arterial Road upgrade project, something which the member for Cairns is hugely supportive of, along with the member for Barron River. It is an upgrade that is vital for the Cairns region and it has been carefully planned to minimise further adverse impacts on the Kamerunga Conservation Park which, I note, is also already degraded by soil loss, vegetation loss and invasive weeds caused by flood events. This \$300 million project will build a new two-lane bridge over the Barron River and duplicate the Cairns Western Arterial Road from Redlynch Connection Road in the south to the Captain Cook Highway in the north. It is an essential piece of infrastructure for the northern part of our state.

Alternative options for the upgrade were discussed between TMR and DES, but they all required that the road corridor be widened, and so there was no practicable way to achieve the essential road infrastructure upgrade without this revocation. I do note, though, that Transport and Main Roads has agreed to provide the Department of Environment and Science with suitable compensation for the minor loss of protected areas.

I know that the member for Hervey Bay will address the significant changes to the Great Sandy Marine Park at length, but they are very significant. They increase its size by 400 square kilometres, while removing about 26 hectares from the boundaries of the marine park. Overall, we will see an increase to the area of the marine park in the order of seven per cent. These changes will facilitate better management and improve visitor use. They make the marine park boundaries more logical, more

precise and avoid capturing public infrastructure. They exclude boating infrastructure, allowing ongoing maintenance to be done without seeking specific permits. They will also support the production of digital maps that can be used as the basis for fishing apps and digital navigation aids. I know that boaties in the member for Hervey Bay's electorate will be very sympathetic, as they would be in my electorate, to the need to upgrade boating infrastructure as smoothly and quickly as possible.

Finally, I note that there are minor adjustments proposed to the boundaries of the Tallebudgera Creek Conservation Park that will seek to ensure residents have continued access to their properties in the future. I want to take a moment to knowledge the dedication of our rangers, our Indigenous rangers and officers from Queensland Parks and Wildlife and the Department of Environment and Science who work hard every day to manage and protect our precious wild areas in Queensland. Thanks to them, we can be confident that our protected area estate is managed with careful stewardship to preserve its values for current and future generations. I am grateful to the minister, to the committee secretariat and to my fellow committee members for their commitment to the legislative work of managing our state's protected areas. I commend the motion to the House.

 **Mr BENNETT** (Burnett—LNP) (5.56 pm): I rise to support the proposal involving the Nature Conservation Act and certain revocations. The origins of some of these revocations were part of the Queensland government's completion of its first comprehensive review of the Great Sandy Marine Park zoning plan first declared in 2006. The review was informed by community and stakeholder feedback, advice from First Nations peoples, recommendations from an independent scientific reference group, socio-economic information and best practice marine park management principles.

As an avid recreational fishermen in my part of the world, the process was problematic and left many not sure of potential outcomes. Many only heard about the review after we distributed information in December 2019. The one proposal that I am thankful has not been recommended is the one to convert Baffle Creek into a green zone. Overall, most of us are very happy with the final proposed plan. I must acknowledge some of the smaller but important outcomes.

First, it will allow sand replenishment at Flat Rock boat ramp at Baffle Creek. Under the final zoning, 87.2 per cent of the Great Sandy Marine Park will remain available for recreational fishing and crabbing. The final plan includes the removal of commercial, large gillnets from the yellow zones in Baffle Creek, Elliott River, the Burrum River system and Great Sandy Strait. Commercial blood worming in the Great Sandy Strait will be prohibited. Commercial crabbing within the conservation park yellow zones at Baffle Creek, Elliott River, the Burrum River system and the Great Sandy Strait will be allowed to continue as a nonconforming use. Commercial tunnel netting within the conservation park yellow zones in Great Sandy Strait will be allowed to continue as a nonconforming use. The use of two handed lines and rods with a total of no more than two hooks in those conservation yellow zones will continue.

The boundaries of some of the green zones that have been modified to reduce the impact on commercial and recreational fisher have been articulated previously. It is important that we understand that the maintenance and possible replacement of boat ramps into the future can be better facilitated if they are not tied up in a marine zone seeking those lengthy and somewhat complicated approvals. This is a very welcome development. A comprehensive mitigation package, as we know, will be developed to address some of the commercial fishing and seafood processing issues. It is a big issue, particularly in Bundaberg. I know that the member for Hervey Bay is here and that he will have his own issues to deal with. Again, there is a comprehensive package on the table and we have to work with our industry as we transition.


A regional economic enhancement package will include the development of additional infrastructure within the marine park—boat ramps and artificial reefs—to support fishing and tourism opportunities. That is a really important part of this. I take this opportunity to again highlight the serious issue of the much overdue replacement of the Walkers Point boat ramp—you never let a chance go by. This is identified as the No. 1 marine infrastructure project needing replacement in Queensland, and it was identified in the government's own consultant's report. It is time that Walkers Point has a new boat ramp.

Based on the findings of the review, the Queensland government has approved a range of zoning and management changes that will be included in the final zoning plan. These changes are detailed in a decision regulatory impact statement. The website also has a range of other resources, including a summary of key changes, zoning maps and other information to assist people's understanding of the effects of the zoning changes in the marine park. It is complex, and those who want to take the time should familiarise themselves with these changes. The legislative process to formalise these changes

to the zoning plan are in progress and the new zoning plan is expected to take effect in early 2024. It will revoke parts of the Great Sandy Marine Park containing an area of about 26 hectares, including areas surrounding 12 existing public boating facilities.

In speaking to the revocation of public boating infrastructure, I will target those areas in the electorate of Burnett. The Kolan River boat ramp will be targeted within 30 metres of the north bank adjacent to the Miara caravan park—those people up there will welcome that. Burkitt Street, Bargara will also be excluded and Esplanade at Innes Park. The boat ramp pontoon in the Elliot River will also be part of this.

In closing—I want to give others a chance to talk to this, as we only have 50 minutes—it is important to acknowledge the three ministers. I do not do this very often, but the former chief of staff to the department, Nick, was always there to discuss this with me over the three or four years this has been going on. He does need to be acknowledged in this process. I believed that he had moved on to another portfolio, but Nick was talking about this only yesterday so I give a shout-out to him. This is a good revocation and a good piece of work. We look forward to making sure that boating infrastructure gets funding and the locations sorted out so we can continue to enjoy the Great Sandy Marine Park.

 **Mr TANTARI** (Hervey Bay—ALP) (6.02 pm): I rise to speak in support of the revocations proposed for part of the Great Sandy Marine Park being debated by the House today. The revocation of several small areas of the Great Sandy Marine Park result in minor but necessary modifications to the marine park boundary that will have no impact on the integrity of the marine park itself.

The key objective of the Great Sandy Marine Park Zoning Plan Review was to ensure the outer boundary of the marine park is defined in such a way that the accuracy and understanding of the extent of the marine park is improved. The revised outer boundary will result in a net increase in the area of the marine park by approximately 400 square kilometres, or about 40,000 hectares. This seven per cent increase in the area reflects a more accurate inclusion of the extent of the tidal land and tidal waters not shown on the statutory plan and revised mapping of the offshore extent of Queensland state waters.

The extent of the marine park is currently described in the Marine Parks (Declaration) Regulation 2006 by reference to a statutory plan and a list of tidal areas that are excluded from the marine park. Currently, the statutory plan can be difficult to interpret at the scale required to support marine park management, both for park managers and from a local user's perspective, with these inaccuracies being confusing and leading to misinterpretation of the Great Sandy Marine Park Zone. We know that this can cause issues around compliance when enjoying the use of the Great Sandy Marine Park.

The list of exclusions includes areas under or within 30 metres of 30 public boating infrastructure facilities; however, not all such infrastructure is listed. Some of the revocations are required to exclude public boating infrastructure from the marine park. Currently, not all public boat ramps, associated jetties and pontoons are excluded from the marine park, and the action to revoke the area within 30 metres of all boat ramps in the marine park is sensible. It reduces red tape, as authorities such as local councils will be able to carry out maintenance and improvements to these boat ramps within the excluded footprint without having to obtain a marine park permit. That is vitally important for local councils, who make sure these boat ramps are compliant and safe for users. That is a great outcome of this revocation.

The other proposed revocations are in the Kolan and Mary rivers and Snapper Creek at Tin Can Bay, where the current marine park boundary is not logical and needs rectifying. In the Kolan River, the revocation there will sensibly remove significant public railway infrastructure and a weir from the marine park. In the Mary River, the boundary will be moved a short distance downstream to link with a definable feature to ensure that users of the marine park can more easily determine where the boundary is. In Snapper Creek, areas near a sewage treatment plant are currently in the marine park. Here the marine park boundary will be moved a short distance downstream to ensure some separation between the marine park and sewage treatment infrastructure. As I said earlier, the exclusion of these areas from the marine park will allow relevant authorities to carry out maintenance to all boat ramps in the marine park without the need to obtain a marine park permit. That will just make it a lot easier for them to do their work and keep those ramps safe.

In the overall scheme of things, at 26 hectares the revocations represent a very small part of the Great Sandy Marine Park and the total area of state marine parks more broadly. In addition, each revocation proposal is well founded and, in combination with the recent reviews of the marine park's zoning plan, demonstrate that this government takes sensible measures to improve the protection and management of the state's marine parks. Overall, the revised description of the marine park's boundary

will be more accurate and logical and will support the production of digital maps for use in products such as fishing apps and navigational software to improve the understanding of the extent of the marine park. We know that is important for our boaties and our fishos, who need to have detailed maps so they can enjoy the park and make sure they are keeping within the compliance requirements of the park.

It was interesting to hear the member for Bonney talk about this government's record in environmental management. I must say that that is a little bit rich coming from that side of politics. The Newman government were the worst environmental vandals in Queensland's history. I must admit that I am a little bit surprised by his comment. He should go back and read the history of environmental management from his side of politics, not ours. We are making sure that we are looking after our environment. As you have seen from the plan, what we are doing for sustainable fishing in the Great Sandy Marine Park is a good thing for sustainable practices as we moved forward.

I absolutely support the member for Pumicestone's comments regarding what the member for Bonney said. She was also knowledgeable in that area. We know that the former LNP government was not that great a manager of our environment. With that, I would like to also acknowledge the rangers and Indigenous rangers who have done great work in ensuring our marine parks are kept safe and in a usable condition for users of the Great Sandy Marine Park. I would also like to give a shout-out to the minister and the government for increasing the number of rangers and Indigenous rangers to ensure our areas continue to be protected and valued.

I would also like to mention some of the comments made by the member for Burnett, who has acknowledged the good work that has been done on these revocations. I absolutely agree with his words and I also acknowledge the work done to improve the use of the Great Sandy Marine Park. On that basis, I commend the motion to the House. I encourage other members of the House to support these proposals.



Mr PERRETT (Gympie—LNP) (6.08 pm): I rise to speak on this revocation and dedication of protected areas motion, which deals with a range of areas regarding the Great Sandy Marine Park, several state forests and timber reserves. Specifically, it will revoke by regulation the setting apart and declaration of the entirety of one timber reserve, one state forest and parts of four state forests. It will dedicate them as conservation parks, as part of a conservation park, and as an addition to one existing national park. The areas listed in this motion include: Wickham Timber Reserve, Beerwah State Forest, Deer Reserve State Forest, West Cooroy State Forest, Luttons State Forest and Mount Mee State Forest.

Wickham National Park has a history of native timber harvesting. Deer Reserve was originally set aside as a timber reserve in 1912 with hoop pine plantations. West Cooroy State Forest had plantation coops to meet Queensland's contracted hardwood sawlog supply commitments. Beerwah State Forest was originally established in 1874 as a reserve for state forest purposes, including selective native timber harvesting. According to the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries website—

The area was being considered for selective timber harvesting in 2022 to meet long-term supply contracts.

All of these forests and reserves are located within the South East Queensland Regional Plan area. When the Premier announced the Native Timber Action Plan in November 2019—four years ago—she announced that hardwood timber forestry harvesting would end in the South-East Queensland plan south of Noosa in 2024. This was originally envisioned by Labor's 1999 South East Queensland Forests Agreement. The Premier said—

... a commitment has been made to progressively hand back up to 20,000 hectares of land to become conservation estate before 2024.

Despite many of these areas having been part of our timber history, Minister Furner said it would be the department of environment which would identify the 20,000 hectares of state owned land for transition. Minister Furner also said—

This will take into account the State's native timber supply commitments under existing sales permits and other potential constraints on tenure.

When the Premier promised to hand back those parcels of land, she also promised to undertake 'a comprehensive two-year study to identify sustainable future options for timber supply, including on private land'. That study was due in November 2021. We have heard nothing. It is now two years overdue.


The government needs to ensure balance when it locks up these reserves. The reserves must be well-managed. It is self-defeating if they are left to become fire hazards and riddled with invasive pests and weeds. We also need to find alternative sources of timber to cater for the loss of supply from these areas. As Queensland continues to grow, we need increased supplies of timber for construction

and to address the housing crisis. You cannot address the housing crisis without ensuring long-term and affordable supplies of timber. Our current timber supply shortages are a direct result of 24 years of policy failures by successive Labor governments.

These regulations represent the government's reduction of native timber forestry in these areas. This year Dr Tyron Venn of the University of Queensland found that reducing native title forestry would have 'negative impacts' to 'conserve biodiversity and reduce carbon emissions due to increased consumption of timber imports and carbon polluting substitutes'. DAF contributed to Dr Venn's research, yet Minister Furner had no answer during estimates about whether he asked the federal government to ensure imported timber was sourced from countries with sustainable forestry practices. It is clear that he did not. It makes sense to produce our own. Timber is a renewable resource.

Locking up these forests is being done in the name of conservation. The Premier says the high cost of structural timber is impacting the housing crisis, yet we learned during estimates that Queensland has no plan to increase supplies of structural timber. When asked whether Queensland needs to grow its current forest footprint to reduce the reliance on imported timber, DAF's director-general said, 'I do not know how to answer the question.'

A November 2022 cost-benefit analysis by Indufor and Natural Capital Economics showed that South-East Queensland state forests used for sustainable harvesting produce higher combined environmental, social and economic benefits than if they were managed as national parks. While I do not oppose this motion, this must be about balancing the needs of conservation, the proper management and maintenance of state owned land, resource sustainability and ensuring long-term supplies of timber for our future needs.

 **Ms PUGH** (Mount Ommaney—ALP) (6.13 pm): I rise to speak to the revocation motion. In so doing, I reflect on the fact that I am married to a man from Beerwah, hence my interest in this particular topic. He is very passionate about where he comes from. Some of the language he uses around that passion is unparliamentary, but he is always excited whenever Beerwah is mentioned in parliament, especially when the Minister for Education mentions money for a Beerwah school. I digress.


I want to briefly cover some of the proposals around the particular areas in and around the beautiful Sunshine Coast hinterland region, particularly the Wickham Timber Reserve, the Beerwah State Forest, the Deer Reserve State Forest, the West Cooroy State Forest, the Luttons State Forest and the Mount Mee State Forest. There are six proposals that seek to revoke land from the forestry estate to allow the areas to be dedicated as protected areas. These are: the whole of Wickham Timber Reserve, the West Cooroy State Forest, parts of Beerwah State Forest, Deer Reserve State Forest, Luttons State Forest and Mount Mee State Forest. They total about 2,550 hectares. These actions are part of an initiative that our government has undertaken under successive environment ministers.

I would like to acknowledge the work of the former ministers in this space, Leeanne Enoch and Minister Scanlon, as well as the work of the current Minister for the Environment, Minister Linard. These actions are part of an initiative by the Palaszczuk government that is outlined in the Native Timber Action Plan which will guide the preservation of Queensland's timber industry. As I am sure all members of the House are aware because we are all members of the friends of the timber industry that visits parliament and puts up our beautiful Christmas tree each year, the timber industry in Queensland employs around 6,000 people and contributes about \$675 million into the Queensland economy every single year.

The plan affirms a commitment made in the South East Queensland Forests Agreement back in 1999 to end hardwood forest harvesting in the South East Queensland Regional Plan by the end of 2024. Wouldn't you know it, 2024 is almost here. The plan proposed the future direction of the timber industry to transition outside of the South-East Queensland area. Back in 2019 Leeanne Enoch, who was then the minister for the environment, announced that we would transfer up to 20,000 hectares of state forest areas in South-East Queensland, where logging will cease, to protected area in 2024. In December last year, the environment minister at the time, Meaghan Scanlon, announced that part of the aforementioned six forestry estates will be part of that 20,000 hectares of forest transfers as these areas contain crucial habitat for native species, including koalas. Now that harvesting has ceased over these areas and impediments to dedication have been resolved, these areas can be added into the protected area estate. I think we can all agree just how important that is.

On a personal note, I have an area that has been put aside as koala habitat in my area but we had not seen koalas there for about 20 years. Just the other week, the very first koala was spotted and photographed down in Pooh Corner. It is really important to keep these pieces of habitat. Even though we provided that habitat, for a very long time we had no proof those little furry fellows were in there—I

will not say 'koala bears' because we all know what happens when you do that—but they are back at Pooh Corner. Whether they have returned or what have you, it is exciting to have them there. It is great to have such a large tranche of habitat that has been committed. I note the passion of my good friend the member for Caloundra in advocating for this as well. He is very excited about it and I know his community is very excited about it because he represents my in-laws still. With those few words I commend this motion to the House.

 **Mr POWELL** (Glass House—LNP) (6.18 pm): In the very short time remaining on this debate, I want to address three parcels. Two of those reside in the electorate of Glass House and one is adjacent to it, which the member for Mount Ommaney just mentioned. There is a proposed revocation of part of Luttons State Forest to be added to the existing Glass House Mountains Conservation Park. There is a part of the Mount Mee State Forest being revoked and added to the D'Aguilar National Park. As was mentioned, part of the Beerwah State Forest is being added to a newly created Mooloolah River Conservation Park.

At the outset, as has been said by others on this side, we certainly support these changes. However, I do want to raise two matters briefly. The first was well canvassed by the member for Gympie. By converting state forest into conservation park or national park, we are cruelling ourselves ultimately. On my understanding of what was colloquially known as Ferny Forest, what was going to be harvested selectively were a number of telegraph poles. The question now is: where are they coming from and are we going to be importing them from nations that have poorer standards of environmental practice than we have? As mentioned by the member of Gympie, there were commitments given, particularly when the South East Queensland Forests Agreement was first put into place and subsequently when the sale of Forestry Plantations Queensland was made, that there would be hardwood plantations around the state of Queensland that could be used for these purposes. They have not materialised.

The second thing I would say is that, whilst I understand that people are very passionate about protecting the environment—do not get me wrong; I am not suggesting that Ferny Forest should not be protected—some of the tactics are not accurate. For example, my daughter, who is a Venturer, came home and said, 'Dad, you've got to stop Ferny Forest because we won't be able to ride our mountain bikes through Ferny Forest if the logging goes ahead,' suggesting that it was somehow going to be clear-felled. It was simply the case that whilst the selective logging was going to be occurring it was unsafe for those bikes to go through. As I explained to her, if it actually became a national park then her mountain biking certainly would be curtailed. I do note that it is only going to become a conservation park. My comment to the minister is that I hope practices like mountain biking will continue to be able to be undertaken in that part of the former Beerwah State Forest, the now new Mooloolah River Conservation Park, because getting out into the environment is the way that future generations will understand it is important and will want to protect it.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.


Motion agreed to.

CRIMINAL CODE (SERIOUS VILIFICATION AND HATE CRIMES) AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Resumed from p. 2957, on motion of Ms Fentiman—

That the bill be now read a second time.

 **Mr POWER** (Logan—ALP) (6.21 pm): When I originally saw this bill on the *Notice Paper* I was not going to speak to it, not because I do not have serious concerns about vilification, hate crimes and the presence of discrimination in our society but because I thought others would speak to it perhaps better than I. One of the things that motivated me to speak was when I began to get constituents speaking to me with a petition from the Australian Christian Lobby. When I read it I thought, 'I have to look back at the bill,' because it was not my memory of it. The petition says, 'Say no to the attack on freedom of free speech and expression.' Indeed, it was very similar to the speech that the member for Mirani gave. If I took at face value some of the accusations—that there were no definitions, that people found guilty of saying things that were not wanted by society, as the member for Mirani said, would face criminal offences—then I would be concerned about the bill. Instead, when I looked at it, that was not the case.

I want to speak first about how much we value the harmonious society that we have. On the weekend I went to the Zim festival, the biggest festival of Zimbabwean Australians. I highlight the passion of the people of different nationalities who were helping out at the Park Ridge Soccer Club, where the Zim festival was taking place with fantastic food and football. One of them was a Salvadoran volunteer photographer who was so excited to be a part of a Zimbabwean festival and part of a club, knowing that it was binding together people of so many different nationalities.

When I spoke at the festival I said that Zim festival was the most Aussie of events. I could see people's quizzical looks. I said that there is nothing more Aussie than gathering together with your family and sharing food, sport, language, culture, dance and music. That is one of the things that makes us Australian, along with bringing up your children in a peaceful atmosphere and in a peaceful way. That was a fantastic event. We were also reminded how fragile it is. Last night Suzi Smeed from Budapest spoke—unfortunately I missed it because I was in the chamber—about the experience of her family during the Holocaust. These are things that we need to work at. I think these laws are a positive thing.

After looking at the petition, I rang people who had filled it in. I looked at what was being said. It was as simple as—I say this to the member for Mirani—looking through the explanatory notes. There will be a new provision—we should take that very seriously—which prohibits the display of hate symbols, including those related to Nazi and ISIS ideology. The display of Nazi flags and Nazi symbols, especially to someone affected by the Holocaust, is a violent act. It is an act attempting to hurt our society and to propagate extraordinarily destructive ideas. I support the offence provisions.


I recognise that we do need to be careful. I note that the minister has to undertake a variety of consultation and that the regulation is subject to disallowance by this House. I think the test for the minister should be whether the very display of a symbol, like the swastika, should be regarded as an act of violence against others in our society. That is a serious thing. The member for Mirani did not focus much on that. He seemed to think that was a Trojan horse.

Let's have a look at the committee's original recommendations. Recommendation 7 was that the government investigate the viability or removing the requirement for the written consent of a Crown Law officer before commencing a prosecution for serious racial, religious, sexuality and gender identity vilification, section 131A. There will be a change in procedure—nothing for the member for Mirani, or indeed the Australian Christian Lobby, to get that dramatic about.

The next recommendation is that the Queensland government relocate section 131A—the offence of serious racial, religious, sexuality or gender identity vilification—from the AD Act into the Criminal Code. What was a criminal offence in the Anti-Discrimination Act is now being moved to the Criminal Code to make it clear. The member for Macalister spoke very clearly about that movement. It is a criminal offence under the Anti-Discrimination Act and will remain so. What is really important is that this is not just knowingly or recklessly, through a public act, inciting hatred towards, serious contempt for or severe ridicule of a person or group of persons on the ground of race, religion, sexuality or gender identity; it must also be done in a way that includes threatening physical harm towards, or towards any property of, the person or group of persons, or inciting others to threaten physical harm towards, or towards any property of, the person or group of persons. These are serious criminal offences that are also attached to the incitement of hatred. The two things must be together in section 131A. I think no-one in this House should object to that. If either the Australian Christian Lobby or the member for Mirani understood that, they would support it. Of course, they are not actually showing what that is about.

Another recommendation is that there be introduced a statutory aggravation. This would mean that, for certain serious criminal offences—there is a significant list of them—once a person is found guilty of that offence—for instance, where someone has assaulted another person—if it is then proven that it was motivated by serious racial, religious, sexuality or gender identity vilification then it would be considered an aggravated offence in terms of determining the sentence to be given. This relates to people who it has been proven have, firstly, committed a criminal offence and, secondly, been motivated by this type of divisive hatred in the commission of the offence, which therefore becomes an aggravating factor and should be sentenced accordingly.

No-one could object to the four things we are addressing in this bill. It is bad enough when a person assaults someone. If they are motivated for reasons of serious racial or religious discrimination we should address that, because the nature of that assault is so much more profound. I am disappointed with those who seek to confuse this issue and pretend that it is something it is not. Those who are doing that are undermining our attempts to sensibly and clearly eliminate vilification that happens in our society. I note that these are sensible, clear and simple steps that every Queenslanders would support.

 **Mr DAMETTO** (Hinchinbrook—KAP) (6.30 pm): I rise to give my contribution to the Criminal Code (Serious Vilification and Hate Crimes) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. This bill was introduced by the then attorney-general, Shannon Fentiman. The bill went to the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee, which considered the bill. The bill went through the committee process resulting in a large number of recommendations, one of which was that the bill be passed. There was a statement of reservation by the member for Noosa.

The objectives of the bill are: to remove the requirement for Crown Law officer consent to prosecute under section 131A of the Anti-Discrimination Act; to introduce a statutory aggravation regarding hate and serious vilification; to relocate the sentence for serious vilification to the Criminal Code; and to prohibit the display of hate symbols. I will expand on those objectives.

The bill seeks to make changes to the Anti-Discrimination Act 1991, the Criminal Code Act 1899, the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000 and the Summary Offences Act 2005. The changes to those acts broadly include moving the offence of serious vilification based on race, religion, sexuality and gender identity from the AD Act to the Criminal Code and increasing the penalty from six months imprisonment to three years imprisonment. It seeks to introduce a statutory aggravation under the Criminal Code regarding hate and serious vilification that may apply to particular criminal offences. Those amendments are not overly controversial. They seem to be ratcheting things up to the extent they may be working towards gagging free speech. That is some of the feedback we have received in our office.

Mr Power: I thought you said that is not true.

Mr Knuth interjected.

Mr DAMETTO: I take that interjection from the member for Logan. The fact is we have had people contact our office. He is saying that is not the case, but we have. He had the call a moment ago and I would like to continue with my speech.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Lui): Member for Hill, I ask you to withdraw your unparliamentary language.

Mr KNUTH: I withdraw.

Mr DAMETTO: Vilification requires an element of threatening or inciting physical harm. Perhaps in the future we will see a tightening of the provisions, especially if the state keeps going down the current path. I will not say too much further about that at this stage.

I do want to talk about the most contentious part of the bill and that is the proposal to prohibit the display of hate symbols. This is a suggestion that may cause some concern and I will explain why as we go through the bill. In speaking to the part of the bill that prohibits the display of hate symbols, from the outset I want to make it very clear that I have no time or tolerance for outright acts of hatred or displays of offensive or hate symbols that are used to intentionally cause harm or distress. However, I do question the principle behind the blanket prohibition of hate symbols and I will explain why.

As I was saying when I was rudely interrupted earlier in my contribution by the member for Logan, a number of constituents have contacted our office. Yes, some of them were from the Christian Lobby; some of them were just normal everyday people who live in Hinchinbrook who were made aware of this legislation and wanted to have their voice heard. That is my job: to bring their voice into the House. I did not have anyone contact our office in support of the legislation. I am not saying they do not support the legislation in Hinchinbrook; I am just saying it is not one of the top things they are concerned about right now. If honourable members talk to the people of Hinchinbrook they will find they are more worried about what is going on with the youth crime, the agriculture industry or the commercial fishing industry. If they were watching this tonight they would probably be wondering why we are debating this right now and not one of those other subjects.

As I was reading through the bill I was interested to see some of the submissions received during the committee process and from those who contributed during the public hearings. A lot of the views expressed were what could be called left wing, and that is okay. I think those people—and everyone—should have the opportunity to use free speech and put their views across. That did not surprise me. However, the committee seemed to rely more on those opinions. One of the submissions that stood out and caught my eye was from the Queensland Council for Civil Liberties. When speaking about freedom of speech, the council said—

... the test of whether you support freedom of speech is not whether you support it for those with whom you agree but whether you support it for those with whom you most disagree.

The point of that is, even though people may say something, if we want to protect free speech then we have to listen to both sides and allow both sides to freely speak. The reality is we may be hurt by hearing or seeing some of these things that are displayed. However, we need to bring them into the public realm and have an adult discussion about them without getting to the point that we are so hurt by them we ask the government of the day to make them illegal. I think that can have a negative effect on society moving forward. Like I said, I think the right to free speech should be protected. If things are going to offend people, I think they should be allowed to offend people. Like I said, that is the way to bring out true debate.

Government members interjected.

Mr DAMETTO: I feel someone on the other side of the House may be offended by what I just said. The council went on to say—

Given the lack of consensus about values in our society the underlying idea must be that everyone of us would want equal freedom with everyone else to be able to express our values and ideas as they relate to government and the management of our society. When we suppress a person's ideas, we are violating that basic conception that everybody has an equal right to participate in the decision-making process on matters which may affect them. What must be added to this is the notorious fact that Governments consistently overestimate threats to the country and to their policies. Furthermore, when regulating speech which interferes with its activities government is in essence in a conflict of interest situation.

The Queensland Council for Civil Liberties went on to say—

Further when making laws about speech the state must use criteria that are generalisable. In this regard we have long argued that the fact that someone might be offended is not an appropriate ground for restricting speech as too many things offend people.


That is a fact these days.

Ms Boyd interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Lui): Member for Pine Rivers, order.

Mr DAMETTO: Thank you for your protection, Madam Deputy Speaker. This brings me back to my earlier point about the things that people can find overwhelmingly offensive these days. The council made a careful distinction here that laws that include harassment, stalking and other forms of criminal conduct do not offend free speech principles. This includes some of the amendments in the earlier part of the bill. They are slightly less controversial, because the speech of those circumstances do not make up the primary offence; it is just an additional offence to be added. Deliberately using words and symbols to harass and threaten someone is very different to what is being proposed and what the council says. It is a law which on its face applies to the publication of political content to a wider audience. This will be a blanket prohibition of content, and is something that does not sit right with me. My next point is that just because you ban something, it does not mean it does not exist anymore. We have seen things be pushed underground in this way. We have seen this with illegal drugs. There are still plenty of illegal drugs out there in the public spaces right now and being done in people's houses—

(Time expired)

 **Mrs MULLEN** (Jordan—ALP) (6.41 pm): The former secretary-general of the United Nations, Ban Ki-moon, once said something that has always stuck with me, and I think it has a particular resonance following the contribution of the previous speaker. Ban Ki-moon said that defeating racism, tribalism, intolerance and all forms of discrimination will liberate us all, victim and perpetrator alike. I am very proud to rise and speak in support of this important bill, the Criminal Code (Serious Vilification and Hate Crimes) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023. I would like to thank the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee for their significant work, not only on this bill, but on the inquiry into serious vilification and hate crimes in Queensland. That report did not make for light reading, and that is the point, because it certainly shone a light on some of the more hateful behaviour that so many in our community face each and every day.

Many Queenslanders are subject to vilification, and some to serious vilification and hate crimes. These Queenslanders include people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, people with disabilities, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and members of the LGBTIQ+ community. Vilification and hate crimes occur online and in a wide range of physical settings throughout our state such as on public transport, on the street, in the workplace, shops or schools. The descriptions that were provided by so many on the nature and extent of hate crimes and vilification faced by members of the community captured only part of the story. The ongoing impacts are much deeper. A sample provided to the committee expressed the following—

The victims of vilification and hate crimes are left being intimidated, vulnerable, in fear of their own safety and the safety of their families and they often feel like an outsider—feeling as though they do not belong in the Queensland community. The psychological impacts of these experiences leave victims with ongoing trauma.

Or this—

The impact of racial vilification or hate crimes is a far-reaching consequence. It instils a sense of nonbelonging for victims and it creates a feeling of being an outsider. As a result, people of all ages, not just children, “always try to fit in”, and this need to assimilate has left many ... with the inability to embrace and accept their own culture and heritage. Others report a tendency to work harder than anyone else to get somewhere, and to be always cautious of their actions; since even a small misstep labels the whole community as the offender. Other respondents mentioned feeling “alien or outsider” and cited the impacts of shame, humiliation ...

These are heartbreaking words.

When I was at school, I had to do a project on multiculturalism. The focus of my project was on my own family's experience of living in multicultural Australia. My mother came to Australia in 1959. As a 10-year-old girl who was displaced from her homeland, she faced terrible racism—constantly being told to go home, having her hair pulled, being punched and being described in terrible terms. My father came to Australia in 1969 as an older student. His experience was slightly better, but he still faced significant discrimination and he was often ridiculed for the way he expressed himself, English not being his first language. In 1989, my experience as someone of Greek heritage was, at times, difficult. There is a particular word that was used to describe those of Greek or Italian descent and I was often called that when I was growing up. It was hurtful, it made me feel like I did not belong and it also made me turn against my own culture. I recall it was around 1989 that a TV show called *Acropolis Now* was able to take those hateful words, the stereotypes and the cultural cringe and completely own it, subvert it and make it kind of cool. I cannot tell you what a relief that was for this Greek girl.

For some, there is not relief; there is continued anger, pain, humiliation, insecurity and anxiety and it will not be easy to counter. It will require a multifaceted and concerted approach to combat the type of thinking and behaviour—much of it learnt—which manifests in serious vilification and hate crimes. In 1989, I did not have to worry about social media. The online platforms that are now available to those who seek to behave in this abhorrent way, mostly in the anonymity of the internet and without accountability, makes it even harder to counter. I am pleased, however, that as difficult as it is, we recognise that it needs to be addressed. As the committee has recommended, it is important that our government work with the Commonwealth government and other states and territories on ways to address this, including legal enforcement, where there is evidence of online vilification.

The bill before us has some important provisions that will make an important difference in addressing serious vilification and hate crimes. The bill amends the Anti-Discrimination Act 1991 to increase the existing penalty for the offence under 131A, the vilification of serious racial, religious, sexuality or gender identity vilification. The bill also inserts a new section 52B into the Criminal Code that introduces circumstances of aggravation for prescribed offences where the offender was wholly or partly motivated to commit the offence by hatred or serious contempt for a person or group of persons based on actual or presumed race, religion, sexuality, sex characteristics or gender identity. Importantly, the following offences are prescribed in the Criminal Code: going armed as to cause fear; threatening violence; disturbing religious worship; common assault; assault occasioning bodily harm; threats; unlawful stalking; intimidation, harassment, or abuse; and wilful damage.


The other important area which has been canvassed broadly has been the new section 52D—‘Display, distribution or publication of prohibited symbols’—into the Criminal Code. This provision will prohibit the public display, public distribution or publication of a prohibited symbol ‘in a way that might reasonably be expected to cause a member of the public to feel menaced, harassed or offended’ ‘unless the person has a reasonable excuse’. Prohibited symbols will be a symbol or image that is proscribed by regulation. Critically, under section 52C(3), the minister responsible for administering the Criminal Code may, after consultation with the Crime and Corruption Commission, Queensland Police Service and the Queensland Human Rights Commission, recommend the Governor in Council make a regulation proscribing a prohibited symbol. This can only be done if the minister is satisfied that the symbol or image is widely known by the public, or by members of a relevant group, ‘as being solely or substantially representative of an ideology of extreme prejudice against a relevant group’.

Whilst the bill does not prohibit a specific symbol, it is rightly anticipated that symbols relating to Nazi ideology will ultimately be proscribed. This recognises that swastika symbols have a profound meaning in some religions including Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism. The new laws will allow these symbols to be used in these respectful circumstances, but it will prevent them from being used as a symbol of hate. This speaks also to the reasonable excuse provision in the bill, which recognises that a person will not commit the offence if they engaged in conduct for a genuine, artistic, religious, educational, historical, legal, law enforcement or public interest purpose, or to oppose the ideology

represented by that prohibited symbol. The offence captures a broad range of circumstances, including the public display of tattoos, and, importantly, the public distribution or publication of prohibited symbols online.

Depictions of hate symbols have no place in Queensland. As a community we cannot tolerate the deliberate use of these symbols to cause fear or to promote hatred towards our communities. Make no mistake, we are seeing the rise of right-wing extremist groups, sadly sometimes fuelled by legitimate political parties whose very existence thrives on fear, division and deliberate misinformation. I am pleased that our government is taking this important step in the banning of hate symbols, and I would like to congratulate the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice on progressing this law. For those who have expressed concerns about the impact of the prohibition of hate symbols on freedom of expression, I quote the words of the parliamentary report that points out that 'human rights are not absolute and that freedom of expression must be balanced against the rights of equality and non-discrimination, freedom of religion and cultural rights'. I believe that the proposed new section 52D strikes the right balance between these competing rights.

I am fortunate to represent a diverse electorate where I am honoured to be invited to many multicultural and religious events. In the past month alone I have attended a Filipino festival, a Sri Lankan cultural program and an Indian festival, all celebrating the beautiful and rich cultures of these communities. At these events I always say that the diversity of Queensland is its greatest strength, and I truly believe that. Our government is committed to a Queensland that is harmonious, fair and inclusive and where individuals or groups are not vilified based on their race, religion, language, ethnicity, nationality, sexual orientation or gender. The laws proposed today make that commitment even more possible. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr O'CONNOR** (Bonney—LNP) (6.50 pm): I am very proud to represent one of this parliament's most multicultural electorates. Of the 56,000 people who live in Bonney, around four in 10 were born outside of Australia and that is 41—

Mr Crandon: Only 56,000?

Mr O'CONNOR: I take the interjection from the member for Coomera. He likes to talk about how large his electorate is. That is people, not constituents, member for Coomera. The member for Coomera has 52,000 constituents, is it?

Mr Crandon interjected.

An opposition member: Relevance.

Mr O'CONNOR: Yes, relevance. Anyway, back to my speech. Some 41.9 per cent of the people I represent come from another country, but they all chose to call our part of the Gold Coast home and it is our responsibility as parliamentarians to ensure we make the home that they chose the most welcoming and the safest place possible. One way we can do that as community leaders is by condemning vilification in the strongest possible way, and that is what these laws aim to do. Serious vilification and hate crimes, whether they happen here or overseas, must be called out and firmly responded to. As other members have mentioned, after witnessing one of the most horrific acts of terror that the world has seen perpetrated by Hamas in Israel I know many people have been deeply impacted by the images we have been seeing in the news and on Twitter and other places from some of those acts perpetrated on civilians. We have unfortunately been reminded of the hate that is much closer to home as well. Over the last couple of days the anti-Semitism on display in other parts of our country has been disgraceful. I thought Australia was much better than that. It is not even just the comments about Jewish people. There is no further explanation or justification for what Hamas has done.

Last night, alongside many other members from all parts of this House, I was very proud to stand with Queensland's Jewish community at this difficult time. We heard a really powerful and heartbreaking contribution from Hungarian Australian Holocaust survivor Suzi Smeed. I also take the chance to commend the member for Chatsworth, who has hosted these functions, I think, for the last decade. He does an outstanding job to organise that.

On the same topic, last month I took the opportunity to visit the newly opened Queensland Holocaust Museum and Education Centre just up the road in Charlotte Street. It is an incredible place. It is a powerful monument against intolerance, against anti-Semitism, against hatred, racism and indifference. It is somewhere that promotes multiculturalism, acceptance and harmony. The virtual reality experience—the goggle set-up that you can put on—is particularly moving. That shows one aspect of the Holocaust from Latvia. There are some really important artefacts from Queensland

survivors. There are quite a few videos of them telling their stories. There is a replica train, but most importantly there is a final message in the stairwell as you leave. It says, 'Never again.' I encourage all members and all Queenslanders to visit that place.

Turning to the bill before us, the Criminal Code (Serious Vilification and Hate Crimes) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023, any step we take towards reducing vilification and hate in our state is a crucial step towards promoting a more inclusive and safe society. This legislation comes from the inquiry into serious vilification and hate crimes and it enacts four of the 17 recommendations of that inquiry: that the government investigate the viability of removing the requirement for the written consent of a Crown Law officer before commencing prosecution for vilification; that the government introduce a statutory aggravation regarding hate crimes and serious vilification in the Criminal Code; that the government relocate the offence of serious racial, religious, sexuality or gender identity vilification from the Anti-Discrimination Act to the Criminal Code; and that the government establish a criminal offence prohibiting the display of hate symbols, with some considered exceptions.

The bill also proposes to increase the maximum penalty for the offence of serious racial, religious, sexuality or gender identity vilification in the ADA. Vilification and hate crimes are serious offences and this increase of the maximum penalty reflects the community's denunciation of such conduct when it occurs. Throughout the committee process stakeholders raised concerns about a number of sections, including protected attributes, some of the prohibited symbols, the prescribed offences for circumstances of aggravation and the definition of what constitutes a public act. However, despite these concerns, the bill's intent was broadly supported.

Vilification must be called out. We support education around the impacts of hateful behaviour on various groups and the community more broadly. Although thankfully we have not seen many instances of the types of vilification behaviours that this covers, the cases we have seen have shown just how important it is to prevent these and to deter people from even thinking about committing these acts. The bill seeks to strike a balance between the protection of our communities and of minority communities in particular from vilification and hate crimes against the freedom of expression that we hold so highly in this country.

This balance is more heavily weighted towards the protection aspect. Given the long-lasting impacts of vilification and hate crimes on communities, I believe this is justified. Even today the effects of vilification and hate and their most evil iteration during the Second World War are still felt across communities, with some people continuing to perpetrate discrimination and vilification and to spread fear. Take, for example, the flying of a Nazi flag near a synagogue a couple of years ago. It is just disgraceful behaviour and my community does not condone this type of hatred based on someone's heritage or their personal attributes and we will never find it acceptable in a modern Queensland.

There have been a couple of examples in my part of the Gold Coast that show why this is so important. I have a proud Islamic community, one of the largest in our state. Around four years ago I stood in solidarity with them at the Gold Coast Masjid in Arundel after the horrific terrorist attack in Christchurch. Hundreds of people came to show their support for the basic right to be safe while you pray, to practise your religion without fear. Last year we saw some disgraceful individual drop a pig's head and heart at the entry of the mosque on a Friday, the holiest day in the week for our Islamic community, and it was just a day before the National Mosque Open Day. At the time the head of the Gold Coast Islamic Society, Hussin Goss, who himself is proudly from the first Muslim family on the Gold Coast and some of our oldest residents of Labrador, described this incident as a targeted hate crime.


I also want to take this opportunity to give a massive shout-out to some of the multicultural organisations that support my diverse community. Legislation like this will not fix this problem alone. We have to promote and celebrate the multiculturalism we have in our state. Our diversity is our strength. The largest organisation is the Multicultural Families Organisation. It is led by Cornelia 'The Queen' Babbage OAM. It is a not-for-profit which works to support culturally and linguistically diverse families across the Gold Coast. It has been doing this for a couple of decades. From settlement services and DV support to its Global Village Festival, it makes an outstanding contribution. Even its homework club is in our local schools. The other one is TMC, Thriving Multicultural Communities, led by the amazing Anna and Joyce. It is a fantastic mostly volunteer-led organisation supporting migrants in our area. It works tirelessly to promote the benefits of multiculturalism, differences of opinion and the contributions migrants have made to our city and it does a really good job delivering the Skilling Queenslanders for Work program for which it has been awarded. There is also the great work done by the Gold Coast Islamic Society and the meals it provides to international students. One of its executive members, Hussain Baba, works tirelessly through the Multicultural Social Network.

I am so proud of the community I represent and the incredible number of different faiths that harmoniously exist beside each other in our Arundel community precincts. To all these fantastic organisations and their volunteers, thank you for working towards a better society where discrimination, vilification and hate have no place.

Debate, on motion of Mr O'Connor, adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT

Construction Industry

 **Ms SIMPSON** (Maroochydore—LNP) (7.00 pm): Have you thought about building a house lately or maybe renovating your bathroom? Do you know about the changes to the rules? Probably not. The biggest changes to the construction code in its history are being implemented very rapidly and at a time of uncertainty and cost escalation, with many Queensland consumers potentially impacted by up to \$30,000 on a new house. Additional costs are even incurred with bathrooms that are being renovated. At a time of record homelessness and great pain in the building industry, the state government's answer is to introduce more cost, red tape, confusion and chaos.


The industry has clearly said it would work on making this happen in a way that ensured clarity and an adequate transition time, but the state government and Minister de Brenni did not listen and now we have seen flip-flops and more confusion. Where is the detailed information for industry? I talked about how there are home owners who may not understand what this impact will be. There are people in the industry who are saying they have not seen the detailed technical advice provided to the range of many small businesses that make our construction industry work. This has been absolutely chaotic.

I asked a question on notice of the minister about what funding had been provided to help in the rollout of education for those who have to deliver it. Quite frankly, his answer was pathetic. It did not identify a monetary figure and it certainly has not satisfied the many people I have talked to in the industry. One said—

Our view is that insufficient education and awareness was provided to industry consumers and the supply chain. In particular, it is insufficient for small business builders and trade contractors, being the majority of the industry, to just have information on the national Australian Building Codes Board website that they are supposed to know exists without receiving proactive information about the changes and then the QBCC only putting information up on the website days before commencement.

They go into a lot more detail about what this means. There are many people in the industry, not only builders. I mention waterproofers as an example of a group for whom there is quite a substantial change. There will be others. People want to do the right thing, but the way this government has gone about doing this is absolutely wrong. They have spent more on their own PR, publicity and egos than they have on working with industry and consumers. We need to see answers to homelessness that are not about a government creating confusion, more costs and disruption through their flip-flopping. There needs to be certainty and work done with industry so people can have their homes built and renovated and a roof put over people's heads.

Sunnybank State High School

 **Mr RUSSO** (Toohey—ALP) (7.03 pm): On the last day of the third term of the school year I had the pleasure of representing the Minister for Education, Grace Grace, at the official opening of Sunnybank State High School's new \$6 million Innovation and Design Centre. The initial idea for this amazing facility can be attributed to the determination and foresight of Acacia Platt, the head of the school's technology department. Her idea was for a state-of-the-art facility which would respond to current and future demands of industrial design and manual arts training. Acacia's dream was brought to life by visionary minds at Chapcon building services who have done a great job onsite. What I saw at Sunnybank State High School was a centre of learning that will propel students into a world of boundless possibilities. This facility is not just a building with classrooms and machinery; it has become an opportunity that will foster the aspirations of students.

This new building has embraced and realised recent changes that have been steadily evolving in the design, building and construction industries. Students will still be able to engage with traditional manual arts benches and tools; however, they will also be able to immerse themselves in modern, collaborative environments, fuelled by cutting-edge technology. The new building space includes two design theory classrooms which include 3D printers; a smart manufacturing workshop with a CNC lathe, router and milling machine; and a building and construction workshop. In purpose-built collaboration zones, students will be able to come together and share their ideas. Laptops will transform their ideas


into opportunities and become a creation as projects are brought to life before the students' eyes. Students will use their digital sketches to create new designs and with laser-cut precision and 3D printing those designs will bridge the divide from imagination and become a reality. The opportunity for the students to have hands-on engagement in these leading-edge applications will prepare them for when they step forth into real-world industries. This experience will be critical in the context of skill shortages.

I commend Jessica Walker, the Principal at Sunnybank State High School, for enthusiastically embracing the new Innovation and Design Centre and I endorse her words when she said—

The Sunnybank High Innovation and Design Centre isn't just a space; it's a bridge to our future. It moulds our students, not just into effective designers and builders, but into architects of their own destinies. It prepares them to stride confidently into a world of possibilities, where they'll sculpt innovative and creative careers in a rapidly evolving world.

I acknowledge the efforts of all the teachers, teacher aides, school support staff and the school P&C and their support of this wonderful outcome at the school.


Volunteer Marine Rescue, Jacobs Well; Get Ready Queensland Week

 **Mr CRANDON** (Coomera—LNP) (7.06 pm): VMR Jacobs Well's Big Splash event was on 16 September—and what a great event it was celebrating the commissioning of VMR's new rescue vessel, Jacobs Well Rescue I, and 45 years of rescue service to the local community. At VMR Jacobs Well there are 95 volunteers currently working as boat skippers, crew, radio operators and in administration. In the last 12 months they have assisted over 1,000 people and spent almost 6,500 hours doing that, together with training and patrols. They used over 39,000 litres of fuel over that time, costing something like \$80,000. Together with ongoing maintenance, as one can imagine, it is a costly exercise.

That brings me to Get Ready Queensland Week which commenced yesterday and goes through until Sunday, 15 October. Queensland experiences more natural disasters than any other state or territory. Queensland has had more than 100 natural disasters since 2011. We all need to be ready to face bushfires and storms in particular. I am asking all of my constituents, 'Do you have a plan to stay safe?' There are a few simple things that can be done to be ready for extreme weather: clean up, for a start, by checking around the house and yard; subscribe to the Bureau of Meteorology and the Gold Coast City Council for extreme weather notifications; connect with neighbours—if you do not know them, get to know them; get your insurance cover up to date and make sure your home and contents insurance is adequate with the cost of building skyrocketing in recent years; be sure to Google the Get Ready Queensland website for more information; grab a few extra items from the supermarket to make an emergency kit such as long-life food, drinking water and other items that you may need; and be sure you have batteries, a torch and a radio in case the power and mobile services go out.

From our local northern Gold Coast perspective, the risks are real. We have the Darlington Range to our west which is a heavily treed area and has been prone to bushfires in past years, particularly severe bushfires in around 2000 and 2010. My concern is the low number of hazard reduction burns that are being done on the Gold Coast in general and the fire danger rating signs that have been removed. Go online and sign the petition. Those fire danger rating signs were a visual reminder to everybody to be very careful. From a volunteer perspective we are well prepared. We have four rural fire brigades—Rocky Point, Ormeau, Wasp Creek and Cedar Creek Wolffdene. We also have state emergency services at Pimpama and, of course, Volunteer Marine Rescue down at the Well that works with emergency services. They have first responder paramedics as volunteers at Volunteer Marine Rescue Jacobs Well.

Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference; Redlands Electorate, Events

 **Ms RICHARDS** (Redlands—ALP) (7.09 pm): I start this contribution by thanking the parliament for allowing me to represent Queensland and Australia at the 66th Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference, along with the member for Toowoomba North. It was the most incredible experience I have had probably in my life, I have to say.

An opposition member: He's good but he's not that good.

Ms RICHARDS: He was a very good security guard. It was fantastic that I was able to contribute to the conference debate on food security and sustainability and to talk about how Queensland and Australia are positioned. I was really honoured to have that opportunity. I thank everybody for that. My biggest takeaway is that we are so blessed to live in Queensland and Australia when you look at countries such as Ghana and their capital cities. You will not find a luckier country than ours anywhere else on the planet. Thank you, again.


I want to talk about health because it has been a big topic of the day. Out in the Redlands we have never seen more investment into than health by the Palaszczuk government. I want to talk about the satellite hospital. I was at the Victoria Point Sharks footy club for the trivia night and two people came up to me. One said, 'Hey, good job on the satellite hospital. It's awesome. I was down there with my daughter. She had done her ankle in a dance lesson.' Another chap has been having renal dialysis there. At my shopping centre booth people have been raving about our satellite hospital. It is an amazing contribution to delivering health care closer to home for Redlanders. The Minister for Health came and we turned the first sod for the construction of our new intensive care unit and new wards are set to open in November this year. When we talk about health, honestly, you cannot beat the track record of the Palaszczuk government. I will stick our track record of the past five years against the previous 10 years any day of the week.

Mr Head: Is it 10 years?

Ms RICHARDS: Absolutely and the member for Callide should look at who was representing government in the previous 10 years. In terms of supporting our seniors, Minister Crawford came with me to the Donald Simpson Centre. A sum of \$50,000 is continuing the funding that we provided when the Redland City Council withdrew their annual operational funding support to that very important group. The seniors centre has over 1,700 members. They do an amazing job. We have given them another \$50,000. Today I have written to the minister asking to look at how we can make certain recurrent funding and to call on the Redland City Council to reinstate their support for what is a really important centre in our community. I am proud to be part of the Palaszczuk government that knows that it is really important to support our seniors.

Talking about the Big Build, our ferry terminal has been completed. Operationally, they have shifted it over. The Lamb Island guys had a big drink party with the construction crew. It was a great night. We are doing lots out in the Redlands.

Toowoomba Carnival of Flowers

 **Mr WATTS** (Toowoomba North—LNP) (7.12 pm): I congratulate everybody in Toowoomba for the energy and effort that went into the 74th Toowoomba Carnival of Flowers. When it comes to September in Queensland, Toowoomba is really the only place to visit. Just under 200,000 people visited Queen's Park Botanic Gardens. We were 162 people short of 200,000. That was a great attendance for just one garden. Over 105,000 people visited Laurel Bank Park. The number of blooms planted by the parks and gardens groups in Toowoomba is amazing. It looks spectacular. I am ashamed to say that I have not put my garden in the competition.

Mrs Gerber: You know why.

Mr WATTS: Yes, I do know why. I should acknowledge Leisa and Serge Rossignol who were crowned the grand champions of the 2023 *Chronicle* Garden Competition. It was well deserved for their very spectacular garden display. Thousands of people open up their gardens so visitors to Toowoomba can look at private gardens as well as the public displays. We really appreciate people getting behind the whole event because it makes it very special. It means that people stay much longer than they would if only the public parks were open. People who are interested in gardening can have a really good look around.

These days a lot more than gardening goes on at the Carnival of Flowers. This year was a celebration of flowers, culture and community. There is the Food and Wine Festival and a big music concert is attended by several thousand people who come along over a couple of nights. I think they get 10,000 or 12,000 people attending over a couple of nights. That is always good fun. There is plenty of wine and food that is produced locally and from around the downs. It is always good to see people from Stanthorpe coming to present.

I encourage everybody to come next year for the 75th year when we celebrate the carnival's diamond jubilee. The floral parade is great fun. If you have primary school kids it is well worth the drive up the hill to let them participate in the floral parade. Everybody did a great job. This year at the Ekka I bumped into the Mary MacKillop Catholic College marching band. They were also in the parade and did a great job.

Our Turf Club does a fantastic job putting on the Weetwood race day. They run a couple of class 1 races with the Toowoomba Cup and the Pat O'Shea Plate. That is always real good fun as well.

All I can say is well done to all the small businesses and the volunteers as well as the council for putting on this event. It is a fantastic opportunity to come and see Toowoomba at its best.

Greenslopes Electorate, Events



Mr KELLY (Greenslopes—ALP) (7.15 pm): There are celebrations aplenty in Greenslopes. The Brisbane Metropolitan Touch Association is celebrating 50 years. The great club started when that fantastic sport was just in its infancy. Congratulations to President Corey Nolan and the team on a great year. Any night of the week you can go down to BMTA and there will be thousands people participating. I have been there myself as a player, I spent a lot more time there as a parent and now I am a patron as well. It is a great club.

On Saturday night I joined the Harty Street kindy community to celebrate 70 years. The kindy is a real Coorparoo institution. They originally started in St Stephens Anglican Church hall and then moved down the road to Harty Street. Well done to Anita Lockland and all the team on a great celebration. It is a fantastic part of our community.

Another great educational institution—many of their students would have started at Harty Street—is Villanova College, which is celebrating 75 years. It is a great Augustinian institution that offers a great Catholic education. The school originally started at Hamilton but thankfully moved to Coorparoo. Villanova is also the home of the Queensland Catholic Music Festival, which is a Queensland institution as far as I am concerned. It was started by a number of volunteers. A number of former members of this chamber went to Villanova College, Kerry Shine and Paul Lucas to name two.

It would be very remiss of me not to mention the 90th anniversary of the Easts Tigers, also known as the Brisbane Tigers. What better way to celebrate than winning their first top-grade premiership since 1991. Well done to CEO Brian Torpy, President Keith Phillips, Coach Matt Church and Captain Ryley Jacks on a fantastic year. The club started out in Coorparoo as the Coorparoo Bengals in 1917. The team became the Eastern Suburbs District Rugby League Club in 1933. There are too many legends from the club to mention them all, but I will mention a couple: Johnny Lang, Rod Morris, Cody Walker and Cameron Munster. Towering above them all is the great Des Morris who has 50 years of service to the club as a player, a coach and a CEO. It was really exciting. I have forgotten how many grand finals I have sat through sadly not getting the gong. It was fanatic to finally sit there and see a great win by the East Tigers.

It was also nice to see the Tigers women's team going well this year. They did not quite get all the way. It was also really nice to see the NRLW bringing three games to Langlands Park, also known as Totally Workwear Stadium. That has happened because of the Palaszczuk Labor government's investment in the stadium upgrade.

Finally, on a sad note, I note the passing of a couple of constituents and friends: Barbara Baker, Rita Hartzis and Dave Carey. They were all fantastic servants of our community. They were all wonderful people. I am very sad that they have departed. They are a great loss to our community. Vale, Barbara Baker, Rita Hartzis and Dave Carey.

Member for Logan



Mr ANDREW (Mirani—PHON) (7.18 pm): I would like to refer to the contribution of the member for Logan on the serious vilification and hate crimes bill, in which he mentioned me many times. The member for Logan should stick by his words instead of being a hypocrite, as he is, because he came to my office, accosted me and told me that the South Sea islanders are not disadvantaged.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Lui): Excuse me, member. You used unparliamentary language. I ask you to withdraw.

Mr ANDREW: I withdraw.

Mr BROWN: Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. There is a bill before parliament and the member has had an opportunity to contribute to debate on that bill. I think he is—

Mr ANDREW: I am talking about the conduct.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Mirani, order!


Mr BROWN: I believe that he is straying back into the bill itself.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member, I will allow you to continue with your speech without making any reference to the bill.

Mr ANDREW: I was accosted at my office and told that Australian South Sea islanders are not disadvantaged people. It has happened in this place not once but many times. Clearly, you should practise what you preach. I do not hold any grudges. I do not go anywhere and make accusations about

anything, but today I did not like what I heard, how the situation unfolded and how my name was mentioned. Because we are South Sea islanders, we forgive and forget these things. It is not fair to make comments like that and then come into the House and say things about how other people should conduct themselves. I have already talked to one of the ministers about that situation and other situations like it involving the same member. I would like to put that on the record. If you have a whole heap of things to say about certain issues and conduct, you need to actually live that life.


Worth, Ms L; University of the Third Age; Greater Whitsunday Showcase

 **Mrs GILBERT** (Mackay—ALP) (7.21 pm): Last week the Mackay community took the opportunity to thank Lorraine Worth for her 32 years of service as manager of CASA. CASA is a dedicated community not-for-profit organisation supporting the homeless and people at risk of becoming homeless. Lorraine has led a team of very compassionate, inclusive and non-judgemental people. Lorraine is a problem solver and she runs her service, as the saying goes, on the smell of an oily rag. She was awarded a grant to buy a big chest freezer. She fills it with leftover bread from Brumby's Bakery so that no-one presenting at CASA goes hungry. She collects tents, sleeping bags and blankets to help those sleeping rough have some protection and comfort. Lorraine is the muscle behind the organisation of Mackay's Homeless Expo, bringing together services and items of comfort for those in need. Some people leave the expo having had a medical check-up, a haircut and a tasty meal and with a bag of groceries. Lorraine is held in high esteem across the Mackay community for her dedication to our community, and we all wish her very many years of doing whatever makes her happy.

Mackay has a great range of organisations that support our seniors. They assist them to get out and about, socialise, be active and be part of our community. We do not want to see anybody feeling trapped in their home and crippled with loneliness. The University of the Third Age recently celebrated its 50-year birthday. U3A offers over 30 activities, from cards and bocce bowls to photography. I congratulate Paul Sunner, Susan Vince and Muriel Kilcullen for organising a splendid celebration at the Mackay Surf Club.

I thank everyone from both sides of the chamber who attended the Greater Whitsunday Showcase last night. Kylie Porter led a delegation of board members to lobby ministers and shadow ministers, making sure that everyone knows the abundance of diverse industry across the Mackay, Isaac and Whitsunday regional council areas. We have agriculture, aquaculture, beef cattle, tourism, mining, manufacturing, biofuels for aviation and marine and biofutures for turning sugar into replica proteins for milk and egg white. We are also to be the centre of Queensland's energy SuperGrid with the Pioneer-Burdekin pumped hydro scheme. Our famous Resources Centre of Excellence signed an MOU with Queensland Hydro last week to be its agent to train workers for the Borumba and the Pioneer-Burdekin projects. The Mackay region is booming!

Palaszczuk Labor Government, Child Protection

 **Mrs GERBER** (Currumbin—LNP) (7.24 pm): My community is demanding action. Madam Deputy Speaker Lui, from the outset I want to assure you that, as a former federal prosecutor who worked with Taskforce Argos prosecuting child exploitation offences, I will not be offending the sub judice rule with my contribution and that nothing I say refers to a matter currently before the courts.

My community is demanding that the state government take immediate action to fix the blue card system and implement national child safety measures. In 2017 the Palaszczuk government received a damning report from the QFCC into the blue card system. Eighty-one recommendations were made to fix Queensland's blue card system. After six long years, the Palaszczuk Labor government is yet to fully implement 53 of those 81 recommendations.

The blue card system has failed our community and it is failing our kids. It is not good enough that this government has had six years to fully implement those recommendations to protect our children. How much more time does it need? Now we find that the implementation is delayed even further, out to 2024-25.


Currumbin parents want to know that their children will be safe when they drop them off at a childcare centre. Childcare centres and childcare educators want to know that the system will do its job and catch predators. We see this government act swiftly on matters of its own interests. Why can it not act swiftly to fix the blue card system and protect our children?

It is not just the blue card system my community is calling for immediate action on; it is also the implementation of the national child safety recommendations. A damning new progress report has revealed that the Palaszczuk government has failed to implement critical child safety recommendations.

Ninety-one remain outstanding, with no timeline. Some of these include introducing a reportable conduct scheme, where heads of institutions including childcare centres must notify an oversight body of a reportable allegation, conduct or conviction involving the institution's employees. These changes could have protected our children from predators. Parents and childcare workers trusted this state government to fix the failings of the blue card system. Instead, they have been fundamentally failed by this government.

My community is demanding immediate action. The government has had the reports for six long years and has failed to fully implement the recommendations. Members of the government have been sitting on their hands, because this government is more concerned with announcements than with protecting our children. They are able to act swiftly when it is about their own political interest, yet when we call on them to act swiftly to protect our children they are failing to act. My community is demanding this action now.

Red Cross Australia, Community Service Workers

 **Ms LAUGA** (Keppel—ALP) (7.27 pm): I rise to highlight the plight of six women specialist community service workers I met with last week along with our local Services Union organiser Wayne Inman. These women have worked tirelessly over almost 40 years to help support our community as loyal employees of Red Cross Australia, delivering the Intensive Family Support program to hundreds of Central Queensland families. IFS holistically supports parents and families doing it tough by improving parenting skills, providing assistance with budgeting, helping parents to develop coping skills, assisting with household management, encouraging children to attend school, improving family relationships and assisting parents to access health and welfare services.

The Red Cross specialist community support workers I met with did an excellent job over many years working right at the coalface with our community's most vulnerable children and families. They were hardworking, loyal and dedicated specialist community service workers meeting their KPIs and getting really excellent outcomes with their clients. I have no doubt that they saved lives, kept families together and have given children a brighter future as a result. I want to recognise them in this place for everything they have done for the parents and children in our community. Red Cross affirmed this in a letter on 27 September 2023 which said that Red Cross appreciates the team's commitment and work ethic throughout their employment. I table the letter.

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 27 September 2023, from the Chief People and Culture Officer, Australian Red Cross Society, Ms Jane Hollman, to the Secretary, The Services Union, Mr Neil Henderson, regarding employee payments [\[1631\]](#).

This has not gone unnoticed by the organisation, their clients and the community and is a testament to their character. Unfortunately, Red Cross Australia made the strategic decision to terminate their contract with the department a year early as a result of a strategic decision to focus on Red Cross Australia's core business, thereby making their staff in Rockhampton redundant. This has been enormously stressful for these women, who were then tasked with ensuring the closure of the Red Cross Rockhampton office whilst continuing to deliver frontline services for several months after they were notified. Red Cross did, however, offer the staff a bonus payment of five weeks salary as an incentive to remain working until the end of September to ensure the proper closure of the office and the program, which they accepted in good faith. They continued to work up to the closure at the end of last month.

Disappointingly, Red Cross reneged on their incentive bonus payment and have left these women in the lurch, stating that the incentive payment was communicated in error. Understandably, these workers feel coerced and undervalued by the decision of Red Cross to retract the retention payment. Red Cross has failed to honour their commitment to these hardworking, dedicated staff. The staff kept their end of the deal, so I would encourage Red Cross to keep theirs too.

The House adjourned at 7.30 pm.

ATTENDANCE

Andrew, Bailey, Bates, Bennett, Berkman, Bleijie, Bolton, Boothman, Boyd, Brown, Bush, Butcher, Camm, Crandon, Crawford, Crisafulli, Dametto, 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, Lui, MacMahon, Madden, Mander, Martin, McCallum, McDonald, McMahon, McMillan, Mellish, Mickelberg, Miles, Millar, Minnikin, Molhoek, Mullen, Nicholls, O'Connor, 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