



# RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

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## FIRST SESSION OF THE FIFTY-SEVENTH PARLIAMENT

### Thursday, 26 October 2023

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# THURSDAY, 26 OCTOBER 2023

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The Legislative Assembly met at 9.30 am.

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



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

## SPEAKER'S STATEMENTS

### Commonwealth Parliamentary Association Australia and Pacific Regional Conference



**Mr SPEAKER:** The 40th Commonwealth Parliamentary Association Australia and Pacific Regional Conference is being hosted by the Queensland branch this year. The conference will be held next week, from the evening of Tuesday, 31 October to Friday, 3 November. The topic of 'Representation for the future: young people and parliaments' will provide conference delegates and participants with great opportunities to hear about a range of topics that directly impact on youth involvement in democratic institutions. I look forward to hosting and presenting at the CPA conference being held here at Parliament House and note the involvement of the members for Bonney, Gaven, Lytton and Scenic Rim as delegates and presenters. Delegates will be using the Legislative Assembly chamber for the majority of the conference sessions. Consequently, honourable members may wish to remove any confidential materials from their desks in the chamber.

### School Group Tours



**Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I wish to advise members that we will be visited in the gallery this morning by students and teachers from Gillwinga Public School in New South Wales, Westside Christian College in the electorate of Bundamba, and Algester State School and the Murri School in the electorate of Algester.

## PETITIONS

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

### Unitywater, Meter Charges

**Mr Mickelberg,** from 96 petitioners, requesting the House to prevent the proposed sub-meter charge by Unitywater on unit owners [\[1762\]](#).

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

### Far North Queensland Hospitals, Obstetricians

2,083 petitioners, requesting the House to consider the proposal of private Obstetricians treating public patients in return for being able to birth their private patients in Far North Queensland public hospitals [\[1763\]](#).

Petitions received.

## TABLED PAPERS

TABLING OF DOCUMENTS (SO 32)

MINISTERIAL PAPER

The following ministerial paper was tabled by the Clerk—

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

[1764](#) Business Committee: Report No. 3, 57th Parliament—Annual Report 2022-2023

## MEMBER'S PAPER


The following member's paper was tabled by the Clerk—

Member for Redlands (Ms Richards)—

[1765](#) Overseas Travel Report: Report on overseas visit by the member for Redlands (Ms Kim Richards) and the member for Toowoomba North (Mr Trevor Watts) to Ghana to attend the 66th Commonwealth Parliamentary Association Conference, 30 September to 6 October 2023

## MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

### Bushfires


 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Olympic and Paralympic Games) (9.33 am): Much of Queensland continues to face extreme fire danger. Conditions are expected to remain hot, dry and windy, with bushfire warnings remaining in place. Significant fires continue to burn in Tara and Millmerran. I am advised the Tara fire is fast moving, uncontrolled and in difficult terrain and expected to burn towards Kogan. Crews have worked throughout the night to strengthen containment lines and will continue that work today.

Residents around Tara, Wieambilla, Kogan, Goranba and Weranga are warned it is not safe to return to those areas. The evacuation centre in Tara has been closed with occupants transferred to the Dalby and Chinchilla evacuation centres. Some 228 people are in the Dalby evacuation centre and 27 in Chinchilla. A range of assistance measures are available to those in evacuations centres where our department of communities staff are working.

Tara State College remains closed for today. In Tara, 16 homes have been lost with further damage assessments to be done when it is safe. Some 98 QFES staff have been deployed to fight these fires and 34 aircraft are available. Our emergency workers have asked to pass on their thanks to their community for the way they have responded to this emergency. Our firefighters have battled more than 100 large vegetation fires this week. They have fought them around the clock, and their work is not over yet.

There are fire bans in 56 local government areas. All of us pray for the rain from storms forecast in the south-east over the next day or so. Please continue to listen to the directions of our police and emergency services and take no risks. I urge families to stay safe.

### Palaszczuk Labor Government, Achievements

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Olympic and Paralympic Games) (9.35 am): I am passionate about delivering for Queenslanders each and every day. It is something we all work hard for. I always said a strong response to COVID would lead to a strong economy for Queensland, and here is the proof.

There are over a half a million more jobs in Queensland under our government. Exports are up from \$44 billion when we came to government to nearly \$125 billion. We are delivering \$89 billion for our Big Build: new hospitals; new schools; seven satellite hospitals; Cross River Rail; Gold Coast Light Rail stage 3; Coomera Connector stage 1; and upgrades to the Bruce Highway.

Our strong economy means we can deliver the largest cost-of-living package of relief in Australia. There are \$550 rebates for all households and over \$1,000 for pensioners, and cash back on energy efficient appliances for households and small businesses. Then there is free kindy from January 2024, ensuring our littlest Queenslanders get the strongest start. Just yesterday, the Australian Bureau of Statistics confirmed Queensland had the largest fall in electricity costs on the east coast because of our rebates on power bills. Let me say that again: the largest fall in power prices on the east coast.

We are also backing manufacturing to come back to Queensland, with Boeing building aircraft in Toowoomba, Downer making trains in Maryborough and Vecco making batteries in Townsville from Queensland's rich critical minerals. We are also building today for the demands of tomorrow. We are building the largest weir in the nation since the Second World War, the Rookwood Weir, to support our farmers. The good news is that it will be open before the end of the year. This is part of our \$5 billion investment in water infrastructure.

Of course, we secured the 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games that will attract even more jobs and investment. We have begun our Energy and Jobs Plan to transform to achieve our renewable targets. We are investing in critical projects like Borumba pumped hydro, providing the long-duration storage to unlock renewable generation capacity and provide energy system reliability. Looking to the future, we are supporting critical minerals, quantum and advanced technologies.


At the same time, we are delivering better health care for Queenslanders with a \$25.8 billion investment in our health system, including \$1.6 billion for mental health services and our nation-leading satellite hospitals program.

We are also taking action to address the unprecedented housing pressure being faced by Queenslanders, underpinned by a record \$5 billion in social and affordable housing, delivering 1,865 homes in the last three years. The \$2 billion Housing Investment Fund will help us partner with industry to deliver the homes that Queenslanders need.

We want Queenslanders to feel safe. We are tackling the complex causes of criminal offending and holding law-breakers to account. We are focusing on our strong legislation, boosting support for victims—making sure that they are front and centre—and investing in prevention and early intervention to reduce youth offending. We continue to take strong action on domestic and family violence to make Queensland a safer place for women.

Queensland is a big state. There is always more to do. As I always say, Queensland's best days are ahead of us.

### Exports

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Olympic and Paralympic Games) (9.38 am): Queensland is the best place to live, work and build a business. A fantastic example of that is Frosty Boy, based here in the south-east. Frosty Boy is Queensland's 2023 Exporter of the Year. The soft serve and beverage manufacturer makes up to two million products a day and exports to 65 countries. Frosty Boy's Managing Director, Dirk, says their success story—


**Mr Bleijie** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Kawana, I am not going to serve this up soft: you are warned under the standing orders.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** We will shout him one. Frosty Boy's managing director Dirk says that its success story was not written overnight, but it is certainly etched in the history books. Dirk says that since opening in 2001 its customer base has grown tenfold. In the past two years Frosty Boy's revenue in India grew by 200 per cent and 95 per cent in the Middle East.


At last week's Export Awards we heard how Queensland businesses are continuing to set new benchmarks for success, and it is not just traditional products that are wanted around the world anymore. Our 2023 agribusiness exporter of the year was AgTrade. TAFE Queensland took out the education and training award, so well done to TAFE. The Gold Coast's Homebodii is the e-commerce exporter of the year, outselling brands like Calvin Klein, and Toowoomba's Mort & Co. is our regional exporter of the year. They have all contributed to Queensland's amazing results. In the year to June, our exports were valued at \$144.3 billion, an increase of \$14.1 billion. That is 10.9 per cent on the year before and a new record high. All this success was achieved by almost 7,000 companies in Queensland in the export sector, with about 40 per cent of these based in regional Queensland. Queensland's customers are in 200 markets across the world led by Japan, India, South Korea, China and Vietnam. I want to thank the Treasurer and minister for trade and Trade and Investment Queensland for putting on the Export Awards and engaging in markets. We have fabulous trade commissioners all around the world and this means jobs for Queenslanders.

### China, Trade Mission

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Olympic and Paralympic Games) (9.40 am): Queensland's economic success means that the eyes of the world are on us, and with that comes opportunity. That is why I will be going to Shanghai and Beijing on a trade mission for five days next month to grasp the massive opportunities China offers Queensland's business and industry. China remains Queensland's second largest export market, generating \$23.3 billion in export revenue in the 12 months to August. That is up a massive 38 per cent. Some 60 delegates will be travelling with me as part of one of the largest trade delegations in Queensland's history. Vice-chancellors will join me from James Cook University, UQ, QUT, the University of the Sunshine Coast, Bond University, Griffith University, CQ University and the University of Southern Queensland as well as representatives from TAFE Queensland International. There will also be tourism bodies including Tourism Tropical North Queensland, Tourism Whitsundays and Experience Gold Coast joining the delegation.

Whilst in Shanghai I will have the opportunity to reinforce Queensland's sister-state agreement by meeting with key government officials. I will also be attending the opening of the China International Import Expo—the world's largest—joined by participants from around Queensland including Akunamgold Honey, ATP Science, the Beenleigh Artisan Distillery, Bundaberg Brewed Drinks, King River ag, Mareeba Orchards, Nu beverages, Nutworks, Sirromet Winery, Stillwater Sweets and more. The event will be a showcase for Queensland's food and agricultural sectors and introduce more of Queensland's finest to Chinese consumers, with China now the world's second largest economy and second largest importing country. This trade mission comes at the right time, with the Prime Minister and federal trade minister also set to be in China around the same time. Reports already say that this visit will be an injection of confidence, an opportunity to showcase what Queensland can offer. Queensland and China remain close and longstanding trade partners. I look forward to continuing that partnership as we look to the future.

### Works for Queensland


 **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): Queensland is a big state and the Palaszczuk government is investing in infrastructure in every community. Along with the Premier and much of the government, I was pleased to be in Gladstone last week for the LGAQ annual conference. We spoke with mayors, councillors and CEOs from all across Queensland and we heard directly from them how beneficial our government's flagship Works for Queensland program is for their communities. Regional councils want to keep delivering local projects that further enhance livability and create good local Queensland jobs in their communities, and so do we.

That is why the Premier announced a 50 per cent increase for the next round of Works for Queensland. Queensland's 65 regional councils will gain a massive funding boost from our signature local stimulus program. There will now be \$300 million available to support regional projects like water and sewerage infrastructure, housing and economic development. This is the biggest ever round of Works for Queensland—an extra \$100 million, up from \$200 million to \$300 million. It will support critical local projects like water infrastructure, waste and energy projects, airport and road upgrades, community revitalisation projects and regional economic development, all of which enhance the livability of our Queensland communities, boost local economies and attract tourism to the regions.

The Works for Queensland program has already seen regional councils deliver more essential infrastructure. This includes road improvements in Bundaberg; water, sewerage and waste upgrades in Mackay; and showground improvements in Gympie. Projects currently being delivered under the 2021-2024 round of Works for Queensland include upgrading the North Rockhampton Sewage Treatment Plant, enhancing roads throughout the Mackay region, replacing the 50-metre pool at the Northern Beaches Leisure Centre in Townsville and upgrading of critical electrical systems across Cook shire's water and wastewater plants.

This program is just another example of the two levels of government working together to deliver critical infrastructure for Queenslanders in the regions. The Palaszczuk government's total investment through Works for Queensland will now be \$1.1 billion over five rounds since 2016. By the end of the current 2021-2024 funding round, it is estimated Works for Queensland will have created and supported more than 26,000 jobs in the regions, and that figure will keep growing thanks to the bigger, better \$300 million round 5. We are also continuing the other council funding programs, including the South-East Queensland Community Stimulus Program and the Indigenous Councils Funding Program. We know how important it is to deliver more of the infrastructure regional communities need, and that is why we are working together with councils to make it happen.

### State Finances

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment) (9.46 am): With one year to go to the next election, Queenslanders can be confident that the state's finances have never been in better shape. In that regard, I am pleased to table the report on state finances.

*Tabled paper:* Queensland Government: 2022-23 Report on State Finances of the Queensland Government—30 June 2023 [1766].


This report is the written proof of the strength of our state's economy and our budget. Queenslanders will remember from our June budget that we were already reporting the largest budget surplus ever achieved by a state government at \$12.3 billion. Well, today's report shows that that surplus is even larger at \$13.9 billion. On debt I have further good news for Queenslanders: the report



on state finances shows that our net debt at 30 June 2023 is just \$2.6 billion. That is down from \$11 billion the previous year—a debt reduction of 76 per cent year on year. I am proud to report to the House that this is the sharpest reduction in net debt since accrual accounting was implemented in the late 1990s. It is also the third consecutive year-on-year decline in net debt.

These are very strong results for our budget and our economy, but most importantly these results are a credit to the hard work of Queenslanders through the pandemic and beyond. These results are more than just numbers on a page. The surpluses that we are delivering and the debt reductions that we are achieving mean that the Labor government has the financial capacity to invest to support Queenslanders: free kindy; our Big Build building program, the largest infrastructure program ever undertaken by our state; and the biggest electricity rebate program in Australia—a rebate program that means electricity costs have gone down in Queensland by 10 per cent in the last quarter compared to double-digit increases everywhere else on the east coast. We are doing all of this without making cuts, unlike Lord Mayor Adrian Schrinner and LNP Brisbane City councillors who are slashing jobs and services across our capital. The reason we can do all of this is for one reason—Labor's progressive coal royalties. These progressive coal royalties are providing Queenslanders with fair returns for the coal that they own and ensuring that when coal companies make record profits the people of Queensland get a record benefit. The point of all of this is this: only the Palaszczuk Labor government will keep progressive coal royalties and only the Palaszczuk Labor government will protect Queenslanders from cuts.

### Bushfires


 **Hon. MT RYAN** (Morayfield—ALP) (Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services) (9.49 am): Queensland Fire and Emergency Services has issued emergency warnings for the areas of Tara, Hallford, Wieambilla, Kogan, Goranba and Weranga. Queensland Fire and Emergency Services is warning people in these areas that it is not safe to return to the identified areas in the warning. The fire in between Tara, Wieambilla, Kogan and Goranba is still burning. It is travelling towards Weranga North Road. The advice is: if you have left the area, stay where you are; it is not safe to return. It is important to stay informed. I remind everyone, whether they are in the impacted area or for the entire bushfire season, to keep checking the Queensland Fire and Emergency Services' Bushfires and Warnings webpage, follow the authorities on social media and listen to their local media outlets. I remind everyone to have a bushfire survival plan and to follow it.

Evacuation centres are now established at the Dalby Events Centre and the Chinchilla Showgrounds. People should avoid driving on the Tara Kogan Road. They should keep updated by checking the QLDTraffic website. They should also move flammable items away from their homes if they can and they should watch out for firefighters working in the area. I also remind people not to fly drones around fire areas because this will impact air operations. Fire conditions have eased in some areas, but they can quickly get worse. Conditions are expected to remain hot, dry and windy, with areas of high and extreme fire danger forecast again today and tomorrow.

Bushfire warnings remain in place for several fires, and the community have been doing a great job in following the advice. Fire crews are working around the clock to keep their communities safe. I thank employers who have released Rural Fire Service volunteers and also volunteer firefighters to allow them to undertake life-saving activities. I also thank everyone who is contributing to the emergency response. In fact, recently I have seen some published comments saying that the firefighters and water bombers in the Tara area have been amazing. With respect, I think that is an understatement. It has been heroic work, extraordinary work, and we owe every single one of those people contributing to this emergency response a debt of gratitude.

Authorities have assessed more than 70 properties in the Tara area and they have now confirmed that 16 dwellings and more than 11 sheds and other structures have been lost. There is also a weather warning for South-East Queensland for today. In the south-east there is expected to be severe thunderstorms with locally damaging winds and large hail possible. I remind everyone in South-East Queensland to also follow the warnings of the authorities. I urge everyone to remain alert and stay up to date with all emergency warnings. Once again, I thank every single one of our Fire and Emergency Services personnel for the outstanding work they are doing.

### COVID-19

 **Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (Minister for Health, Mental Health and Ambulance Services and Minister for Women) (9.53 am): In recent weeks we have seen concerning COVID-19 developments here in Queensland. Firstly, we have seen the emergence of a new strain of COVID


known as Pirola. At the same time we are seeing a spike in COVID hospitalisations. Currently there are 146 people in Queensland hospitals with the virus—twice the number of two weeks ago. This number is expected to rise.

The Chief Health Officer has today said that the rise in cases has largely been due to low booster rates in older Queenslanders. I want to stress the importance of getting your COVID booster, especially if you are aged 65 years and over. We cannot become complacent about the risk that COVID still poses to our health so, please, if you are due for your COVID booster, book one in today. It is a simple yet effective way to protect yourself, your family and the community.

Alarming, the low uptake of COVID boosters coincides with a broader trend that we are seeing across Queensland and the country. While the pandemic has subsided, a new threat has emerged. Immunisation rates have begun to go backwards, while vaccine misinformation and fatigue is on the rise. The number of Queenslanders getting the flu shot has lagged in recent years. Childhood vaccination rates are down across almost every age group, and confidence in childhood vaccines has dropped 7½ per cent on pre-pandemic levels. These trends cannot continue. That is why last Friday I brought together health experts, doctors, pharmacists and patients for Queensland's first ever vaccination summit. It was an enlightening event where we heard that COVID has increased vaccine hesitancy. The number of pregnant women getting vaccinated against whooping cough and the flu remains low, despite being crucial for the health of mums and bubs, and there are still too many practical barriers that exist for people to get vaccinated, in particular cost and access.

I want to thank everyone who contributed and helped set the agenda for what comes next. Clearly, we have to better engage with the community about the benefits and the safety of vaccination. I am urging the federal government to play a lead role here. We need to work with healthcare providers, like our GPs and our pharmacists, to ensure they have what they need to vaccinate more people and we need to get better at combating rumours and misinformation on social media. Critically, we need to do more to reduce barriers for so many families. I am so proud that we are already doing this in some spaces, such as making the meningococcal vaccine free for young people in schools. In the coming weeks I look forward to announcing what Queensland will do to increase vaccination rates.


### Electricity Prices

 **Hon. MC de BRENNI** (Springwood—ALP) (Minister for Energy, Renewables and Hydrogen and Minister for Public Works and Procurement) (9.56 am): It is Queenslanders' ownership of their energy system that is helping with cost of living right now. Our Queensland Energy and Jobs Plan is already delivering, with a 71 per cent reduction in wholesale prices reported by the Australian Energy Market Operator. Today I can advise the House of more good news: the Australian Bureau of Statistics has indicated that Queensland is way ahead of the pack when it comes to putting downward pressure on energy prices. Today the ABS figures show a 10.2 per cent decline in electricity prices in Queensland—in stark contrast to other states, where the bureau reports their electricity indexes still went up. This is a direct result of the decisions that we have made: public ownership, more renewables and the largest cost-of-living relief package in the nation—\$550 for all households, \$650 for small businesses, \$1,072 back in the pockets of seniors, pensioners and concession card holders and \$1,000 cash back on energy-efficient appliances.

I can inform the House that this year over \$1,483 billion in cost-of-living relief is being delivered by the Palaszczuk government through energy bills—funded, of course, as the Treasurer has said, through progressive coal royalties. Since 2017 a total of \$6.2 billion of cost-of-living support has been delivered through Queenslanders' energy accounts. I know that many members of this House have been talking with their constituents about our important measures to address the cost of living. We on this side of the House have even been able to let those Queenslanders know where those funds have come from. Our position, one that extends beyond 2024, to apply progressive coal royalties means that we can put money back into local pockets ahead of global profits.

Today I can announce that federal Labor has delivered a \$69.2 million boost to the publicly owned Stanwell-led hydrogen consortium in Gladstone. Nothing delivers economic security like a good job, and there will be 8,900 more of them at the Central Queensland hydrogen hub in construction. With Labor's progressive coal royalties, nation-leading cost-of-living relief, our Big Build and the backing of new export industries, Labor is delivering cost-of-living relief and good jobs for all Queenslanders.

## State Education Week; World Teachers' Day; Farm Safety Calendar

 **Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for Education, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing) (9.59 am): This week is State Education Week so I want to take this opportunity to pay tribute to our dedicated staff—from cleaners to teachers, teacher aides to principals, admin staff to groundskeepers, P&Cs to tuckshop volunteers and everyone in between—who make our state system so fantastic. Tomorrow Australia will be celebrating World Teachers' Day, so I have provided badges to all members so that we can proudly recognise the pivotal role teachers play in our children's lives and in the future of our state.

There is nothing more pivotal than teaching literacy and numeracy. They are the basic building blocks for giving our kids a great start and a world-class education. Being able to read is a fundamental life skill that provides a foundation for all future learning, no matter the subject, not to mention the pure enjoyment that reading can give children as it takes them into alternative worlds and realities. As a parent, what a joy it is to see your child learn to read and develop a love for words.

This week I was delighted to be at West End State School in South Brisbane to launch the new Queensland Reading Commitment. This is a \$35 million investment over three years, in addition to the \$23 million a year we already invest to support schools with literacy and numeracy. The Reading Commitment will provide a system-wide consistent evidence-based approach to the effective teaching of reading across all Queensland state schools so that every student can realise their reading potential.

Key elements of the commitment include: explicit phonics instruction for students in line with the new version of the Australian curriculum, including a mandatory year 1 phonics check; building the expertise of teachers and teacher aides with professional development through our new Education Futures Institute; increased engagement with families, supporting them to read at home with their children; ongoing advice about reading difficulties and disorders through our reading centre; and a comprehensive suite of reading materials, including guidelines, resources and advice.


The commitment has been welcomed by unions, principal associations, P&Cs Queensland and the Australian Education Research Organisation. There will be a staged approach to implementation, with an initial intensive focus on prep, year 1 and year 2. Schools will be inviting families to learn more about the commitment and what it means for their children. We have developed this commitment and approach by consulting with experts and looking at the latest research. We co-designed the resources with 13 schools including West End State School, trialled them in 50 more and we continue to work with unions, principal associations, teachers and staff on the implementation of the exciting commitment.

Alongside the World Teachers' Day badges, I have also provided members with a copy of the long-awaited 2024 Farm Safety Calendar. This year more than 1,400 children showcased their knowledge about health and safety on rural properties and, of course, their artistic flair. I do not know how the judges pick just 12. It is a fun project but it is a serious message. Only three per cent of Queenslanders work on farms but nearly 30 per cent of work related deaths happen on them.

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Ms GRACE:** They are excited about their calendars, Mr Speaker. As Safe Work Month comes to a close let us all remember: work safe, home safe.

## Townsville, Resources Industry

 **Hon. SJ STEWART** (Townsville—ALP) (Minister for Resources) (10.02 am): If they were excited about that, Townsville is in the box seat to take advantage of the coming critical minerals boom. There is potentially \$500 billion worth of critical mineral deposits in the North West Minerals Province, which presents huge opportunities for Townsville and the region moving forward. That is why the Palaszczuk government is funding and building the \$5 billion CopperString 2032 project. We know that reliable power is key to opening new mines in the region.

Not only will CopperString support new resource projects; it will also create good direct jobs, which is great news for the people and businesses of Townsville. We are already seeing record amounts of exploration in the region as explorers look for new critical minerals deposits. As a government, we are supporting those efforts. We are doing this in a variety of ways, including by reducing the rent to zero for exploration permits for the next five years through our Critical Minerals Strategy and also through our Collaborative Exploration Initiative program. The program supports explorers to take on projects they could not potentially do on their own and, hopefully, this will lead to important discoveries. I can inform the House that applications for round 8 of the CEI program will open next month, with \$4.6 million in grants available to discover new critical minerals deposits throughout

Queensland. Priority will be given to the discovery of those critical minerals that are required to help make solar panels, wind turbines, batteries and other technologies that the world needs as it decarbonises.

Another way that we are supporting Townsville and the resources industry is through our Queensland Resources Common User Facility to be built in Townsville. It will be the first of its kind anywhere in Australia. I want to see Townsville not just as an exporter of critical minerals but also as a manufacturer and producer of vanadium batteries, because if we do not manufacture our future then someone else will. We are seeing it already with Vecco building Australia's first commercial-sized vanadium flow battery electrolyte manufacturing facility in Townsville. I want to see more of this because it means good secure jobs for Townsville, for our kids and for the north's future in both resources and manufacturing.

Right now, Townsville is absolutely booming. There are 6,700 more jobs in Townsville than there were last year alone. We are seeing the lowest unemployment in Queensland at 2.7 per cent, which is more—

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order!

**Mr STEWART:** Mr Speaker, they are excited, just like me. Townsville has the lowest unemployment rate in Queensland at 2.7 per cent. That rate was at more than 13 per cent when Clive Palmer closed Queensland Nickle at Yabulu. We want to see more good jobs for Queensland and the city. We want to hear directly from people, which is why next week we are bringing community cabinet to Townsville, the capital of North Australia. Townsville is a strong and resilient city with an amazing and diverse workforce that stands ready to drive this place forward well into the future. As the resources minister and local member, I am proud to be a part of the Palaszczuk government that will always back and invest in Townsville now and in the future.

### Seniors Month



**Hon. CD CRAWFORD** (Barron River—ALP) (Minister for Child Safety and Minister for Seniors and Disability Services) (10.06 am): Seniors Month is almost over. This October we have been celebrating the theme of social connections with more than 1,050 events across the state engaging an estimated 140,000 people. Almost one in five Queenslanders, almost one million people, are seniors aged over 65 and by 2050 the figure is expected to be more than 1.8 million.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Members, I ask you to please keep your background conversations to a minimum. It is getting way too loud in the chamber. My apologies for the interruption, Minister.

**Mr CRAWFORD:** Seniors Month is a time to recognise the valuable contribution made to our great lifestyles by seniors who are our workers, volunteers, carers, babysitters, the bank of mum and dad, and community leaders. It is also a chance to talk about the hip-pocket relief and cost-of-living support that is available to pensioners and seniors.

Savvy Queensland seniors and pensioners are saving millions of dollars in travel costs thanks to generous Palaszczuk government concessions for bus, train and ferry fares. In 2022-23, seniors saved more than \$10 million on the South-East Queensland public transport network through the 50 per cent seniors fare discount and the One, Two, Free initiative. Last year alone, more than 270,000 Queenslanders pocketed savings on public transport thanks to their Seniors Card +go. More than 110,000 seniors and pensioners travelled the state on the iconic rail service and bucket-list experience that is the Spirit of Queensland.

I want to share a story with the House. Last Friday, on the Cairns train station platform, I met a lovely elderly couple, Linda and Alan. For the first time Linda was delighted to be taking advantage of the half-price ticket on the Spirit of Queensland to visit family in Townsville at a cost of \$25 each way. Mr Speaker, with fuel prices what they are right now, for \$25 she would barely have got outside the southern boundary of your electorate, let alone made the 700-kilometre round trip to Townsville. The couple were full of praise for the Palaszczuk government's discounted fares and support for seniors, which has allowed them to stay connected with their family in Townsville.

Seniors Month celebrations will conclude with Grandparents Day this Sunday. I encourage all Queenslanders who are fortunate to still have grandparents or special older people in their lives to show them some love. Get on the phone, visit them, send them a text and let them know how much you care.

## Containers for Change

 **Hon. LM LINARD** (Nudgee—ALP) (Minister for the Environment and the Great Barrier Reef, Minister for Science and Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (10.09 am): The Palaszczuk government's popular container refund scheme, Containers for Change, is going from strength to strength. Last month the scheme achieved another significant milestone, with the seventh billion container received. That is seven billion containers that have been diverted from landfill to be recycled and re-used. This year alone, a record 1.13 billion containers have been returned to the more than 360 return points across Queensland.

Before the Palaszczuk government launched Containers for Change in November 2018, only 18 per cent of drink containers were being recovered and recycled in Queensland. The current rate is almost 64 per cent, and the Palaszczuk government is determined to see that rate rise even further. Of course, another important benefit of this scheme is the money it puts back into the pockets of Queenslanders at a time when they need it most. Since the scheme began, more than \$700 million has been returned to Queenslanders through the scheme, including almost \$11 million which has been paid to charities and community groups.

We know that Queenslanders want to do even more to reduce, re-use and recycle waste. That is why our government is working with Container Exchange, the not-for-profit company appointed to run the scheme, to further increase the rate of container recycling. This includes, in an Australian first, expanding the scheme to include glass wine and pure spirit bottles from next week. From Wednesday, 1 November, Queenslanders will get 10 cents for every glass wine and spirit bottle, from 150 millilitres to three litres, deposited at one of the container refund points found across the state. Our decision to include glass wine and pure spirit bottles followed an extensive consultation period where more than 6½ thousand Queenslanders shared their thoughts about including additional containers in the refund program. Some 98.1 per cent of participants were in favour of more containers being made eligible for refunds through the program.

The Department of Environment and Science and Container Exchange have been actively engaging with wine manufacturers to help them prepare for the expansion. In recent weeks I have also met with representatives from peak bodies representing wine and spirit producers. I welcome their cooperation with implementing this important initiative.

Containers for Change is an important part of our government's commitment to make Queensland a zero-waste society by 2050. We are determined to build a circular economy where materials are re-used, recycled or remanufactured more, and less waste is produced in the first place. Implementing a circular economy is good for the environment, the economy and jobs. For every one job in landfill there are three jobs in recycling and remanufacturing.

## Year of Accessible Tourism

 **Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE** (Sandgate—ALP) (Minister for Tourism, Innovation and Sport and Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympics and Paralympics Sport and Engagement) (10.12 am): As you know, Mr Speaker, the Palaszczuk government declared 2023 Queensland's Year of Accessible Tourism. We want this to be a transformative year that creates the platform for an enduring legacy for Queensland as an inclusive, world-class visitor destination. Tourism Research Australia predicts inclusive tourism can grow Queensland's visitor economy by an extra \$1.8 billion a year.


The Palaszczuk government is investing \$12 million to support Queensland tourism operators to make the changes that will make a huge difference to visitors with a disability. Next month, tourism operators from across the state will be in Cairns for the Destination Forum, where a main theme will be Queensland's Year of Accessible Tourism.

Today I can announce that one of Australia's most successful Paralympians and disability and inclusion advocates, Dylan Alcott AO, will be the keynote speaker at this event. It is a real coup to have the former Australian of the Year address the forum and share his experiences and insights and to have him engage with tourism and event operators on how they can strengthen their visitor experiences for people with a disability. The theme of this year's forum is 'Build and Focus—Setting the foundations for the future'. This aligns with the Palaszczuk government's commitment to making the Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games the pinnacle global event for elite athletes and spectators living with disability.

I can also inform the House that today we have opened another \$5 million grant program—the Accessible Tourism Elevate Fund, comprising two streams. It includes the Access Projects Grants, which provides funding of up to \$250,000 for infrastructure upgrades. Importantly it is available to a broad range of applicants including local governments. Tomorrow I will host Queensland tourism industry leaders at the second Accessible Tourism Chief Executive Officer Roundtable. We will explore further how we can help tourism businesses assist the one-in-five Australians living with a disability to transform their visitor experiences and those of their families.

Queensland is the nation's leading holiday visitor market, delivering some \$33.2 billion to our economy. When we welcome the world to Queensland we need to ensure we are catering for visitors of all abilities so they can enjoy our natural beauty, the incredible experiences on offer and our state's rich First Nations culture.

## SPECIAL ADJOURNMENT

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Leader of the House) (10.14 am), by leave, without notice: I move—


That the House, at its rising, do adjourn until 9.30 am on Tuesday, 14 November 2023.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

## ETHICS COMMITTEE

### Reports

 **Ms HOWARD** (Ipswich—ALP) (10.15 am): I table the following reports of the Ethics Committee: report No. 216 titled *Matter of privilege referred by the Speaker on 1 December 2022 relating to an allegation against the member for South Brisbane of wilfully or recklessly disrespecting rulings of the Speaker*; and report No. 217 titled *Matter of privilege referred by the Speaker on 16 March 2023 relating to an allegation against the member for Maiwar of misconducting oneself in the presence of the House or reflecting on the chair*.


*Tabled paper:* Ethics Committee: Report No. 216, 57th Parliament—Matter of privilege referred by the Speaker on 1 December 2022 relating to an allegation against the Member for South Brisbane of wilfully or recklessly disrespecting rulings of the Speaker [[1767](#)].

*Tabled paper:* Ethics Committee: Report No. 217, 57th Parliament—Matter of privilege referred by the Speaker on 16 March 2023 relating to an allegation against the Member for Maiwar of misconducting oneself in the presence of the House or reflecting on the Chair [[1768](#)].

## QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

**Mr SPEAKER:** Question time will conclude today at 11.15 am.

### Housing

 **Mr CRISAFULLI** (10.15 am): My question is to the Premier. Newly released ABS data shows that Brisbane has the highest increase in rent of any capital, at 9.5 per cent, and has led the nation since 2020. After almost nine years in power, what responsibility does the Premier take for the housing pressures facing Queenslanders?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I thank the member for the question. Of course, we recognise that housing is a pressure right across Queensland and that housing is a pressure right across the nation. That is why housing is constantly being raised at National Cabinet and why our government is making the largest investment our state has ever seen into housing. We recognise that it is, of course, a big issue.

We also have had over 140,000 people move here in the last year. Queensland is the fastest growing state in terms of the movement of people. That includes around 50 per cent from New South Wales and Victoria and 50 per cent from migration. Queensland does not set those migration targets; that is a matter for the federal government.

This is a growing state, and that is why the Deputy Premier has released the draft South East Queensland Regional Plan. We need councils to plan more to make sure we have the accommodation that is needed. That is why we have the biggest infrastructure build that our state has seen since

Federation—\$89 billion, building the roads, hospitals and schools that we need. In those fast-growing areas around Coomera and the Sunshine Coast, there is massive investment. That is why we are building three brand new hospitals and expanding hospitals, with the largest injection of health funding.

I am pleased that the member has raised the ABS. We have heard from the Minister for Energy in relation to power prices. We are seeing downward pressure, and electricity prices in Queensland have come down 10 per cent. Let me say that again: power prices have come down 10 per cent because we are putting rebates to Queenslanders. I want all Queenslanders to know that we—the Labor government, not the LNP—are putting \$550 to every household across this state. Let me keep going: there is \$1,000 for pensioners. What is happening in southern states? Electricity prices are going up. In Queensland they are coming down, because we kept our energy assets in public hands. That is right: we kept them and they will stay in public hands under a Labor government.

### Housing

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** My question is to the Premier. Simone and Stewart lost their home when income from their catering business dried up. They lived in a tent with their daughter while trying to find a rental. Their rent has just gone up \$60, a cost they do not need while they are re-establishing their business. After nearly nine years in power, what responsibility does the Premier take for Simone and Stewart's situation?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** We recognise that it is critical for people to have a safe place to call home. I am very passionate about this, and everyone on this side of government is passionate about it as well. That is why our government has provided housing assistance to over 200,000 people in this state. We recognise that homelessness can happen at any stage in a person's life. There are a lot of pressures on families at the moment. We recognise that the cost of living is the biggest issue facing families at the moment. How are we helping? By making sure we have rebates going out. We also have—

**Mr Crisafulli:** Do you take responsibility for it?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I will tell you one thing, Leader of the Opposition: we are not cutting funding to non-government organisations that help people like the Leader of the Opposition did to the Residential Tenancies Authority where people went to get help. The member for Broadwater sat around the cabinet table and made those decisions. During COVID the government was front and centre helping small business and helping people through that particular period of time.

If the member wants to refer that information to the Minister for Housing, I am quite sure she will look at that individual case. As we know, from time to time people face difficult circumstances and we want to extend a helping hand to those who need it the most, because on this side of the House we believe in social housing. We do not believe in selling it off like the former member for Everton did when he was the housing minister in this state. We do not believe in forcing people in housing to share with strangers. We do not believe in kicking people out of social housing if they go on leave like those opposite. That is the contrast between this side of the House and those opposite: this Labor government has values and cares about people compared to the reckless approach to government of those opposite. They do not care about housing. They do not care about putting a roof over people's heads. All they care about is themselves.

### Townsville

**Mr WALKER:** My question is of the Premier and Minister for the Olympic and Paralympic Games. Can the Premier update the House on the Queensland government's investment in Townsville, and is the Premier aware of any alternative approaches?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** We know how important the regions are to our economy and how important the people of our great state are. Everyone on this side of the House does everything we possibly can in our communities to support people and make sure they have the dignity of a job. The dignity of a job enables people to put a roof over their heads and food on the table. That is a very basic premise those opposite do not understand. They do not have those values.

I am very pleased that we are taking the cabinet back to Townsville because we support Townsville and that community. As I said yesterday, I can confirm that over 100 members of the community will be meeting with my ministers on Sunday. I will also be joining our members to officially open stage 5 of the Townsville Ring Road, a \$280 million joint project with the feds with a \$56 million

state contribution. We will also be hosting a big afternoon tea for Townsville seniors, where we will be talking about the \$1,000 they are getting off their electricity bills. We understand that the cost of living is the No. 1 issue at the moment.

Our government is proud that there are over 25,000 more jobs in Townsville since we came to office. A job is a pathway to making sure that people can provide the services they need. Townsville has the lowest unemployment in the state at 2.7 per cent. As we know, more and more families are moving to Townsville. In health care we are investing \$530 million to see 143 new beds for the growing region and we are supporting 1,200 jobs in construction. There are more big builds happening in the big city of Mount Isa. We are investing \$32 million in the Pimlico TAFE redevelopment and \$13 million for a new hydrogen and renewable energy facility.

Let's contrast that with what happened when they were in office. There has been no apology for the three years of damage the member for Kawana, the member for Broadwater and the member for Everton did to the people of Townsville—not one single word of apology. They cut 670 government workers, including 398 health workers in Townsville. No wonder the member for Broadwater left. He could not even hold his head up in Townsville. They wanted to sell off the Townsville port and the Townsville to Mount Isa railway line. They closed Stuart State School and they sold off TAFE land in Townsville. Where they sell, we build.

*(Time expired)*

## Housing

**Mr MANDER:** My question is to the Premier. One year ago the Deputy Premier said—

The best way we can relieve pressure on public and social housing is making sure there is affordable housing in the private market, to avoid pushing people out of that private market into social or public housing or homelessness.

What responsibility does the Labor government take for pushing people out of the private market by purchasing nearly 400 homes last financial year alone while failing to deliver a single home from the Housing Investment Fund two years after its announcement?

**Mr Dick** interjected.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** That is right.

**Mr Dick** interjected.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** That is right.

**Mr Dick** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Sorry, Premier. Treasurer, I cannot hear the Premier's remarks. I need to hear the Premier.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** As the member for Everton is—

**Mr Power** interjected.

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

**Ms PALASZCZUK:**—well aware, there are housing pressures everywhere. That is why we have put in place the largest investment in housing across—

**An opposition member** interjected.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I will take that interjection. We are building. We are working with councils. On this side of the House you are seeing \$5 billion; on that side of the House there are no policies. No, they do have a policy. Quick, get out the pamphlet! Have a look. Is there any policy—

**Mr Dick** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** The Treasurer will cease his interjections.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Where is the pamphlet? Hold it up.

**Mr Dick** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** The Treasurer will cease his interjections.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Tell us the housing policy.

**Government members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Lytton, bad timing. You are warned under the standing orders. Treasurer, I tried to call you to order several times. You are warned under the standing orders.



**Ms PALASZCZUK:** They have no policies. It is disgraceful!

**Mrs Frecklington:** Here it is.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** It is not a policy, member for Nanango. The member for Nanango is good at policies. We had a lot of policies from the member for Nanango when she was the leader: the fake Bradfield scheme—

**Mrs Frecklington** interjected.

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

**Mr POWELL:** Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order on relevance under standing order 118(b). The question was about purchasing private properties and not spending any money out of the Housing Investment Fund to build one single new home.

**Mr SPEAKER:** I believe the Premier was addressing the broad issue of housing and housing affordability; however, Premier, I will ask you to go directly to the question.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** As we know, we are actually purchasing those NRAS houses from the Commonwealth government because the Morrison government failed to invest. That is right; they failed to invest. We are putting \$5 billion into the delivery of social and affordable housing across the state. We are working with councils to release more supply. We are helping people if they are homeless through housing assistance. We are helping renters with rental assistance. We put a cap on rent increases to only once per year. We are doing rental reform to ensure that tenants get to have a say, and we know that there are over 100,000 tenants in Queensland. The Housing Investment Fund has approved 1,600 homes. The first two developments in Redcliffe and Chermside will deliver 118 homes. On top of that, we are providing the first home owners grant of \$15,000 when there are new houses to be purchased. That is more than New South Wales and Victoria are applying for their first home ownership. We will continue to invest in housing.

*(Time expired)*

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Maryborough and member for Callide, you are warned for quarrelling across the chamber. Please take your conversations outside next time.

### **Local Government, Infrastructure**

**Ms RICHARDS:** My question is of the Deputy Premier. Could the Deputy Premier advise the House how helping councils invest in infrastructure is a priority for Queensland, and is the Deputy Premier aware of any alternative approaches?

**Dr MILES:** I thank the member for Redlands for her question. I know she supports the efforts that the Palaszczuk government goes to to partner with local government to deliver projects that are priorities for local communities. Through the Works for Queensland program and the South-East Queensland Community Stimulus Program, we are partnering with councils right across the state, delivering critical infrastructure, creating jobs and protecting the Queensland lifestyle that we all know and love.

The Works for Queensland program has been a huge success and is very popular with local government. It is the Palaszczuk government's signature local community infrastructure and stimulus program. It has created 26,000 jobs in 2,200 projects right across the state—whether that is upgrading the water and sewerage in Bundaberg, all the way through to that fantastic new enclosure for the Rockhampton Zoo's iconic eagle. It is delivering projects right across the state. The next round of Works for Queensland will be even bigger and even better thanks to the additional \$100 million that the Premier announced at the LGAQ conference. That will bring the next round, the 2024 to 2027 round, to a total of \$300 million injected into regional communities right across the state to create jobs, to create tourism infrastructure and to go to priorities like water and wastewater treatment.

It is not just in the regions. In the south-east we have the South-East Queensland Community Stimulus Program supporting the 12 local governments here in the south-east to deliver projects that have created 1,430 local jobs. This includes projects like the Disaster and Emergency Management Centre on the Gold Coast or the Moreton Bay housing and homelessness services hub. I think we have proven that we will partner with councils to deliver projects that are a priority for local communities.

Members will recall that the member for Redlands and I have been trying to work with Redland City Council to get them to upgrade the car park at the Weinam Creek ferry terminal. I even wrote to the council and offered for them to use \$4.5 million of state funds to deliver on that priority, and they refused. The member for Redlands and I welcome the member for Kawana's support of our efforts to

get the council to expand the car park. I will write to the council today and tell them that there is now bipartisan support for them to upgrade the council car park. They should stop refusing and start working with us because that is a key priority for the Southern Moreton Bay Islands.

### **National Rental Affordability Scheme**

**Ms CAMM:** My question is to the Premier. How many times has the Premier or the housing minister written to the Prime Minister, the federal Minister for Housing or any member of the current federal government to request that National Rental Affordability Scheme funding continue?

**Government members** interjected.

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

**Mrs D'ATH:** Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. If I heard that question correctly, the Premier was being asked what actions another minister has taken. I believe the question in relation to what action the Premier has taken may be relevant, but she is not in a position to be able to answer questions in relation to what other ministers have directly done.

**Mr SPEAKER:** The question will be allowed. The Premier will be able to address what actions she has taken directly. The Premier has responsibility for broad government matters, so the Premier has the call.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Well, well, well, the member for Whitsunday was given a doozy of a question today. How many times did those opposite contact Scott Morrison, Malcolm Turnbull or their mates in Canberra when they cut Indigenous remote housing? There is a bit of a history lesson for the member for Whitsunday. Then they cut NRAS. I make no apologies for raising housing whenever we meet at National Cabinet. We are always talking about housing and the issues that impact on Queenslanders. Honestly, to the member for Whitsunday—

**Mr Janetzki** interjected.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Oh, grow up.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Toowoomba South—

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** This is just so rude and so arrogant.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Premier, it is unhelpful for the House. Member for Toowoomba South, you are warned under the standing orders. The member for Glass House will cease his interjections. Premier, you have one minute and 32 seconds remaining.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** When those opposite were in office, they wanted to sell off 95 per cent of social housing. What are we doing? We are actually purchasing the ex National Rental Affordability Scheme homes. The member for Maroochydore has been here for 30 years, and what has she delivered for the people of Maroochydore in relation to housing? How many times has the member for Maroochydore raised housing with her former federal colleagues? We are purchasing up to 335 homes, and up to 121 homes mostly exiting from NRAS as well. We will continue—

**Ms Enoch** interjected.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Actually, thank you very much for reminding me that the member for Kawana wrote to the government asking them to please purchase more NRAS properties, I am advised. Do we have that letter? He did not write to Scott Morrison when he was in office. He did not write to Tony Abbott. He was actually writing to us and that is exactly what we are doing.

### **State Finances**

**Mr SAUNDERS:** My question is of the Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment. Will the Treasurer update the House on how the Palaszczuk government's consistent approach to the budget and economic policy is delivering for Queenslanders, and is the Treasurer aware of any alternative approaches?

**Mr DICK:** I thank the member for Maryborough for his question. Today's report on state finances shows how our approach to providing consistency and certainty in delivering financial and economic results for our state is delivering for the people of Queensland. Our record \$12.3 billion surplus has increased to a new record of \$13.9 billion. We have cut debt, even as we fund electricity rebates, free kindy and Queensland's biggest infrastructure program ever. One of the key reasons we can do that is that Labor does not cut. Cutting services and cutting infrastructure the way that LNP Lord Mayor Adrian Schrinner is doing damages confidence in investors, trading partners and the economy generally.

I have been asked by the member about alternative approaches. Yesterday the Leader of the Opposition had the opportunity to get on the public record and say that he supported progressive coal royalties permanently, yet he could not say those words. The LNP leader is refusing to give consistency and certainty to the people of Queensland. He was quite rightly condemned by the parliament for doing that.

That is not the only inconsistent thing about the Leader of the Opposition. We read in the *Weekend Australian* that the Leader of the Opposition now wants to give preferences to the Queensland Greens party. This demonstrates quite simply how craven the member for Broadwater is. The LNP is looking to support a party that wants to wipe out the resources industry in Queensland. The LNP is supporting a party whose lord mayoral candidate encourages and promotes theft, trespassing and blocking public roads. The Leader of the Opposition is contemplating electing a political party that proudly promises to ban horse racing, shut down private schools and even ban the breeding of pet dogs and cats. That is the depths the Leader of the Opposition will plumb in his craven attempt to swindle his way to becoming Premier.

They all know it. The LNP knows that is what he will do. I have said it many times in this House: this is a Leader of the Opposition without any principles and without any convictions. His promises are worthless. Just ask the First Nations people of this state. He can never again be trusted. That is the difference. He is lining up with a party that has at least one thing in common with him: cutting revenue. He wants to cut \$7 billion out of progressive coal royalties and the Greens want to take \$5 billion a year out of our budget by abolishing payroll tax. At least they are together on that issue—destroying our budget. Only Labor will protect progressive coal royalties, only Labor will deliver a strong economy and only Labor will protect Queensland from cuts.

*(Time expired)*

### Home Ownership

**Mr JANETZKI:** My question is to the Premier. ABS data shows that Queensland has the lowest home ownership rate in the nation, while Resolve Strategic research found that 72 per cent of 18- to 34-year-olds think they will never be able to buy their own home. After nearly nine years in power, what responsibility does the Premier take for young Queenslanders losing hope of ever buying their own home?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Let me say very clearly that our commitment to helping first home owners over the last three years has been over \$365 million. We have helped 24,000 first home owners. As I said previously, there is support available up to \$15,000 from the Queensland government. This is much higher than New South Wales and Victoria.

As we know, more and more people are moving here. Every time I go out to the new developments—whether it is Ripley, Springfield, Coomera, Yarrabilba, Palmview or Coomera—I see development happening there and the infrastructure that is needed for these growing communities. Under the first home owner grant, first home buyers purchasing or building a new house can receive support of up to \$15,000, as I have already said. We will continue to provide that support which is, as I said, a lot more than is provided in other states.

Whilst I am on my feet, I refer to a letter about NRAS coming from the member for Kawana. It reads—

I understand the State Government has bought some properties that are currently under the NRAS program and then rented them at similar affordable rates as existing tenants ...

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** They do not want to hear it. It continues—

I would like to know whether your department has considered buying existing NRAS properties in my electorate and converting them to affordable housing.

After Scott Morrison got rid of the scheme, member for Kawana, we will look into that because we want to help people into housing. We want to help people, not sell it off. As I said, member for Everton, 95 per cent of social housing would have been sold off.

**An opposition member** interjected.

**Mr POWER:** Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. Could the member for Coomera withdraw unparliamentary language?

**Mr SPEAKER:** I did not hear unparliamentary language, and I need to be very cautious about going on reports of other members about said things. Member for Coomera, if you used some unparliamentary language, I ask you to withdraw.

**Mr CRANDON:** I withdraw.

### Palaszczuk Labor Government, Achievements

**Mr MELLISH:** My question is of the Minister for Education, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing. Can the minister update the House on some of the Palaszczuk government's key achievements including for the public sector and for Queensland schools, and is the minister aware of any alternative approaches?

**Ms GRACE:** I thank the member for the question. He is such a strong advocate for schools in the Aspley area. I cannot wait to open the new volleyball and indoor multipurpose court centre that will revolutionise sport in that area. He also knows of our proud record when it comes to supporting our public sector workers by providing secure employment and nation-leading wages and conditions.

Let me tell those opposite what helps with rent, what helps with putting food on the table and what helps with cost of living: having a decent, secure job and not having the LNP's sacking policy hanging over their head. Did they apologise? Have they taken any responsibility for the 14,000 public servants they sacked when they were last in government? Have they taken any responsibility and apologised for the pressure that put on them meeting their rent? Have they apologised to the nurses they sacked in Townsville when they started? People were weeping in the offices of the QNMU when they started sacking nurses in Townsville. No wonder the member for Broadwater had to run out of Townsville and is now on the Gold Coast, because they would not have had him there.

We on this side of the House have a nation-leading enterprise bargaining agreement, with over 90 per cent of public servants voting in favour in every single one of those agreements. We live, unfortunately, in very high inflationary times at the moment—something that we as a state do not control. The Reserve Bank increased interest rates from 0.10 per cent to now 4.1 per cent. That is an extraordinary level of increase. The state government does not control those interest rates. That is putting pressure on rents and on housing affordability—something those opposite completely ignore.

We have had an incredible uptake of the enterprise bargaining agreement. However, under those opposite there was a 16-month wage freeze on public servants, and they were not capable of negotiating one agreement when they were in government. That is what the Public Service can look forward to if those opposite are to ever, Lord help us, occupy this side of the House.

When it comes to schools, we are delivering in spades. Everything we said we would do we have delivered, including 27 new schools which we will open up by next year—an extraordinary effort.

*(Time expired)*

### Home Ownership

**Mr O'CONNOR:** My question is to the Premier. The 2023 *The generations defined* report, released this week, shows nearly two-thirds of young people want to own their own home but nearly half fear never being able to do so. With annual residential lot releases falling 30 per cent since the Labor government came to power, does the Premier take any responsibility for hampering young Queenslanders' dreams of owning their own home?

**Dr MILES:** Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The made-up statistic that the member for Bonney just used I have repeatedly corrected in the House. It is misleading.

**Mr SPEAKER:** I need some action request, member. That may well be the view.

**Dr MILES:** I request that the question be ruled out of order.

**Mr SPEAKER:** I will first ask if the member can authenticate that.

**Mr O'CONNOR:** Yes, Mr Speaker. I am happy to table residential lot approvals as at March 2016—23,761; and March 2023—16,715. That is a decrease of 30 per cent.

*Tabled paper:* Extract, undated, from Queensland Treasury webpage titled 'Queensland Government Statisticians Office: Residential land supply and development-Residential development' [[1769](#)].

*Tabled paper:* Document, undated, titled 'Residential lot approvals—QLD' [[1770](#)].

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

**Mr SPEAKER:** This is not going to be duelling points of order, but I will take your point of order.

**Dr MILES:** I have clarified in the House why that statistic is misleading—repeatedly.

**Mr SPEAKER:** The way I will be viewing this is that the member has tabled a document which is of official statistics. An interpretation of those statistics may well be in question, but I will allow the question and allow the Premier to answer any way she sees fit.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Let me make it very clear to those opposite. The best way people can get into the market to own a home is to have a job. Since we came to office, over 500,000 jobs have been created. This is in stark contrast to the LNP policy of cuts—of massive, savage cuts to jobs in this state—which actually ruined and helped to decimate regional economies. The damage was done in those three years. It was in only three years that the massive damage was done to our regional economies. Since then we have convened—

**Mr Mickelberg** interjected.

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

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** It would be a surprise to anybody who is an observer or an historian looking back on those three years to find another government in Australia that inflicted so much damage within three years. Those results are out there everywhere. Talking about first home ownership, whilst they were in power, they cut \$7,000 to first home ownership. That is what they did. Here we are; this article states 'Newman to scrap \$7,000 first home owner grant'. There you are, that is an own goal. I will table that.

*Tabled paper:* Media article, dated 10 September 2012, titled 'Newman to scrap \$7000 first home owner grant' [\[1771\]](#).

**Mr POWELL:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order on relevance under standing order 118(b). The question—

**Government members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Members to my right, I do not need any assistance. Member, as you will have heard in my ruling, I allowed the question but the Premier is able to answer in any way she sees fit. That is due to the challenge we are facing in terms of authenticating data and the difference of opinion regarding that data. There is no point of order.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** The Deputy Premier has clarified in this House the use of those particular statistics when there have been regular approvals year on year.

Let me say this: when I travel across the state I see the good work that our people are doing in terms of setting up QBuild to provide houses for our workers to free up housing across Queensland. No other government is doing what we are doing. It is an Australian first. Now we are looking at standing up a second one in Cairns. We are working with companies on those modular homes, which are more affordable to young people trying to enter the market. The Deputy Premier also approved granny flats in backyards—and I understand there are over 300 of them at the moment—which can also provide an opportunity for young people to stay living closer to home in their community so they can save up and go into the market and purchase a new home. As I said, we have provided over \$200 million in terms of the first home owner grant, which is more than in New South Wales and Victoria. What is the opposition going to do when it comes to housing?

*(Time expired)*

## TAFE

**Mr TANTARI:** My question is of the Minister for Employment and Small Business, Minister for Training and Skills Development and Minister for Youth Justice. Could the minister please update the House on how the Queensland government is investing in TAFE to support the workforce needs of our future, and is the minister aware of any alternative approaches?

**Ms FARMER:** I thank the member for his question. What a great local member. I know how much he loves his TAFE, and he would; that Hervey Bay TAFE is just amazing. I have been up there several times with the member including to the new nursing training facility. That is so important in an electorate where they have the highest number of people over 65 in Queensland and the numbers are twice the national average. They have electrotechnology and mechanical engineering. They have one of only two motorcycle maintenance training facilities as well as the highest enrolments under Fee-Free TAFE for disability support, teacher aides, nursing and hospitality, which is so important in a tourism economy.

Honourable members can understand why the member is so worried about what is going to happen if the LNP get into government. On this side of the House we love our TAFE. It is more important than ever to have skills to address our workforce shortages. We know the LNP hate TAFE. We know

when they last got into government they closed five campuses and were going to cut another 38, including five in Wide Bay. They sacked 2,100 staff and they cut \$170 million from the budget. We know the member for Broadwater has \$10 billion worth of cuts in mind and we know the member for Chatsworth has that big list of things—the ‘pruning’. We are worried. Does that mean the TAFEs?

In Hervey Bay we do not have to wonder anymore because the new candidate for the LNP in Hervey Bay has actually told us what he thinks about TAFE. Do honourable members know what he wants to do with the Hervey Bay TAFE? He wants to bulldoze it. There is the \$40 million expansion that we are funding, which looks absolutely amazing, on the existing site of the Hervey Bay Hospital. What a great use of public funds that is. This LNP candidate, David Lee, who is a councillor up there, does not really like that site. He just wants it to go somewhere else. On social media and on TV they ask him, ‘Where would you like to put this new hospital?’ Where does he want to put it? He wants to put it on the Hervey Bay TAFE site.

Get rid of them because under the LNP the new \$1.3 million nursing facility there would be gone; electrotechnology and mechanical engineering, gone; teacher aides, disability support workers, gone; tourism workers, gone. In fact, he must have been a perfect candidate for the LNP. Their checklist must say ‘must hate TAFE.’ There is a big tick for David Lee, the LNP candidate for Hervey Bay. As Taylor Swift says, haters gonna hate, hate, hate and the LNP are gonna cut TAFE, TAFE, TAFE.

### Palaszczuk Labor Government, Performance

**Mr BLEIJIE:** My question is to the Premier. When asked on television last night about Queenslanders suffering through crises in youth crime, cost of living, housing and health, and with Queenslanders blaming the Labor government for these failures, the Premier answered, ‘Well, who? Who?’ Has the Premier stopped listening to the right priorities for Queensland’s future?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** That is coming from the man who brings a stuffed toy rat into the parliament! Let me say very clearly—and I have said this time and time again: when I am out there meeting with Queenslanders, the No. 1 issue is the cost of living, and that is why we are providing the rebates. That is why we have the largest cost-of-living relief in the country, because we understand that people are doing it tough.

I represent Inala. Inala is a very working-class electorate. I know firsthand how hard it is for people to put food on the table. The best thing we can do to help people put food on the table is to ensure they have a job and their children have the opportunity to go to TAFE with our free TAFE initiative so they can get a job at the end of it. We also know that education is the foundation. That is why next year we are bringing in free kindy. We have been out there listening to people. This will save families \$4,600 a year, which also enables women to go back into the workforce. These are the issues that matter to Queenslanders.

Queenslanders also know the damage the LNP government did to them during those three years and they will not forget. There is not a public servant who is not in fear of losing their job if the LNP are elected at the next election and they have already used the same language. They have already used the language, ‘They have nothing to fear.’ We have heard that from those opposite. It is the same language we are again hearing such as ‘fiscal discipline’. That means cuts. What is going to be cut? They handed out a pamphlet, but Queenslanders do not want pamphlets; they want policies. They want a vision for the state. They want to know—

**Mr Bailey** interjected.

**Mr Crisafulli** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. Minister for Transport and Leader of the Opposition, you will cease your quarrelling across the chamber. You are both warned under the standing orders. Premier, you have 38 seconds remaining.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** We acknowledge that housing is an issue. That is why we have the largest ever spend in housing—\$5 billion. Let us remind people about what happened under those opposite. They defunded the tenants advisory and advocacy service. I quote—

On Tuesday afternoon—

the Newman government—my words—

defunded 23 tenant advice and advocacy services across the state. This free service provided advice, information and advocacy for renters in both private and public housing. The loss of this service means renters will no longer have somewhere to turn to when they need assistance and advice regarding renting issues.

That is their policy.

## Climate Change

**Ms KING:** My question is to the Minister for the Environment and the Great Barrier Reef, Minister for Science and Minister for Multicultural Affairs. Will the minister update the House on our government's response to climate change, and is the minister aware of any alternative approaches?

**Ms LINARD:** I know what a voracious advocate the member is for our precious natural environment in her area but also across Queensland. I am also well aware that she supports taking strong action to respond to the threat of climate change.

The Palaszczuk government believes in the science of climate change and we are taking strong action. Our government has committed to net zero emissions by 2050, in line with leading global economies. Our government is committed to an interim emissions target of 30 per cent below 2005 levels by 2030. Our government is committed to powering Queensland with 80 per cent renewable energy by 2035. We are delivering on those commitments.

Latest data released in April confirms Queensland's greenhouse gas emissions in 2021 were 29 per cent below the 2005 baseline year—that is, we had almost achieved our 2030 interim target nine years ahead of time. This downward trend has been underpinned by initiatives such as our Land Restoration Fund and our robust vegetation management laws.

The Queensland Energy and Jobs Plan is a critical part of our government's action on climate change. Under the plan, we will create the \$62 billion SuperGrid which includes an historic expansion of solar and wind power supported by two world-class pumped hydro facilities. This investment in renewable energy projects will lead to a 90 per cent reduction in electricity emissions on 2005 levels by 2035. Under our plan, Queensland will be powered by 50 per cent clean energy by 2030, 70 per cent by 2032 and 80 per cent by 2035.

With the release of the member for Broadwater's 44-page glossy brochure last week, I thought I was finally going to learn how a future LNP government would address the threat of climate, but how wrong I was. What did their glossy brochure reveal? It revealed absolutely nothing. The term 'climate change' is mentioned just once and any other reference to the environment was no more than motherhood statements and empty rhetoric. There was not one mention of renewable energy or emissions.

Members would be forgiven for thinking that the LNP has no policies or plans for protecting our environment and responding to climate change. However, we do know that some in the LNP have a plan. They think nuclear energy is the answer. In their community meetings across the state, which they love telling us about, have they told the people of Cairns, 'You can have a nuclear reactor'? Have they told the people of Whitsunday, 'You can have a nuclear reactor'? Have they said that to all the communities on the Sunshine Coast and Gold Coast? Only our government has a costed, ambitious plan to reduce emissions.

*(Time expired)*

## Hill Electorate, Speed Camera

**Mr KNUTH:** My question without notice is to Minister for Transport and Main Roads. My office has been inundated with hundreds of people who have received multiple speeding fines on the Malanda to Atherton road over a short period of time in September, causing significant financial hardship and mental stress. Will the minister provide a certificate of calibration to prove the unmanned speed camera device was tested immediately before, during and after its deployment and evidence to prove the placement is in accordance with Queensland government policy?

**Mr BAILEY:** I think everyone in this House knows my commitment to road safety on Queensland roads. I have some information I can provide. I am advised in relation to the Malanda to Atherton road that 94 per cent of vehicles passing the speed camera were not detected speeding. There were 342 offences of more than 20 kilometres an hour over the speed limit. There were actually eight offences where people were driving more than 40 kilometres an hour over the speed limit. Those eight offences mean that people would have been speeding in the 100 zone and not just the 60 zone. The highest speed recorded in the 60-kilometre-an-hour zone was 124 kilometres an hour.

I am not aware of any inaccurate infringements being issued; however, given the member's representations, I am very happy to ask my acting director-general to look at the certification. Transport and Main Roads and our agencies are very careful about the calibration and the certification of this

technology because they know that at some point it can be challenged in a court of law. They are incredibly careful about this. I have confidence that that has occurred in this case, but, given the member has raised it, I am happy to have that checked.

We cannot tolerate people who are speeding on our roads. Speeding is a killer. It is still a big killer of people on our roads.

**Mr Dametto** interjected.

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

**Mr BAILEY:** We had the worst year in many on our roads last year in terms of the number of deaths. Sadly, we are seeing an increase in speeding across the state. That is a contributor to deaths. We cannot ignore the hospitalisations either. People are permanently disfigured in many cases and speeding is often a contributor to that. Often about 25 per cent of our fatalities are speed related. I take that matter very seriously. Given the member has raised it, I am happy to have it checked and we will come back to him.

### Regional Queensland, Job Creation

**Ms LAUGA:** My question is of the Minister for Regional Development and Manufacturing and Minister for Water. Would the minister provide an update on how the Palaszczuk government is creating and supporting jobs in regional Queensland and if there are any alternative approaches?

**Mr BUTCHER:** The member is a huge advocate for bettering our regions. There is no better advocate than her in that role.

We know how vital it is to support our regional communities in Queensland. Queenslanders want to work, want to raise their family and want to live close to where they work. That is why regional Queensland is at the heart of everything we do. Some 65 per cent of our \$89 billion Big Build is occurring outside South-East Queensland and 95 per cent of our \$62 billion Energy and Jobs Plan is focused on regional Queensland.

Last week I was joined by the Deputy Premier in Gladstone to announce the start of construction of the Australian Gas Infrastructure Group's hydrogen park in my city. Thanks to a \$2.72 million investment from the Palaszczuk government, this Australian first will see a city with an entire gas network made up of blended hydrogen gas. This project means local construction company Walz, local contractors Aestec Services and Corfield's Electrical will be getting work on that project.

Our investment in regional Queensland is creating jobs now and into the future. Our investment in train manufacturing is creating 800 jobs in Maryborough. Our work on the Fitzroy to Gladstone pipeline will deliver 400 jobs and support the hydrogen industry in Central Queensland. Our investment in Building our Regions is supporting 3,000 jobs in regional Queensland. Our investment in CopperString 2.0 will deliver 800 construction jobs in North Queensland and support the development of the North West Minerals Province. The list goes on.

These are good, secure jobs in regional Queensland in the industries of the future that our people who live and work in the regions are going to build. The Energy and Jobs Plan is set to deliver 6,400 jobs building the SuperGrid and 36,000 more jobs across key sectors of the economy, and most of these are in regional Queensland. All of these jobs are at risk under the LNP, who have no plan for regional economies and no plan for renewables in Queensland.

Rather than supporting local manufacturing jobs, those opposite sent the manufacturing of trains overseas—and we all know how that turned out for them. Now, under the Palaszczuk Labor government, we are building trains in Maryborough once again. On top of that, the LNP's former member for Callide—

**Mr Krause** interjected.

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

**Mr BUTCHER:**—and the now member for Flynn tried to provide a back-of-the-envelope explanation in federal parliament that hydrogen was dangerous and not of a viable scale in Australia. He also advertised on his social media that hydrogen energy and renewable energy were a fantasy. That is what we are dealing with here with the LNP in Queensland: false security—

*(Time expired)*



### Water Infrastructure

**Mr ANDREW:** My question is for the Minister for Regional Development and Manufacturing and Minister for Water. Would the minister update the House on a concrete start date for the pipeline to Mount Morgan and also why there are no plans for diverting some of the water from the Fitzroy to Gladstone pipeline to the farmers in the Lower Fitzroy agricultural corridor?

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member, that is a two-part question. I will allow the minister to address either of those issues, or both if he so wishes.

**Mr BUTCHER:** I thank the member for the question, and I will start with the Mount Morgan pipeline. The Queensland state government and my department have supported that fantastic program for the Rockhampton Regional Council because it knows that water security for the community of Mount Morgan is really important to those people, and our government has put \$40 million on the table to support that project. The Rockhampton Regional Council will be building and operating that pipeline for us with support coming forward from the federal government to ensure that that project continues to go ahead, because we on this side of the House know that water security is certainly something that we need to be doing for these regional communities, and Central Queensland is certainly no different.

**Mr Lister** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. Minister, resume your seat. Member for Southern Downs, welcome to the party! You are warned under the standing orders.

**Mr BUTCHER:** That investment of \$40 million going to the Rockhampton Regional Council is part of our \$5.2 billion investment in water in Queensland. We are a government that is delivering water security for regional Queensland, and we can put on top of that the Fitzroy to Gladstone pipeline and the Rookwood Weir, which is now 99 per cent complete. I certainly look forward to going up to Rockhampton and celebrating the completion of the Rookwood Weir that we have put money into, and we were also investing money into support for those—

**Mr ANDREW:** Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order under standing order 118(b), relevance. I specifically asked for a—

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Mirani, I am going to cut you off right there. I allowed a question which probably could have been ruled out of order. I have given the minister latitude to answer it. You will resume your seat.

**Mr BUTCHER:** I note that the opposition had to go over there to tell him to do that, so it is good that the opposition is helping One Nation at the moment to get through parliament. That is good to see.

I am going to use the rest of my time to talk for the member about water security particularly in Central Queensland. There are no bigger supporters of water security in Central Queensland than this government and me so that the industries of the future and the agriculture industry get that support from a government that cares about regional Queensland and particularly Central Queensland. I know that the member was very keen to make sure that the Mount Morgan pipeline was supported, and that is exactly what this government did—supported that fantastic project to the tune of \$40 million.

When we talk about the pipeline from Fitzroy to Gladstone, it is important to recognise that the pipeline is being built to not only support existing industries in the Gladstone region but also support the new and emerging industries that are happening in the Gladstone region. We built Rookwood Weir in the member's electorate to ensure that those irrigators and the agricultural sector move forward in that region on the banks of the Fitzroy River, and we are delivering that in spades. We are delivering Rookwood Weir in Central Queensland. We are delivering funding to go to the Rockhampton Regional Council to build that pipeline to Mount Morgan to support the member's community, and we will be delivering that very shortly.

*(Time expired)*

**Mr SPEAKER:** Members for Coomera and Burleigh, you may be hidden on the grassy knoll but I can still hear you. You are both warned under the standing orders.

### Agriculture Industry

**Mr WHITING:** My question is of the Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries and Minister for Rural Communities. Will the minister highlight the importance of candidate crop suitability and how that may apply elsewhere when it comes to determining suitability in Queensland?

**Mr SPEAKER:** You have one minute, Minister.

**Mr FURNER:** I will need a little bit more, but I will try to bring it home in one minute. I thank the member for his question and note his strong support for agriculture, particularly in terms of crop suitability. We can find a lot of this detail on the DAF website in terms of crop suitability. Interestingly, the other Sunday in my electorate I noticed the Leader of the Opposition announcing an LNP candidate for Ferny Grove. There is a question about suitability when it comes to that particular announcement. The headline in the *Courier-Mail* was simply 'LNP endorses man who said "good stuff" to "racist" video'. To give some context to that headline, I quote the article directly—

The then-Young LNP president made the comments in December 2020 in response to a video sent to him before it was posted to the Young LNP Gold Coast Facebook page, in which members call for Australians to 'stop celebrating a culture that couldn't even invent the bloody wheel for god sake'.

This is the type of candidate that the LNP is saying is suitable—

*(Time expired)*


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

## TOW TRUCK BILL

### Second Reading

Resumed from 25 October (see p. 3274), on motion of Mr Bailey—

That the bill be now read a second time.

 **Ms PUGH** (Mount Ommaney—ALP) (11.16 am), continuing: I rise to resume my contribution to the Tow Truck Bill. In doing so, I want to acknowledge the highway heroes who do such a wonderful job, as I said yesterday, keeping the Centenary Highway and the Ipswich Motorway clear after there has been a bingle. Yesterday before the debate was adjourned I was just about to start the part of my contribution where I talk about the maximum fee provisions. As I was driving home along the Centenary last night I was thinking that in my particular office complex car parks are quite hotly contested and there is advertising in that car park that if you park your car in the wrong space your car will be towed. There is also advertising that explicitly spells out the fee that will be charged. It is about \$290, from memory. I have never been towed, of course, because I always park in the right place.

**Mrs Gilbert** interjected.

**Ms PUGH:** Thank you, member for Mackay; I am a goody-two-shoes, yes. I think it is really important, where possible, to advertise those towing costs, because it provides a point of reference to people when they are making that decision—that is, 'Is \$290 a cost that I can afford to bear?' When people are making that decision about where to park, it gives them an opportunity to think about whether that is a cost they can bear, and I do not know anybody right now, with the rising cost of living, who could afford to pay \$290 because they could not be bothered to move their car a couple of spaces down. I often see people pull into the wrong car park, read the little sign and off they go. I believe that is because they can see the little sign that outlines the amount they will have to pay.

I am really pleased to speak about the maximum fee provisions in the bill. As I outlined yesterday, there is a particular car park in Oxley where cars get towed. I do not believe that there is a maximum amount advertised there, although I could be wrong, so that is not something I can specifically recall. As I said yesterday, owners of cars have contacted me or spoken with me at mobile offices when they have had their car towed, and it has happened quite quickly there.


Obviously, the viability of the towing industry is crucial. It does provide an essential service to our community. Others have described these drivers previously as highway heroes, especially when they are getting accidents cleared as quickly as possible. We know that accidents on our motorways can cost the economy billions of dollars in lost productivity every year, and that is why the service that these towies provide is just so incredibly vital. However, to remain viable they need to charge reasonable fees for those services.

As we know, motorists are often at their most vulnerable after a crash. The government has a role in ensuring they are protected from unscrupulous practices when they are at their most vulnerable and they are able to make good decisions. To achieve the required balance between ensuring that the industry is viable and that motorists are protected, the bill makes provision for the regulation of a number of towing fees. These includes regulating the maximum fees for towing a vehicle from a crash scene or from a private property. These fees will be prescribed in the new regulation currently being drafted.

The fee for towing a vehicle from the crash scene includes loading the vehicle onto the tow truck; cleaning up the scene—which, as we know, can be done in really tricky circumstances and often involves dangerous materials such as glass that also have the potential to do serious damage to other cars which could result in other accidents if it is not cleaned up properly; and, of course, towing for the first 50 kilometres from the scene to a holding yard or another location as selected by the motorist. The maximum fee ensures motorists are paying a fair amount and do not need to consider competing quotes at what can be a very stressful time.

In 2018 the Palaszczuk government introduced significant reforms to private property towing in response to community concern. I can see that the clock is going to beat me so in the time that I have left can I simply say that I think this bill is really important. I certainly know that it will be welcomed by my community and I commend it to the House.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Kelly): Before I call the next speaker, I remind members of the House of those members who are on a warning. They are the members for Kawana, Logan, Lytton, Woodridge, Nanango, Maryborough, Callide, Toowoomba South, Buderim, Broadwater, Miller, Hinchinbrook, Scenic Rim, Southern Downs, Burleigh and Coomera.

 **Mr POWER** (Logan—ALP) (11.21 am): I appreciate the reminder. If it is the dead of night, there is driving rain and your vehicle has broken down or you have been in an accident, whether with another driver or just with the edge of the road, or even perhaps an accident with multiple cars and multiple injuries, you need to know not only that the first responders from our emergency services are there—police, ambulance and in the case of cutting open cars, fires—but also that those who can move those cars and/or trucks after those accidents are part of a good, strong industry that is well regulated so there is a fair return.

There are issues with cars that are parked illegally. The one experience I have had with towing is accidentally leaving my car in an inner-city area. I was not familiar with parking in the inner city and left my car in a clearway and it was towed at four o'clock. I just put that out as a warning for MPs who do not spend a lot of time parking in the city that your car will get towed if you leave it parked in a clearway during peak times. Tow trucks provide a vital economic service. We want roads to provide parking during certain hours but also to be clearways to ensure our rush hours work effectively. They have a role in both the safety of our roads and the effectiveness of our roads.

The towing industry is important when it comes to dumped or abandoned cars. It is also important for small businesses that have people parking outside their premises who do not intend to use the services of their small business. However, we have seen that there are abuses and unscrupulous drivers taking advantage of that. It was not an issue for the small business but instead was a way to make money for those who are unscrupulous. It is because of those types of situations that we have had to act. We keep a close eye on this industry, and if there are those who seek to take advantage at the edges of the law then we need to take action. For the most part we have an industry that is working really hard at keeping fees reasonable and that is doing a great job.

It is also very important that tow truck operators work with our police. We have put in place new hooning legislation. I recognise the police minister on this issue. We reversed the onus of proof such that we did not have to prove it was a particular driver but instead it was the car that was involved and the registered owner has responsibility. These new laws give new powers to our police. Those cars that have been involved in hooning can be taken off our streets. I have been to the secret impounding yards where our good friends who are partners with the police in Logan, Harvey's Towing, have car after car lined up that they have towed on behalf of the police after the legal process. These new laws are taking hoon cars off the street—imposing the ultimate penalty for those who want to put others in danger on our streets by taking their car away and impounding it for a period of time. A car we saw carrying on extreme hooning in Crestmead was towed off the streets by Harvey's Towing and brought here to the front of parliament. It was then used, under the new legislation we have also put in place, for emergency services workers—firefighters in this case—to practise on. In this case they took a beautiful V8 Commodore, which was a point of regret—but that was the responsibility of the driver—and the roof was removed.

**Mr Watts** interjected.

**Mr POWER:** It was the ultimate punishment. We work with the tow truck drivers and we set fair and regulated fees. The member for Toowoomba North does not acknowledge this, but I know that an important role they play in the community is in the prevention of hooning. The member for Toowoomba North does not seem to think hooning is an important problem. I say that these laws are important and I say that the partnership we have with companies such as Harvey's Towing, which tows hoon cars off the streets of Logan, is important in our Queensland society.

**Mr Watts** interjected.

**Mr POWER:** The fact that the member is interjecting saying it is not relevant to the bill I find deeply concerning. I will ignore the member for Toowoomba North because he fundamentally does not understand the industry and I will not get side-tracked.

We have seen a significant reduction in accidents in certain intersections in Logan. Tow truck drivers used to pause on the edge of the Logan Motorway, before the intersection of the Mount Lindesay Highway and the Logan Motorway, ready to go if there was any accident. Accidents were frequent at this dangerous intersection, especially the right turn going to Ipswich where traffic had to go across other traffic on a four-lane road. The major investment we made, working with Transurban in an innovative way, has transformed that intersection. We have also seen four-laning on the Mount Lindesay Highway going south from Park Ridge Road past the very location where Harvey's Towing is. They probably regret that we are eliminating some of their work, but it is important that we can make our roads safer.


Where there are accidents we want to see our tow truck drivers doing a fantastic job in reducing that impact. Harvey's Towing is a business that is in Park Ridge. It has existed as a family business since 1977. They have over 150 workers—not all in Park Ridge. I wish they were. We have to spread it around. They have blue and gold livery—the only place with blue and gold livery that I support. This might interest the member for Toowoomba North: you can buy online livery in blue and gold symbolising Harvey's Towing.

**Mrs Gerber:** Blue and gold? Good colours!

**Mr POWER:** The member for Currumbin has just picked it up. She is a little bit slow.

As I said, we used to see tow trucks parked on the edge of the Mount Lindesay Highway. In the committee process, Harvey's Towing made important submissions about the way that tow truck drivers are assessed. Significantly, they noted that it is important to have those regulatory tests because we have seen unscrupulous people involved in the industry and that brings the entire industry down. Great companies that have really strong HR practices do not want to see that either, but they did raise concerns about the consistency of the accreditation process. The department noted that where individuals are assessed on the merits of a situation it could appear inconsistent. They recognised and respected the fact that that could appear inconsistent to the tow truck operator. It is important that we raise those issues because having tow truck drivers assessed and accredited is a very important part of the process. We want to recognise that we have the best tow truck drivers and do not have any who are unscrupulous, so that was a worthwhile discussion.

Earlier in the process, the company raised concerns and I took them to the transport minister's office. They received very good feedback from their association about this ongoing process, which has been happening for a long period. The minister spoke about the multiple roundtables that were held during the lead-up to the process, which shows the strong effort made to engage with the industry in order to get good consultation. I was really pleased to see that. I know I did my bit by bringing forward representatives. Long before the bill process began, I certainly had discussions with the minister about the concerns that those operators had and I think those concerns have been addressed. The bill reflects the concerns of industry that other states had processes in place that we do not have in this state. That is why I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr MELLISH** (Aspley—ALP) (11.31 am): I rise to speak on the Tow Truck Bill. I thank the minister for introducing the bill and his department for the significant work that has gone into its construction. I acknowledge the committee for looking at the bill, particularly the committee chair, the member for Kurwongbah. I served on his committee in the last term so I know that he always looks at these matters very diligently and thoroughly. He is a great chair to have when dealing with transport matters. I am sure that over the years he has had a few of his cars on tow trucks, for quite harmless reasons I am sure. I know he is a big car fan.

I am sure that the chair of the committee would be a big backer of many aspects of the bill, particularly the committee's recommendation that the minister convene a working group of all interested tow truck industry stakeholders. That is really important. Having peak industry representation on a range of issues helps both government and opposition to draft policy positions and legislation that impact positively in the community and ensure all interests are looked at. When regulating an industry, there is always a balance to be found between meeting commercial interests and ensuring consumer protection measures are in place.

The towing industry would have very tight margins and at times it would not be easy work. They perform a service for the community. To remain viable, they need to charge reasonable fees for their services. At the same time, often motorists are at their most vulnerable after a crash and the government has a role in ensuring that they are protected from any predatory practices by unscrupulous operators in the industry. To achieve the required balance, the bill makes provision for the regulation of a number of towing fees. These include regulating the maximum fees for towing a vehicle from a crash scene or from a private property. These fees will be prescribed in the new regulation.

About 20 years ago, I needed a car towed up the Toowoomba range from near the McDonald's at Gatton. It cost me about \$500, which was a lot of money for a poor uni student. It took me a fair bit of time to pay that back. It is good to see that, in the legislation before us, the maximum fee ensures that motorists will pay a fair amount and will not need to consider competing quotes at what could be a very stressful time. This is about competing quotes and it is also about those areas where there is not much competition. We want to make sure that people are not exploited.


In 2018, the government introduced significant reforms to private property towing in response to community concerns about practices. Those reforms included maximum regulated fees, including capped storage fees, to ensure motorists were not subjected to excessive fees when their vehicles were removed from private property. Whilst that cap on storage fees for vehicles towed from private property is being maintained, the cap will not apply to other regulated towing services such as crash towing.

In my area of the north side, Gympie Road often tops the big insurers' lists of dangerous intersections. There are a number of pretty bad accident hotspots, the intersections of Gympie and Hamilton roads and Gympie and Webster roads to name just two. For many years I have been pushing to find solutions to prevent crashes and, therefore, prevent the need for tow truck services. Traffic congestion is a really big issue and it was really good to hear other members mentioning this as well. Accidents are a major contributor to road congestion. As anyone listening to the ABC or other radio stations in the morning will know, if you hear that there is a crash on Gympie Road you know that traffic will be banked up for kilometres.

Therefore, ahead of the budget this year, I was really pleased to hear the Treasurer announce \$35 million for a detailed study into the Gympie Road bypass, which is a solution that I have been pushing for over a number of years. That bypass would benefit the entire north side of Brisbane. There are potential cost savings and time savings for locals. The number of tow trucks we would get off Gympie Road as a result of that project would be outstanding. It would be great to see that happen. In future years I would love to be here and say that Gympie Road no longer tops the RACQ's or other insurers' lists for the most dangerous road in Queensland and the most number of crashes.

Turning back to the bill specifically, these measures will not mean that a tow truck business can charge any amount for the storage of a crashed vehicle. The new regulation will retain the requirement that a customer must be advised of the storage charges to be applied at least 48 hours before the charges are due to commence. That will give the customer the opportunity to explore their options and have their vehicle transferred. Therefore, while industry will be able to continue to charge reasonable fees for vehicle storage, consumers will have knowledge and insight into what those charges will be.

I support the bill. I think it is an outstanding bill. Well done to the minister and to the committee for its inquiry and recommendations. I thank everyone who has contributed to the bill.

 **Mr LANGBROEK** (Surfers Paradise—LNP) (11.37 am): I rise to speak on the Tow Truck Bill. Given that you are in the chair, Mr Deputy Speaker Kelly, I first acknowledge a couple of guests from Taiwan whom we met on our recent visit in April and May. It is nice to welcome them to the public gallery in the parliament of Queensland.

The bill seeks to bring about significant changes in the towing industry, with the primary goal of enhancing road safety and protecting the interests of motorists, property owners and industry professionals. Earlier this month, on 12 October 2023, I raised Gold Coast crime issues and marked the 10th anniversary of a bikie brawl in Broadbeach along with the subsequent introduction of the VLAD laws. I table a related article from the *Gold Coast Bulletin*, dated 30 October 2013 and titled 'Police launch statewide blitz on tow truck businesses with outlaw bikie links'.

*Tabled paper:* Article from the *Gold Coast Bulletin* online, dated 30 October 2013, titled 'Police launch statewide blitz on tow truck businesses with outlaw bikie links' [\[1772\]](#).

I do that because, over the past decade, we have seen a transformation in the tow truck industry, which at that time was definitely associated with potential outlaw bikie gangs. In addition, as the member for Aspley and other members have mentioned, in the past five years, in central Brisbane and across

the state, some people whose vehicles were towed were charged extreme fees. Certainly I remember that happening at my former dental surgery in Surfers Paradise when the car of one of my patients was towed. My wife rang a police officer whom my patient knew. That policeman said, 'Just pay it. There's nothing we can do it about it.' That is an example of something that was happening a decade ago. Subsequently, the first regulations came into what was a completely unregulated field of activity and today we are here debating proposed changes to those regulations.

In the 2013 article, the then taskforce boss, Superintendent Jim Keogh, was quoted as saying—  
Criminal motorcycle gangs and gang members hold significant interest and influence in the tow truck industry.

It goes on—

There have been reports of vehicles being unlawfully towed and operators charging exorbitant amounts of money to free the vehicle.

I was proud to be part of a government that took strong action with tougher laws, more police resources and a court system that followed through.

The origins of this bill can be traced back to the 2018 independent investigation into the towing industry and a comprehensive review of Queensland's tow truck scheme and governing legislation in 2019. First and foremost, this bill clarifies the primary purpose it serves—specifically, outlining what constitutes regulated towing and distinguishing between operating a tow truck and operating a tow truck business. To streamline the industry, it replaces the existing terms of 'licence' and 'certificate' with a new designation—accreditation—providing the necessary regulatory powers to ensure flexibility and relevance. Moreover, the legislation aims to improve the accreditation process by introducing eligibility requirements and grounds for refusal, renewal and amendment of accreditations. It also establishes a structured scheme of authorised officers' powers whilst offering safeguards against self-incrimination and protection for seized items.

Certain issues have been raised regarding the timeliness of this bill. It has been noted that, whilst the changes have been in consideration since 2018 and 2019, the accompanying regulations have not yet been shared with the industry. The government has not provided a compelling justification for the sudden need for these legislative changes.

Another area of concern involves the determination of an appropriate person within the industry. The lack of clearly defined criteria has hindered the entry of new operators, particularly during a period of workforce shortages. There are also concerns about the fairness of procedures when suspending or cancelling licences. It should be noted that operators are apprehensive about a potential increase in undesirable behaviours not addressed in the new legislation such as spotters' fees, the selling of personal injury claims, the sale of personal information obtained at accident scenes and bribery. For example, I have been made aware of tow truck companies in the south-east only weeks ago approaching small businesses and individuals offering a \$50 spotter fee if they contact the company and report an incident.

The introduction of government imposed penalties for vehicle damage during towing has sparked concerns among operators, who prefer the concept of civil liability. They worry that these penalties may lead to risk aversion and, as other members have mentioned—I think the member for Mount Ommaney said it—resulting in longer accident clearance times and added delays for road users.

There were a number of issues highlighted in the committee process, including the establishment of a working group with industry operators, the reversal of the onus of proof in specific clauses and potential conflicts with the Human Rights Act arising from the power to remove an individual's accreditation based on untested charges rather than convictions. Stakeholder views, mainly from tow truck operators, mirror these issues, with many expressing frustrations at the limited time for submissions and a lack of prior consultation with the industry.

The opposition acknowledges the importance of passing the bill but is committed to highlighting the industry's concerns. These concerns pertain, as I have mentioned, to the lack of consultation, the potential issues within the legislation and the timeliness of the proposed changes. I refer to the submission by the RACQ dated 8 August 2023 titled 'RACQ's submission on the inquiry into the Tow Truck Bill 2023'. I table a copy.

*Tabled paper:* Media release, dated 8 August 2023, by the RACQ, titled 'RACQ submission on the inquiry into the Tow Truck Bill 2023' [[1773](#)].


The RACQ highlights key areas of importance in the bill and existing 1973 Tow Truck Act which need urgent addressing to ensure motorists are not left exposed and vulnerable to exploitation by third-party accident management companies and credit repair hire operators. RACQ chief executive of insurance, Mr Trent Sayers, said—

... watered down protections and lack of—  
awareness or—

proper enforcement of legislative requirements can unnecessarily place upward pressure on insurance premiums, lead to repair issues and intimidating, coercive conduct by towing providers ...

On this side of the House, our priorities are to drive down the cost of living by reducing the impact of crime on the insurance premiums of Queenslanders. The Tow Truck Bill 2023 is designed to modernise the towing industry; however, it is crucial that we address the concerns raised. As others have mentioned, we do not oppose the bill but we will ensure that these concerns are not overlooked and that the voices of industry operators are heard and considered during the implementation of this legislation.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Krause): Before calling the member for Nicklin, I would like to acknowledge in the gallery today students from Westside Christian College in the electorate of Bundamba—accompanied by their teacher, my brother, Mr Paul Krause.

 **Mr SKELTON** (Nicklin—ALP) (11.44 am): I rise to speak in support of the Palaszczuk government's Tow Truck Bill 2023. First and foremost, this bill maintains substantive portions of the framework under the existing Tow Truck Act 1973. The Tow Truck Act currently provides for the towing, in regulated Queensland areas, of vehicles damaged in accidents, seized by police or towed from private property in certain circumstances. It also provides a framework for the subsequent handling and storage of those vehicles, the handling of confidential information and offence, enforcement, administrative and review provisions. It will also maintain the accreditation requirements for people who operate a tow truck or tow truck business and the obligation of people with an accreditation to comply with duties, obligations, standards of conduct and other requirements. The bill will also modernise the existing legislation by introducing new structure and terminology, which will improve consistency across accreditations administered by the Department of Transport and Main Roads. It will also enhance the accreditation process—including eligibility requirements—and will ensure that penalties and offences are targeted and appropriate.

The 1973 act was revised in 1997 to incorporate police seizure towing and again in 2018 to include private property towing as a result of the independent investigation into the towing industry. The independent investigation made 22 recommendations focused on including private property towing in the regulatory framework. All 22 recommendations were endorsed by the Palaszczuk government. In 2018, legislative amendments to the 1973 Act and the Tow Truck Regulation 2009 were made to support implementation of these recommendations. All other forms of towing, including breakdown towing, trade towing and compliance towing, are not covered by the legislative framework.

As of April this year, there are approximately 98 tow truck licence holders, 1,173 tow truck drivers and 72 tow truck assistants approved to operate within Queensland's regulated tow truck scheme. This bill gives effect to the remaining recommendations made by the independent investigation by delivering a modernised tow truck scheme in Queensland that is designed to improve road safety and deliver improved outcomes and protections for motorists, property owners and industry professionals.

The policy objective is to modernise the existing legislation by introducing a new structure and terminology. The bill clearly states the main purposes of the act, clarifies what is considered regulated towing, clarifies the distinction between operating a tow truck and operating a tow truck business, unifies industry members under the new designation of accreditation to replace the terms 'licence' and 'certificate', provides appropriate regulation-making powers to ensure the legislation is flexible and remains contemporary, removes unnecessary provisions and updates penalties for particular offences.

The main objectives are: facilitating best practice in the tow truck industry by providing a balanced framework for regulating the operation of tow trucks to carry out regulated towing; protecting the public by ensuring tow trucks carrying out regulated towing are operated in a safe, competent and professional manner and at a reasonable cost to consumers; and protecting public safety and the safety of the road network including through ensuring the safe removal of motor vehicles from the scene of an incident, from a place of seizure or from private property.

The bill restructures provisions from the 1973 act to aid readability. Specifically, fundamental concepts used within the legislation are clearly explained and located together at the start of the bill. These include explaining references to towing and defining the terms 'tow truck', 'regulated towing', 'private property towing', 'tow truck business', 'towing authority' and 'private property towing consent'.

The bill clarifies that regulated towing is: the towing of a motor vehicle that is damaged in an incident in a regulated area from the scene of the incident; or the towing of a motor vehicle that is seized in a regulated area from the place of seizure; or private property towing, which is the towing of a motor vehicle parked on private property in a regulated area from the property if the owner of the vehicle has not expressly requested or directed the towing of the vehicle from the property.

The bill maintains the same regulated areas as those prescribed by the 1973 act. Consistent with the 1973 act, the bill provides that it is an offence to conduct a tow truck business unless the person is the holder of an operator accreditation for the business. Further, it is an offence to operate a tow truck to carry out regulated towing unless the person is the holder of a driver accreditation or to assist in the operation of a tow truck unless the person holds a driver or assistant accreditation.

The distinction between a tow truck and tow truck business is that currently activities associated with a tow truck are referred to as operating a tow truck. The context of the provision then determines whether the operation refers to operating a business involving the use of tow trucks or operating the tow truck itself, such as driving the tow truck or loading a vehicle onto the tow truck. The bill introduces the concept of a tow truck business as a business or trade that involves the operation of one or more tow trucks to carry out regulated towing.

The bill also defines the term 'operate' in relation to a tow truck to mean driving or otherwise operating a tow truck for consideration or in the course of a business or trade and also includes offering to do those things. This will assist in distinguishing provisions dealing with the carrying on of a tow truck business from those dealing with the operation of the tow truck itself.

Currently, under the 1973 act a tow truck is licensed and the person is the holder of the licence. This then results in a licensed tow truck. A person who wishes to operate a tow truck, including driving it, must have a driver's certificate, and a person who wishes to be employed on, or connected with, the use of a tow truck must have a driver's certificate or an assistant's certificate.

The bill proposes to unify industry members under the new designation of accreditation, which will include an operator accreditation, a driver accreditation and an assistant accreditation. An operator accreditation authorises the holder to conduct a tow truck business—that is, a business or trade that involves the operation of one or more tow trucks to carry out regulated towing. A driver accreditation authorises the holder to operate or assist with the operation of a tow truck to carry out regulated towing. An assistant accreditation authorises the holder to operate or assist with the operation of a tow truck to carry out regulated towing. The bill clarifies, however, that an assistant accreditation does not authorise the holder to drive a tow truck.

To provide for operational details and ensure the legislation remains flexible and contemporary, the bill contains various regulation-making powers. The more significant of these include the power to make regulations for: the making of applications for accreditation; the giving, renewal, amendment and replacement of accreditation documents; the obligations, duties and standards of conduct of persons who hold an accreditation; the auditing by the chief executive of accreditation holders for compliance with this act; obtaining and dealing with towing authorities; obtaining or attempting to obtain a person's authority to repair a motor vehicle damaged in an incident in a regulated area; requirements in relation to the storage and release of motor vehicles, including requirements in relation to holding yards; certain maximum and minimum amounts able to be charged; and the specifications and requirements for tow trucks.


The bill ensures that any unnecessary provisions previously contained in the 1973 act are removed; for example, the maximum permissible driving hours are not included, as these are already contained in the Heavy Vehicle National Law. A review of existing offences and penalties was undertaken to ensure penalties appropriately reflect the seriousness of the offence with reference to other offences within the tow truck legislation compared to similar offences within transport legislation.

The maximum penalty for a number of offences will be increased, including: an accredited driver who tows a vehicle from the scene of an incident or a place of seizure without obtaining the necessary towing authority, increased from 20 to 60 penalty units; carrying out private property towing without a private property towing consent, increased from 50 to 60 penalty units; a person obtaining or attempting to obtain private property towing consents when not the holder of operator accreditation, increased from 50 to 60 penalty units; an accredited driver towing a vehicle if a person is inside the vehicle, increased



from 50 to 60 penalty units; giving false or misleading information as well as dishonesty and coercion, increased from 40 to 60 penalty units; obstructing or threatening authorised officers, increased from 40 to 80 penalty units; disclosing sensitive information, increased from 50 to 100 penalty units; and an operator who fails to comply with alternative requirements while an exemption is in effect, increased from 20 to 80 penalty units.

In summary, this bill modernises Queensland's tow truck scheme and makes it fit for purpose. It also gives effect to the remaining recommendations made by the independent investigation into the towing industry and the findings of the 2019 review conducted by TMR. I commend this bill to the House.

 **Mrs GILBERT** (Mackay—ALP) (11.54 am): As road users, we all hope that we will never be in a crash and need to have a tow truck. The tow truck industry provides a vital service in clearing the road to get traffic moving again. They can get damaged vehicles back to where they need to be for repair, insurance claims or forensic investigation. I would like to send a shout-out to the hardworking tow truck drivers and companies who do a professional and skilful job in high stress situations. We need to protect the reputation of these great people and their businesses, especially those people who are doing the right thing.

Crashes are traumatic events, and we cannot forget that even an uninjured driver is often in a very vulnerable position after a crash. It is very difficult to think clearly when you are in a state of stress or shock. We need to ensure that everyone attending a crash scene is a fit person for the role they are engaged to carry out. I have been the first on the scene at a major accident and everyone was in shock. They were vulnerable. The scene was chaotic and it was horrendous, especially until emergency services arrived. Even then, with order put in place by emergency services the shock of what had occurred did not dissipate. Everyone was vulnerable. I was not even part of the accident. In my region there have been too many crashes recently where vehicles needed to be towed and drivers and passengers needed emergency service attendance. Lives have, sadly, been lost in my region. It is a timely reminder for all drivers to drive to the road and traffic conditions around them. It is better to be a bit patient during peak traffic times than suffer injury or worse.

To support vulnerable motorists and the industry that helps keep traffic on our roads moving we need to stamp out practices that do not support the towing industry such as bribery and incentives to gain information about a crash. Comprehensive consultation has been undertaken on the new legislation. The community and towing industry were asked if they supported tow truck companies using incentives to secure a motorist's approval to tow their crashed vehicle. I understand that over three-quarters of the responses from industry and the community did not support the use of incentives and inducements, as they believed this practice may lead to coercion in what is an already stressful situation for motorists. In view of this feedback, the existing bribery protections in the legislation will be maintained and, in some instances, strengthened.

It is proposed that the new Tow Truck Regulation currently in development will address this behaviour by making it an offence for: towing accreditation holders to offer an inducement to vehicle owners; accreditation holders to offer inducements to another person in exchange for providing information about an incident such as a crash; and a person receiving a benefit in exchange for information about an incident—for instance, using crash spotters. The penalties for these offences are proposed to be consistent with similar offences that exist in the act. Importantly, if a tow truck operator has already been doing the right thing—like many of the ones in my area—they will not be impacted by these new provisions.

This bill strikes a good balance. It provides for road and public safety and delivers improved outcomes and protections for motorists. It will also support industry to deliver efficient and effective outcomes. The Tow Truck Bill 2023 will deliver a modern tow truck scheme in Queensland that is responsive to emerging operational concerns. It will also improve road and public safety and deliver improved outcomes for motorists, property owners, industry professionals and the community.

Regulated towing as defined in this regulation refers to the removal of vehicles damaged in a crash, vehicles seized by police and the removal of vehicles from private properties in defined areas of Queensland. These areas are predominantly in South-East Queensland, but I am pleased to see that larger regional areas such as Cairns, Mackay, Bundaberg, Townsville and Rockhampton have all been included. They are locations with a high population density where we need to facilitate the removal of vehicles involved in crashes to aid the normal flow of traffic.


Consultation with the towing industry, motoring groups and the community has been at the centre of this tow truck legislation review process over a number of years. Since 2019, TMR has been in regular contact with stakeholders seeking their views on how the industry should be regulated. Their input has been crucial to ensure that legislation balances the viability of the towing industry and the need to protect consumers while maintaining efficiency in our road network.

Consultation measures included holding two tow truck industry forums, releasing a public discussion paper online survey and meeting with motorist advocate groups, insurance companies, the Queensland Police Service and tow truck businesses. In addition, there has been continuous engagement and communication with the towing industry on issues such as holding yard storage fees, exemptions for heavy vehicle towing and proposed offences, among other things.

To ensure that the industry remains informed about the changes, TMR will be meeting with industry representatives in the near future to discuss the new legislation and its implementation. It is anticipated that further meetings will be held early next year. In line with the committee's recommendation on the bill, TMR will also support industry to establish a tow truck industry peak body should it wish to do so. As a result of the valuable input from the towing industry, motoring groups and the community, this bill will achieve its objectives for Queenslanders with a modern tow truck scheme that is responsive and safe and delivers improved community outcomes.

Others have told personal stories about extreme charges for towing. It is good to know that this bill will be regulating an industry with commercial interests and ensuring consumer protection measures are in place. This has to be balanced out. The viability of the towing industry is crucial as it is an essential service in our community. To remain viable, they need to charge reasonable fees for their service. At the same time, motorists are often at their most vulnerable after a crash, so this legislation has a role in ensuring that they are protected from unscrupulous or predatory practices in these circumstances.

To achieve the required balance, the bill makes provisions for the regulation of a number of towing fees. These include regulating the maximum fees for towing a vehicle from a crash scene or from a private property. These fees will be prescribed in the new regulation currently being drafted. The fee for towing a vehicle from a crash scene includes loading the vehicle onto a tow truck, cleaning the scene and towing for the first 50 kilometres from the scene to a holding yard or other location chosen by the motorist. The maximum fees ensure that the motorists are paying a fair amount and do not need to consider competing quotes at what can be a very stressful time. I know that when a motorist is at the site of one of those scenes it is very hard for them to comprehend what is being said to them by competing interests and it is very unfair for them to have to make a decision at that time. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Hon. MT RYAN** (Morayfield—ALP) (Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services) (12.04 pm): I rise to support the Tow Truck Bill 2023. As the House has heard, the policy objectives of the Tow Truck Bill are: to maintain the framework previously provided by the Tow Truck Act 1973 for the towing, in regulated areas of Queensland, of motor vehicles damaged in incidents, seized by police from off-street regulated parking areas or towed from private property in certain circumstances; to maintain the requirement for persons who conduct a tow truck business or are involved in operating tow trucks in regulated areas to hold an accreditation; to maintain the requirement for persons who hold an accreditation to comply with duties, obligations, standards of conduct and other requirements; to modernise the existing legislation by introducing a new structure and terminology that improves consistency across accreditations administered by the Department of Transport and Main Roads; to enhance the accreditation process, including accreditation eligibility requirements; to ensure penalties and offences are targeted and appropriate; and to modernise enforcement powers to ensure authorised officers have suitable compliance powers.

There has been a lot said in the contributions of members to this bill. It is an important bill. I know some people would see it as a very dry topic, but it is important to acknowledge the critical work that those in the tow truck business do for community safety. They are present in moments when people are experiencing hardship and difficult times. It is important to highlight that it is a great responsibility to be present in a person's moment of vulnerability, and there needs to be a framework and protections of vulnerable people in that framework. There needs to be high standards.

Tow truck operators are often present in people's moment of vulnerability. Sometimes they are the first at the scene of a traffic incident and sometimes they are confronted with quite challenging and complex situations where people have been injured or worse. We need to acknowledge that situation and we need to appreciate the type of character of being a tow truck operator and the contribution they

make to people who are in vulnerable situations and also more broadly to community safety. To be there in that moment with other first responders is an important and critical role, and with that role there needs to be responsibilities and high standards because they are providing an essential service.

We would hope that there would be no demand for situations involving tow truck operators or emergency services in respect of traffic crashes and incidents on our roads, but we know unfortunately that these things happen. There is to a large extent a lot of sadness and tragedy that goes along with serious incidents on our roads.

Tow truck operators provide a vital service in clearing roads, enhancing community safety and being there when people are experiencing a moment of vulnerability because of their involvement in a traffic incident. We need to make sure we get the balance right so that we have a viable tow truck industry which has responsibility and high standards. This bill achieves that right balance. It achieves a good balance between ensuring that our roads get cleared in good time and that there is an appropriate response to the needs of occupants of the vehicles who have been involved in traffic crashes or incidents.

I want to raise the issues that have been considered and acknowledged within the consultation that was undertaken in respect of this bill. I take this opportunity to highlight the work of the committee in engaging in that consultation process and for their very considered and thorough report.

It is interesting to note that the majority of responses from industry and community did not support the use of incentives and inducements in respect of this sector. The common view was that the practice may lead to coercion of a motorist. I agree with that. As a consequence, the existing bribery protections in the legislation will be maintained and, in some instances, actually strengthened.

It is proposed that a new tow truck regulation currently in development will make it an offence for: towing accreditation holders to offer inducements to vehicle owners; accreditation holders to offer inducements to another person in exchange for providing information about an incident such as a crash; and a person receiving benefit in exchange for information about an incident—for instance, using crash spotters. The penalties for these offences are proposed to be consistent with similar offences that exist in the current act. Importantly, if tow truck operators are already doing the right thing, there will be no impact on their operations.

Regulating an industry with commercial interests and ensuring consumer protection is always a balancing act. The viability of the towing industry is important as it is an essential service provider in our community. To remain viable, everyone accepts that they need to be able to charge reasonable fees for their services. At the same time, motorists, as I have already mentioned, are often at their most vulnerable after a crash or traffic incident. Therefore, the government has a role in ensuring that those people, the vulnerable, are protected from unscrupulous or predatory practices. To achieve the required balance, the bill makes provision for the regulation of a number of towing fees. These include regulating the maximum fees for towing a vehicle from a crash scene or from a private property. These fees will be prescribed in the new regulation currently being drafted. The fee for towing a vehicle from a crash scene includes loading the vehicle onto the tow truck, cleaning the scene and towing for the first 50 kilometres from the scene to a holding yard or other location chosen by the motorist. The maximum fee ensures that motorists are paying a fair amount and do not need to consider competing quotes at what can be a very stressful time.


In 2018, this government introduced significant reforms to private property towing in response to community concern about certain unscrupulous practices. These reforms introduce maximum regulated fees, including capped storage fees, to ensure motorists were not subjected to excessive fees when their vehicles were removed from private property. While this cap on storage fees for vehicles towed from private property is being maintained, the cap will not apply to other regulated towing services such as crash towing. However, this does not mean that a tow truck business can charge any amount for storage of a crashed vehicle. The new regulation will retain the requirement that a customer must be advised of the storage charges to be applied at least 48 hours before the charges are due to commence. This gives the customer the opportunity to explore their options and have their vehicle transferred to another location if they wish. Industry can therefore continue to charge reasonable fees for vehicle storage and consumers will continue to have the ability to choose where their vehicle is stored.

Assessing a person's suitability to be an authorised tow truck business driver or assistant is an important part of the regulated tow truck scheme. Checks are in place to ensure those operating within the scheme are suitable. Criminal and traffic history checks are undertaken for all operators and drivers who apply to be accredited under the scheme. Given the varied nature of criminal and traffic histories, each application for accreditation has to be assessed on its merits. Offences that are likely to make a

person unsuitable for a towing role include, but are not limited to, those involving violence, abuse, theft or intimidation. A recommendation from the committee report was that consideration be given to criminal convictions being weighted more heavily than criminal charges. This is what currently happens in most cases. However, for more serious offences like acts of violence, the department may need to take action based on the criminal charge rather than waiting for a conviction to ensure community safety.

There are a number of other aspects included in this bill, but I will come back to the point I made first up: it is important to have a regulated framework here because we are dealing with people who are interacting with tow truck operators at a vulnerable time in their lives. This bill gets the balance right. I commend the minister on the bill and I encourage all members to support it.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Lister): Honourable members, I would like to draw to the attention of the House the presence in the gallery of the Hon. Neil Roberts, former member for Nudgee, and former Brisbane City councillor Kim Flesser. Gentlemen, you are very welcome here.

 **Dr ROWAN** (Moggill—LNP) (12.14 pm): I rise to address the Tow Truck Bill 2023. On 13 June 2023, the Minister for Transport and Main Roads and Minister for Digital Services introduced this legislation into the Queensland parliament which will repeal the Tow Truck Act 1973 and specifically amend the Photo Identification Card Act 2008, the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000, the State Penalties Enforcement Act 1999, the Transport Operations (Passenger Transport) Act 1994, the Transport Operations (Road Use Management) Act 1995 and the Transport Planning and Coordination Act 1994.

As per the Minister for Transport and Main Roads' introductory speech and the explanatory notes, various objectives of this legislation include: modernising existing legislation by introducing a new structure and terminology, including clearly stating the main purpose of the act, and clarifying what is considered regulated towing, specifically clarifying the distinction between operating a tow truck and operating a tow truck business. This legislation also seeks to enhance the accreditation process, including eligibility requirements and the grounds for refusing to grant or renew an accreditation, as well as the processes for amending, suspending, cancelling or surrendering an accreditation.

Another objective is to ensure that various related penalties and offences are appropriate, including the updating of penalties for particular offences and introducing various new offences to address identified issues. I note also that this legislation is seeking to modernise enforcement powers by introducing a consolidated scheme of authorised officers' powers whilst providing certain protections in relation to self-incrimination and safeguards for seized things.

With this legislation subsequently referred to the Queensland parliament's Transport and Resources Committee for detailed examination and consideration on 13 June 2023, 17 submissions were received from various stakeholders, including the RACQ, tow truck operators, as well as other individuals, and there were also confidential submissions. In addition, the Queensland parliament's Transport and Resources Committee held a public briefing on 11 July, as well as a public hearing on 21 July. Throughout its examination, the committee identified several key issues pertaining to the government's proposed legislation, including issues pertaining to accreditations, issues regarding offences, the adequacy of the Department of Transport and Main Roads' consultation with stakeholders, compliance of this proposed legislation with the Legislative Standards Act 1992, as well as concerns regarding compliance of the legislation with the Human Rights Act 2019.

On 1 September 2023, the Queensland parliament's Transport and Resources Committee tabled its report with four recommendations including that the legislation be passed. Other recommendations largely pertained to specific parts of the legislation, including the establishment of a working group with operators, the reversal of onus of proof in certain clauses, and also Human Rights Act conflicts arising from the power to remove a person's accreditation based on untested charges, rather than convictions.

I certainly share the sentiments, as expressed by others, that road crashes can be a traumatic experience and one that you never hope to be involved in. Certainly, having been involved as a medical practitioner and seeing the consequences, we all need to do more when it comes to the education that takes place around road safety to prevent such instances occurring.

The services provided by tow trucks are vitally important, not only in ensuring the safe clearing of an accident and prompt resumption of traffic flow but also in providing assistance to vulnerable, uninjured persons in the immediate aftermath of a crash. That is why it is important that the legislation and various regulations that govern the operation of tow truck businesses and operators are fit for purpose, enhance safety and reflect modern expectations.

To that end, it is disappointing to note a number of significant issues which were canvassed that appear to jeopardise such important objectives. In particular, I note the feedback received which highlighted concerns in relation to not only the state Labor government's time line in bringing these changes to Queensland's tow truck scheme but also Labor's failure to adequately listen and consult with affected stakeholders. The Queensland parliament's Transport and Resources Committee stated on page 32 of the report—

The committee was advised by several tow truck companies in their submissions and at the public hearing that they only became aware of the Bill as a result of the committee inquiry process and that they did not believe that adequate time had been provided for them to properly consider and respond to the Bill.

In addition, Labor's failure to listen and its failure to adequately consult was further exposed with the committee admitting—

It appears that the department did not circulate a draft bill to the industry or otherwise give notice to the industry prior to the tabling of the Bill.

In its submission, the towing and recovery service company Barnes Auto Co. also stated—

... we respectfully suggest that the industry consultation process regarding this bill has been less than adequate.


In fact, I encourage members of the state Labor government to view the submission by Barnes Auto Co., which provided important information and insight. In particular, I wish to highlight the following from Mr Matt Taylor, the general manager, who stated—

The closure of a major highway for emergency recovery operations can cost the economy millions of dollars per hour. This enormous cost is due to factors such as lost productivity, delayed deliveries, wasted fuel, environmental damage, and the cumulative impact of traffic congestion in adjacent areas.

As local residents of the western suburbs know only too well, an accident on the Centenary Motorway, Western Freeway, Ipswich Motorway or Warrego Highway can, and often does, cause significant delays and substantial congestion lasting hours with major flow-on congestion and traffic impacts affecting linking arterial state roads including Moggill Road and Mount Crosby Road. That is why the state Labor government must prioritise the funding and delivery of an integrated road and public transport plan for the western suburbs of Brisbane developed with full public consultation and coordination with all levels of government. The Labor Minister for Transport and Main Roads may have had a better understanding of this need and local community support for such integrated planning had he attended the recent Lions Club of Brisbane West's Western Suburbs Transport Forum held at Moggill State School. It was disappointing that he failed to respond to their invitation or send a rep from the Department of Transport and Main Roads to participate in the forum.

In concluding my contribution today, I again reaffirm my support for all measures which can reduce traffic congestion and, most importantly, improve road safety. As traffic congestion continues to increase without requisite road and public transport planning and infrastructure delivery by the state Labor government, it is a reality that crashes and accidents requiring the use of tow trucks will continue to be a common feature on our road network.

Finally, I want to thank all stakeholders who contributed to the Transport and Resources Committee's consideration of this legislation and all committee members from both sides of the House. They do incredibly important work in scrutinising legislation and in preparing their report. Specifically, I acknowledge the deputy chair, the LNP member for Gregory, as well as the member for Toowoomba North and the member for Callide for their work. I would like to also acknowledge the secretariat because, again, when these reports are prepared for the Queensland parliament the secretariat of the committees do a lot. As I said earlier, I acknowledge all members of the committee, including members from both sides of the House in relation to that. They all do important work. The committee does important work in scrutinising the legislation and in the preparation of the report.

 **Ms LUI** (Cook—ALP) (12.23 pm): I rise to speak to the Tow Truck Bill 2023. The Tow Truck Bill was introduced into the Legislative Assembly by the Hon. Mark Bailey, the Minister for Transport and Main Roads and Minister for Digital Services and was referred to the Transport and Resources Committee on 13 June 2023. The Tow Truck Bill 2023 will replace the Tow Truck Act 1973 to deliver a modern tow truck scheme in Queensland that is responsive to emerging operational concerns, improve road and public safety, and deliver improved outcomes for motorists, property owners, industry professionals and the community.

The existing legislation is 50 years old and very outdated. Now is probably a really good time to make the appropriate changes to modernise and strengthen this outdated legislative framework to suit the current climate, particularly as it relates to advancements in technology, vehicle movement and administrative practices.

I want to take time to reflect on the speech delivered by the member for Redlands yesterday when she took us back in history to 1973 and the debate that occurred in parliament at that time. I thought it was quite interesting how it was a controversial topic back in 1973 compared to what it is today. It reflects the changing times and the need for us to progress and adapt to the changes that are in effect today.

The Tow Truck Act 1973 was revised a couple of times, first in 1997 to incorporate police seizure towing and again in 2018 to include private property towing. The 2018 revisions followed the *Independent investigation into the towing industry: removal of vehicles from private property*. Subsequently, the independent investigation made 22 recommendations and all 22 recommendations were endorsed by the government. The government also made a further commitment to: review the 1973 act and regulation to ensure the broader regulatory framework is simple, precise and accessible; ensure that in relation to the towing services and geographic areas covered by the legislation, the regulatory framework is appropriately targeted; and review all offence penalties to ensure they reflect the seriousness of the relevant offences. The scheme will continue to regulate the towing of motor vehicles involved in crashes, police seizures from off-street regulated parking areas and the towing of vehicles from private property. These towing activities are only regulated within defined regulated areas of Queensland.

A lot of work went into consulting industry groups and key stakeholders. Consultation with the towing industry, motoring groups and the community has been at the centre of the tow truck legislation review process over the past few years to ensure a broad view from community was achieved. Since 2019 TMR has been in regular contact with the stakeholders to seek their views on how the industry should be regulated. Industry input was critical to ensure the legislation balances the viability of the towing industry and the need to protect consumers whilst maintaining the efficiency of our road network.

Consultation included holding two tow truck industry forums; releasing a public discussion paper and online survey; and meeting with motorist advocate groups, insurance companies, the Queensland Police Service and tow truck businesses. In addition, there has been continuous engagement and communication with the towing industry on issues such as holding yard storage fees, exemptions for heavy vehicle towing and proposed offences, amongst other things.

To ensure the industry remained informed about the changes, TMR will be meeting with industry representatives in the near future to discuss the new legislation and its implementation. It is anticipated that a further meeting will be held in early 2024 as implementation of the changes becomes TMR's primary focus. In line with the committee's recommendations on the bill, TMR will also support the industry to establish a tow truck industry peak body should it wish to do so.


As a result of the valuable input from the towing industry, motoring groups and the community, this bill will achieve its objectives for Queenslanders with a modern tow truck scheme that is responsive and safe and delivers improved community outcomes. The bill will maintain the framework previously provided by the Tow Truck Act 1973 for the towing in regulated areas of Queensland of motor vehicles damaged in incidents, seized by police from off-street regulated parking areas or towed from private property in certain circumstances. It will also maintain the requirement for persons who conduct a tow truck business or are involved in operating tow trucks in regulated areas to hold an accreditation, currently known as a licence or certificate, as well as maintain the requirement for persons who hold an accreditation to comply with duties, obligations, standards of conduct and other requirements.

The amendments in the bill will modernise the existing legislation by introducing a new structure and terminology that improves consistency across accreditations administered by the Department of Transport and Main Roads. It will also enhance the accreditation process, including accreditation eligibility requirements and ensure penalties and offences are targeted and appropriate. The bill will further modernise enforcement powers to ensure authorised officers have suitable compliance powers.

Assessing a person's suitability to be an authorised tow truck business, driver or assistant is an important part of the regulated tow truck scheme. Checks are in place to ensure those operating within the scheme are suitable for the inevitable interactions they will have with vulnerable members of the community. A criminal and traffic history check is undertaken for all operators and drivers who apply to be accredited under the scheme. TMR also ensures that prospective tow truck drivers hold an

appropriate driver's licence for a tow truck. Given the varied nature of criminal and traffic histories, each application for accreditation is assessed on its merits. Regulating an industry with commercial interests and ensuring consumer protection measures are in place is a balancing act.

I acknowledge the hard work and effort of the Minister for Transport and Main Roads to achieve a balanced legislative framework to support both commercial and consumer interests. I acknowledge and thank the Transport and Resources Committee—the chair, Shane King, the member for Kurwongbah, and the other members of the committee—the committee secretariat and Hansard for their valuable work in the examination of the bill. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Hon. MC BAILEY** (Miller—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads and Minister for Digital Services) (12.31 pm), in reply: It is my pleasure to speak for the final time on the Tow Truck Bill 2023. It is pleasing that support for the bill has come from a broad range of members in the House. I thank members from all sides of the House for their contributions. I thank the committee for all of their work on what is an important bill and for their endorsement of the bill.

Being in a traffic crash can be a traumatic event and for the average Queenslanders it is thankfully one that is not experienced on a regular basis. If they find themselves in such a situation, having an accredited tow truck driver to attend the scene, load their vehicle and get it safely towed to a secure location alleviates some of the distress Queenslanders face in these circumstances. Being very quickly at a crash scene in my 20s I can attest to how distressing and shocking it is for people in those circumstances. It is important for them that the people who are responding deal with them with integrity. This bill is all about that.

Undoubtedly, the tow truck sector in Queensland plays a pivotal role in facilitating the quick and safe clearance of crashes from our road network. They are instrumental in helping restore traffic flow and keeping our road network safe and free from obstructions. For this reason, it is essential that we have a balanced and effective legislative regime for the industry.

The Tow Truck Bill is the result of an extensive review by the Department of Transport and Main Roads of the current legislative framework for Queensland's regulated towing industry. An important part of this review has been the invaluable feedback received during the considerable consultation process with Queensland's towing industry, motoring groups and the broader community. This consultation process was undertaken to ensure that the legislation continues to provide the required protections for Queensland motorists and guarantees the ongoing viability of the regulated towing sector.

The tow truck industry has been supportive of the need for clearer, more modern legislation, confirming their need for a legislative framework that is easily understood, aligned with current practices and provides clarity on compliance requirements. The outcome of this review is a bill that introduces a contemporary approach that is simple and accessible and addresses the current and emerging operational demands in the industry.

The bill's main goals are to enhance road safety outcomes through safe and efficient towing services and provide adequate protections to Queensland motorists. Of equal importance, the bill also supports a sustainable and viable towing industry.

I acknowledge the participation and contributions of members to this debate and I appreciate their support. I think we can all agree with the member for Kurwongbah's assessment that tow truck operators are the heroes of the highway.

Members of the opposition have, however, raised some matters that I consider are important to address. The member for Chatsworth raised fines being issued to people parking on private property. It is true that current transport laws have enabled private car park operators to access a registered operators' personal information to issue demand notices for breaches for parking contracts. There has been significant community concern that this access has not been for legitimate purposes and that it no longer meets community expectations for the use of their personal information. I had significant concerns about some of the practices being reported and that Queensland was the only Australian jurisdiction that enabled this type of access.

In response to those concerns, I announced a pause, effective from 20 February 2023, on the release of registered operators' personal information for private car parking enforcement. The pause has allowed the Department of Transport and Main Roads to review the current laws and examine options for future reform. Consultation has been undertaken seeking stakeholder views on reform options that are now being formally considered. In the meantime, I strongly encourage private property owners grappling with unwanted vehicles on their land to enter into an agreement with a tow truck operator as provided for in this legislation.

The opposition has also raised the time it has taken to progress this bill and the alleged inadequacy of consultation. In response to that I say that this time has been taken to get the bill right. Since 2019, the department has been in regular contact with stakeholders to seek their views on how the industry should be regulated. Forums with the tow truck industry were held and a public discussion paper was released. The department also met with motorist advocacy groups, insurance companies and individual tow truck businesses. There has also been ongoing engagement with the industry, seeking their views on issues such as holding yard storage fees, exemptions for heavy vehicle towing and proposed offences. This has ensured that the legislation is responsive to industry needs while delivering positive outcomes for the community. I am pleased to add that just this month the department met with tow truck operators again to keep them updated on the legislative changes. The department plans to meet with operators again in early 2024 to discuss the implementation of the changes.

The members for Chatsworth, Gregory and Callide also noted that operator accreditation can be suspended in response to untested charges. At the same time, they acknowledged the important role tow truck drivers have in assisting vulnerable people at the roadside. It is for this exact reason that the bill enables the department to immediately suspend the accreditation of tow truck drivers charged with serious crimes.

Assessing a person's suitability to be a tow truck operator is an important part of the regulatory scheme. Checks are in place to ensure operators are suitable for the inevitable interactions they will have with vulnerable members of the community. Given the varied nature of criminal and traffic histories, each application is assessed on its merits. Offences with no relevance to towing will be disregarded. However, offences that may make a person unsuitable for a towing role, including those involving violence, abuse, theft or intimidation, are closely considered.

For the most serious of offences, the department will act based on criminal charges rather than waiting for a conviction. This is purely in the interests of community safety—for the safety of vulnerable people left stranded on the side of the road after a crash. These decisions are, however, reviewable, both internally and through QCAT, in accordance with natural justice arrangements that are standard in Queensland. Similarly, the department thoroughly investigates all potentially vexatious complaints against tow truck operators and only takes action if there is sufficient evidence. An operator's accreditation is only suspended if the individual's conduct justifies this action. Natural justice arrangements apply.

The members for Chatsworth, Gregory and Surfers Paradise also noted industry concerns that the new legislation does not appropriately deal with aspects of operator behaviour, including bribery. As a number of government members have noted, the bribery protections in legislation will be maintained and in some instances strengthened. Most of these provisions are simply being moved from the bill to the regulation. The new regulation—that is currently under development—will make it an offence for towing operators to offer inducements to vehicle owners and for a person to benefit in exchange for providing information about a crash, including using what is known as crash spotters.

A number of opposition members noted industry objections to the bill's obligation not to unnecessarily damage towed vehicles. Under the current legislation, tow truck operators are already responsible for ensuring towed motor vehicles are not unnecessarily damaged. This requirement is not intended to be onerous for the industry. It is acknowledged that sometimes a vehicle will sustain unavoidable damage due to the nature or complexity of the tow. Importantly though, this obligation protects drivers from unwarranted damage to their vehicles at a time when they are already dealing with very challenging circumstances. Removing this obligation would leave drivers with the sole recourse and burden of having to engage lawyers to take civil action.

The obligation to avoid unnecessary vehicle damage is also relevant to the points raised by the members for Gregory and Toowoomba North about towing electric vehicles. They are correct in saying that towing electric vehicles improperly can cause damage and may also pose a safety risk to tow truck operators. This is an emerging field and first responders, including tow truck operators, are learning how to manage the future which will see more and more of these vehicles on the road. The Palaszczuk government will continue to pursue the adoption of electric vehicles and support our industries to do the same as part of our Energy and Jobs Plan and commitment to a clean energy transition.

I also want to thank the member for Southern Downs, who happens to be in the chair right now, for raising questions regarding how the bill will operate within his electorate given that it sits outside the proposed regulated area. Consistent with the current Tow Truck Act 1973, this bill will not regulate towing in the more rural and remote areas of Queensland. Given the much lower number of tows in these areas, the regulation of towing with the associated costs to the industry is not justified. In rural



and remote areas, including cross-border towns, tow trucks from New South Wales can enter Queensland to complete a tow. This can be a positive for residents in those areas as it increases the number of trucks available and provides consumers with a choice of providers.

New South Wales regulates tow trucks across the entire state for all towing types. Queensland has instead sought to strike a balance and not overregulate the industry. It is acknowledged that a Queensland tow truck operator will have to comply with the New South Wales requirement should they wish to operate over the border. This is, however, also the case with New South Wales operators and, as such, there is no comparative disadvantage when crossing the border. This government does not propose to regulate towing in Queensland unnecessarily which would ultimately impact all regional and rural tow truck operators.

This bill strikes a clear balance between regulating towing services in certain towing scenarios while also recognising that not all towing services require regulatory oversight. The bill's focus continues to ensure safety, fairness and appropriate standards are met in situations where they are deemed necessary. For this reason, the new legislation will continue to regulate the towing of motor vehicles from crashes, police seizures from off-street regulated parking areas and vehicles towed from private property. Additionally, this regulatory oversight will continue to be limited to defined geographic areas within Queensland. These areas are essentially located in more urbanised locations such as South-East Queensland and our larger regional cities along the east coast. This approach recognises that a robust regulatory framework is required in busier urban locations where towing activities have the potential to adversely impact public safety and the efficient flow of traffic.

The legislation will benefit motorists in these areas who need to use a towing service following a traumatic or stressful event such as after a vehicle crash or where a motorist may be left stranded after-hours if their vehicle is towed from private property. This will be achieved by ensuring tow trucks undertaking regulated towing are operated by appropriate persons who not only provide a safe, competent and professional service but do so economically for motorists. My transport and main roads department has also made certain that the legislation is futureproofed by ensuring flexibility is maintained through appropriate regulation-making powers. The bill includes the ability for a regulation to provide for operational matters around the setting of fees and charges, accreditation processes, obligation of accreditation holders and requirements relating to storage and release of towed vehicles. The bill also removes red tape for industry by providing for temporary holding yard exemptions to be provided to accommodate emerging and unforeseen events such as flooding.

Unfortunately at times, as noted by the member for Surfers Paradise, the tow truck industry has been known to have undesirable elements which has been a concern voiced both from the community and from within the industry itself. Because of this, appropriate offences and penalties are vital to address any noncompliant behaviour. As I have mentioned before, the transport and main roads department conducted a comprehensive review of tow truck scheme offences and their penalties. They were examined to ensure their continued relevance and suitability. As a result, the new legislation will provide for a fair and consistent penalty framework that aligns more broadly with offences across transport legislation.

As I am sure we would all agree, penalties are necessary as an effective deterrent against noncompliance. They provide appropriate consequences for those who engage in unlawful or unsafe practices that are detrimental to the wider community. It is therefore essential that the penalties accurately match the severity of the offence to effectively discourage noncompliance and ultimately reduce these rogue elements that adversely affect the reputation of the industry. The new legislation will include offences that address dishonest and predatory behaviours within the regulated tow truck industry. It will also require towed vehicles to be stored in authorised holding yards. Failure to ensure secure and authorised holding yards approved by the transport and main roads department are used for storing vehicles will be an offence. Inclusion of this requirement in the bill provides for the safety and protection of both the vehicle and the personal belongings it contains inevitably after a crash. It provides reassurance to motorists that they can readily locate their vehicle and that their vehicle is adequately protected from the risk of theft, damage or unauthorised access.

Another key inclusion in the bill is the offence that will apply to anyone who obtains a towing authority to tow a vehicle when they are not accredited to undertake regulated towing services. This aims to protect the public and the industry by ensuring that only accredited individuals whose suitability has been assessed are involved in regulated towing activities. This protection from potential exploitation or unethical practices is particularly beneficial when motorists may be experiencing high levels of stress following a vehicle crash or when in a vulnerable state at the side of the road or deserted parking area. The new legislation will also introduce a requirement that only the tow trucks used for regulated towing

services are those approved by the department. Approved tow trucks are subjected to appropriate compliance inspections to ensure they can safely tow vehicles and carry approved passengers. This results in vehicle standards being adequately maintained.

As I mentioned earlier, this bill aims to deter tow truck business owners from instructing their employees to act in a way that is contrary to their obligations under the act. This new offence attracts a high penalty as it targets business owners who abuse their power and undermine the integrity of the tow truck industry. This may occur, for instance, if a tow truck business owner knowingly directs an unaccredited driver to tow a vehicle, transport passengers or operate without the required written authority being in place. This offence aims to promote responsibility amongst tow truck business owners, guaranteeing they do not exercise undue power over their employees.

The bill also targets a number of dishonest behaviours. Specifically, new offences have been included for forging documents such as an accreditation document, towing authority or towing consent, as well as knowingly using or directing another person to fraudulently use an accreditation document. Activities such as these that are clearly about deceiving others have no place in our tow truck industry. These new offences demonstrate the government's zero tolerance for fraudulent practices that can harm consumers and undermine the integrity of the tow truck scheme.

The legislation will also include the new concept of notifiable offences. Business operators will now be obliged to inform not only the department but their fellow business partners or executive officers if they are charged with or convicted of any notifiable offence. Notifiable offences are those that potentially make someone unsuitable to operate a tow truck business where they are required to regularly deal with vulnerable consumers, their vehicles and possessions. Significant offences—for example, serious and violent assaults, arson or stealing—will be reportable. Offences of less significance to the tow truck scheme do not fall within the list of notifiable offences.

Industry privacy has been a fundamental consideration in the development of this provision. As a result, where offences are not relevant to their suitability or ability to perform their towing role they are not required to be reported to the department or their fellow business operators. New stronger grounds will also be introduced to enable the department to take appropriate action against a driver or operator's accreditation. This will include the ability to take action when it is in the public interest. Equally, industry will have access to both internal and external appeal processes. Alongside these new provisions, this means that anyone impacted by a decision on their suitability will still be afforded the principles of procedural fairness and natural justice.

The offence provisions that I have touched on today clearly aim to protect Queenslanders. Importantly, however, they will not place additional burden on those in the towing industry who are already providing high-quality and professional services. Offence provisions are only directed at those who show contempt for the law by engaging in misconduct or fraudulent activity. As I mentioned previously, a new regulation is currently being drafted to support the operation of the new act. Together, the new legislative framework for the tow truck industry will ensure safe and efficient removal of motor vehicles from our roads while protecting the community and supporting the adoption of best practice in the industry.

In closing today I wish to thank everybody who has contributed to the debate. I thank the Transport and Resources Committee. I acknowledge its chair, the member for Kurwongbah, for all his hard work and leadership—one of the best chairs here in the parliament. I also wish to again thank the industry members who provided valuable feedback through submissions to the committee, as well as their engagement throughout the legislative review process. I thank all the committee members from all sides of the chamber for their contributions through the process. Finally, I thank the ministerial and departmental officers who have been working so hard on this bill for all of their fine work. I commend the bill to the House.

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

Motion agreed to.


Bill read a second time.

### **Consideration in Detail**

Clauses 1 to 217, as read, agreed to.

Schedules 1 to 3, as read, agreed to.

### Third Reading

 **Hon. MC BAILEY** (Miller—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads and Minister for Digital Services) (12.52 pm): I move—


That the bill be now read a third time.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a third time.

### Long Title

 **Hon. MC BAILEY** (Miller—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads and Minister for Digital Services) (12.52 pm): I move—

That the long title of the bill be agreed to.


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

Motion agreed to.

## BODY CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY MANAGEMENT AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Resumed from 24 August (see p. 2400).

### Second Reading

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence) (12.52 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a second time.

I thank the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee for its consideration of the Body Corporate and Community Management and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023. The committee received 95 submissions during its inquiry. I would like to thank all those who made written submissions to the committee and those who made themselves available to present at the committee hearing. The committee tabled its report on 6 October 2023 recommending passage of the bill. I table the government's response to the committee's report.

*Tabled paper:* Legal Affairs and Safety Committee: Report No. 56, 57th Parliament—Inquiry into the Body Corporate and Community Management and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023, government response [\[1774\]](#).

The bill will amend the Body Corporate and Community Management Act 1997, which provides for the establishment and management of community titles schemes. It will deliver a key action of the 2022 Queensland Housing Summit by amending the BCCM Act to allow for termination of uneconomic community titles schemes to facilitate renewal and redevelopment. The bill will also deliver one of this government's 2020 election commitments to amend the BCCM Act to allow an adjudicator the power to approve alternative insurance arrangements and will make supporting amendments to complement this change. The bill also reforms and modernises the operation of the BCCM Act in relation to by-laws and other governance issues, including administrative and procedural matters.

The development of this bill has been informed by the broad ranging, independent review of Queensland's property laws by the Commercial and Property Law Research Centre at the Queensland University of Technology between 2013 and 2018. The review considered aspects of the BCCM Act and related legislation, including scheme termination, by-laws and procedural issues. The amendments in this bill have also been informed by the views of the Community Titles Legislation Working Group, which considered the QUT recommendations as well as the alternative insurance arrangements included in the bill. I thank the working group for its extensive work.

This bill also makes unrelated amendments to strengthen consumer protections for off-the-plan contracts. The bill will limit when sellers can use sunset clauses to terminate off-the-plan contracts for the sale of land under the Land Sales Act 1984 so that there must be written consent of the buyer, an order of the Supreme Court or another situation prescribed by regulation.

The bill also includes minor amendments to the BCCM Act, the Land Sales Act, the Building Units and Group Titles Act 1980 and the South Bank Corporation Act 1989 in relation to off-the-plan contracts. These minor amendments clarify and confirm the policy intent of existing provisions about when a deposit can be released from a relevant trust account to a party to an off-the-plan sales contract.

Before I discuss the committee's recommendations on the bill I would like to flag a proposed amendment to be moved during consideration in detail relating to the bill. This amendment is minor and technical in nature. Both this bill and the Property Law Bill 2023 propose the insertion of a new section 205AAA at the same point in the BCCM Act. The two provisions proposed to be included as section 205AAA serve different purposes, with one dealing with body corporate certificates and the other dealing with information access in layered arrangements of community titles schemes. I therefore propose to move this minor technical amendment during consideration in detail to renumber the new section 205AAA inserted by this bill and to provide for it to be located after the new section 205AAA inserted by the Property Law Bill and become section 205AAB.

I thank the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee for its consideration of the bill. The committee made nine recommendations. I thank the committee for its first recommendation: that the bill be passed. The committee report stated in relation to the scheme termination reforms that the majority of the committee believes that the right balance has been struck regarding the interests of lot owners who wish to sell and those who do not, including the need for thorough evidence to support a dissolution of a scheme and an accessible dispute resolution process.

As the committee has correctly identified, when it comes to the rules for terminating community titles schemes, finding the right balance is key. The views of stakeholders will inevitably vary. For instance, while some stakeholders may consider that more relaxed arrangements would accelerate the potential for this reform to deliver more properties for redevelopment, other stakeholders are deeply concerned about the potential for a unit owner to be required to sell and leave their home. Different views were also presented to the committee about the types of properties which should be within the scope of the new process. On the one hand, some consider that any building over a certain age—for example, 30 years—should be subject to a reduced decision-making threshold for termination regardless of whether there are economic reasons for terminating. Meanwhile, some stakeholders pointed out that some older buildings are very well maintained and well positioned to provide homes for owners and occupiers in the future and that the rights of minority owners to decide whether to sell and terminate the scheme should be upheld.

In this respect I acknowledge the statements of reservation from the members for Currumbin and Scenic Rim and the member for Noosa regarding the lack of formal modelling of how many Queensland bodies corporate would adopt the new termination process and the consequential impact on housing supply. While this sort of information would be beneficial, in order to undertake the type of modelling referenced in the statements of reservation, a number of fundamental and significant assumptions would need to be made which would make any predictions and forecast difficult to rely on in any meaningful way.


The committee's second recommendation is that the Queensland government develop an education campaign with the Community Titles Legislation Working Group to provide guidance and resources to organisations and individuals to support the proposed reforms including, in particular, information on the dispute resolution processes available for lot owners in community titles schemes. The government supports this recommendation. I appreciate there is some uncertainty felt by some unit owners and other stakeholders about the prospect that other owners within their community titles scheme will pursue terminations simply because a developer makes an attractive offer to purchase the scheme. I want to assure those owners that the new process balances the capacity for non-unanimous termination with strong protection for lot owners and contains safeguards designed to ensure the process only applies where there are demonstrated economic reasons for termination. Those safeguards include a requirement to obtain expert information establishing there are economic reasons to terminate as well as the capacity to dispute decisions about the information, with the body corporate responsible for costs. The safeguards also include minimum compensation requirements that, by relying on the Acquisition of Land Act 1964, take into account market value, uplift in value due to sale of the whole site and disturbance factors associated with sale and relocation.

Debate, on motion of Mrs D'Ath, adjourned.

Sitting suspended from 1.00 pm to 2.00 pm.

## PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

### Palaszczuk Labor Government, Performance

 **Mr BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (2.00 pm): In one year, Queenslanders will have the chance to show Labor the door in '24. In one year, the people of Queensland will be able to pass judgement on the Palaszczuk Labor government, a government that has been in power for nine years now and has overseen a youth crime crisis, a housing crisis, a health crisis, a cost-of-living crisis and budget blowouts under Minister Bailey. In one year's time, Queenslanders will be able to finally have their say and show Labor the door in '24. They will be able to say to the Premier, 'You are now too arrogant to continue in this job.' That is what Queenslanders are saying.

Last night, the media questioned the Premier about her leadership. She said, 'I reject that.' The reporter said, 'But, Premier, this is coming from your own members—Labor members.' The Premier said, 'No, that's not true. I reject it.' Then the reporter said, 'But, Premier, they are telling us; your Labor members are telling us.' The Premier said, 'It's not true. They've not talked to me about it.' When the reporter said to the Premier, 'But, Premier, Queenslanders are blaming you for the housing crisis, the youth justice crisis and the health crisis,' she said, 'Who? Who is blaming me?' How arrogant can you get in this job? We need only look at the Premier and the Labor Party! That is how arrogant they are.

Let us look at police numbers. They keep talking about 'approved strength'. The Labor Party weakened the youth justice laws in 2015-16. We have fewer police on the beat. Is it any wonder we have a youth crime crisis? Since 2015 in my electorate of Kawana, police numbers have reduced by two, yet they say we have more police. It is not true. In my electorate, police numbers are going down.


There have not been enough homes released for our constituents right across Queensland. They talk about the NRAS. I have written to the government and told them to buy NRAS houses in my electorate to stop my constituents from becoming homeless. There is a difference between using housing investment money to buy houses from the private rental market—taking them from the private rental market—as opposed to buying houses that are already in a subsidised scheme, which is NRAS. They do not understand it. The Labor Party do not want Queenslanders to aspire to home ownership. The Labor Party want Queenslanders to aspire to rent or live in social housing for their rest of their lives. We want people to aspire to home ownership. We want Queenslanders to be able to own their own homes if that is what they want.

Let us not forget the Premier's flippant response on water security, saying that Kawana will have a desalination plant. Which beach in my electorate will that involve? The Premier has not come clean about that apparently \$8 billion plan to build a desalination plant. Now we hear it is probably going to be built at Bribie Island, in the electorate of Pumicestone.

The Labor government has had its chance. After nine years we have all these crises caused by the Labor Party in Queensland. It is time to show Labor the door in '24.

*(Time expired)*

### Ipswich West Electorate, Remembrance Day

 **Mr MADDEN** (Ipswich West—ALP) (2.03 pm): On 11 November, Remembrance Day, in my electorate of Ipswich West, we will join the world in honouring those who served in and were casualties of World War I. Over 60,000 Australian soldiers lost their lives, making the ultimate sacrifice. They will be remembered by a number of community groups and schools in my electorate that organise Remembrance Day services and have invited me to attend to lay wreaths.

The first service I will be attending will be at Karalee State School, which is holding their Remembrance Day Service on Friday, 10 November at 9 am. It is always a wonderful service that features the school's excellent choir. I would like to acknowledge Karalee State School Principal Michelle Hamlin and Deputy Principal Jodie Jones for organising that service.

Later that morning, at 10.45, I will be attending the Ipswich State High School Remembrance Day Service. I would like to thank Principal Simon Riley and the school's defence school mentor, Ange Crichton, for their hard work in organising the service.

On Saturday, 11 November, Remembrance Day, I have been invited to attend a number of services. I will be attending the Ipswich Railway RSL Sub Branch Remembrance Day Service at the All Conflicts Memorial, located at the Workshops Rail Museum at North Ipswich. I would like to acknowledge the hard work of the Ipswich Railways RSL Sub Branch Committee. They include

president John Dredge OAM, vice-presidents John King and Bruce Graham, secretary Peter Dixon, treasurer David Baker, assistant secretary Reg Bond and board members Shan Brown and David Brown.


Meanwhile, at the Rosewood Remembrance Day Service, held at the Rosewood Memorial Hall, Private Brian McLucas will be laying a wreath on my behalf. The Rosewood RSL Sub Branch Committee, which is organising the service, includes president Bernie Mason, vice-president Brian McLucas, secretary Carmel Luetchford and treasurer Ian Luetchford.

At the Ipswich RSL Sub Branch service, Andrew Boxsell will be laying a wreath on my behalf. I would like to thank the Ipswich RSL Sub Branch Committee for organising what will be a truly amazing service. They include president Paul Rogers, secretary Debbie Wadwell, treasurer Owen Smith, deputy president George Picone and vice-presidents Vivienne Stanbury and Peter Newman.

At the Pine Mountain Honour Stone, Carol Nevin will be laying a wreath on my behalf. I would like to thank the Pine Mountain & District Historical Society for organising the service. The committee includes Bill Mahon, Mary Mahon, Des Jones, David Walters, Diane Mantei, Colleen Engel nee Bromage, Roy McGibbon and Mary McGibbon.

Remembrance Day is a truly amazing day in my electorate of Ipswich West. I thank all of the schools and community groups for their voluntary and selfless service to the Ipswich community in recognising that important day.

### Shin, Mr J

 **Mr LAST** (Burdekin—LNP) (2.06 pm): In a medical emergency minutes matter. Early diagnosis and treatment saves lives and ensures the best outcomes, especially when specialist services are hundreds of kilometres away. Recently I attended a meeting of the Bowen Probus Club where one of the most inspiring and passionate medical professionals I have ever seen addressed attendees. Jack Shin, affectionately known as Jack, the senior radiographer at the Bowen Hospital, is testament to the benefits of improving medical imaging in regional centres. The campaign to provide CT Scans at the Bowen Hospital was a seven-year battle that was only won due to the federal LNP government funding the equipment itself, but it was a battle that was well worth it.

Clinical guidelines state that, for the best outcome, a stroke should be diagnosed within four hours. I am proud to inform the House that, recently at Bowen, Jack and his team completed a diagnosis in just seven minutes. Within 2½ hours, the patient had been diagnosed, treatment had commenced and the patient was receiving care in the Mackay Base Hospital. What a difference that will make to the quality of life of that particular patient.


However, Jack is not satisfied with exceeding standards. His goal is to change lives and it is a goal he is well on his way to achieving. Whilst absolutely necessary in diagnosis and treatment, CT scans can come with side effects such as nausea, vomiting, rashes and swelling, but not at Bowen. Jack's research into using a smaller cannula with a slower flow rate of contrast dye has resulted in no patients suffering those side effects while using up to 70 per cent less radiation and reduced volumes of contrast yet still providing high-quality medical imaging.

Those amazing results at the Bowen Hospital are yet another reason why I am proud to campaign for CT scanning facilities at the Ayr Hospital. Thousands of Burdekin locals and visitors have signed petitions calling for that essential equipment. I thank the minister for her response and her acknowledgement of the importance of that particular piece of equipment.

What Jack and his team have achieved in Bowen is proof positive that equipment is not just essential and beneficial to local patients; it is equipment that can produce benefits for patients across the state. Those benefits come from the passion and tenacity of medical professionals such as Jack and I know that those benefits can also be replicated in Ayr.

In closing, I want to thank the Bowen Probus Club for the opportunity to personally hear about Jack's passion and achievements. I also want to acknowledge the Bowen Probus Club members whose 20 years of service was acknowledged on the day. It was a proud moment for me to present those 15 members with certificates acknowledging their service.

### Cairns, Edor Carnival

 **Mr HEALY** (Cairns—ALP) (2.09 pm): It is so refreshing to see the wider Cairns community come together by taking collaborative action to address key identifiers that can lead to youth offending— isolation, boredom, lack of transport, poor nutrition, lack of physical exercise and limited motivation. I

bring to the House's attention the wonderful work of Mr Marc Harbrow through his company Harbrow Mentoring and its not-for-profit group Our Future Mentors Indigenous corporation. Harbrow Mentoring is dedicated to improving the lives of young people through three key pillars: leadership, mentoring and sport—and they are doing just that.


On Saturday, 14 October Harbrow Mentoring coordinated our annual Edor Carnival, or the 'running game'—a chase-and-tag type team sport which originated in the Aurukun community many generations ago, likely introduced to Northern Australia through missionaries from Samoa in the early 1900s. It is a game still widely played throughout North Queensland and the Torres Strait today. Proudly supported through a \$14,000 Community Partnership Innovation Grant from the Department of Youth Justice, the event attracted 100 participants across 10 teams—five youth teams between the ages of eight and 12; and five junior teams of young people aged between 13 and 18.

Thanks to Aurukun State School and the Aurukun Shire Council, who helped coordinate two teams, elders and support staff travelled to Cairns alongside Aurukun's 2021 Young Citizen of the Year, esteemed marathon runner Waynead Wolmby, who officially opened the running games event—and run they did. Teams from Yarrabah and across Cairns converged on Jones Park and enjoyed celebrating not just culture but also camaraderie and, more importantly, healthy competition.

I say a huge and sincere thank you to Kinetic, which provided two buses with drivers to transport participants, support staff and family members from the Moorooloolool Hub, managed by Cairns Safer Streets, to the Manoora Community Centre, which is now proudly run by Centacare, which has recently been awarded the tender to continue to offer community programs.

Thanks also go to the Gimuy community radio, Bumma Bipperra Media, which provided a free outdoor broadcast on 98.7 to ensure families and friends across the north could share in the excitement and help celebrate the achievements of their loved ones. It is so heartening to see the whole community of Far North Queensland working together—the private sector, not-for-profit groups, charities and schools. This is just as it should be. It is said that it takes a village to raise a child, and I am extremely proud of the work the Palaszczuk Labor government has done to assist the broader community to work together, creating productive and positive experiences for young people. Community safety is all our responsibility. Cairns is getting it right.

### **Mooloolaba Beach, Seawall**


 **Ms SIMPSON** (Maroochydore—LNP) (2.12 pm): This week there has been community uproar over Sunshine Coast Council's proposed seawall and works which will interfere with the iconic Mooloolaba Beach. This is serious. The community does not want Mooloolaba Beach to become a concrete beach. There are grave concerns about: the impact upon the beach, with the proposed concrete tiered seawall extending into the beach area only metres from the water; safety during construction, with barriers extending to the waterline preventing surf-lifesavers from being able to safely patrol the beach where people swim during construction; the closure of most of the beach between the Loo with a View back to the northern steps which will also impact significantly upon the economic viability of many businesses in Mooloolaba; and the removal of car parking.

This design and works must be put on hold until environmental and economic impacts are addressed in full and the right design is taken into account with proper consultation. The consultation that council did has been criticised for very valid reasons, because some stakeholders were told one thing and others told a completely different thing about the design, how far it extended, how close it would go to the water and what that design would do. In fact, some stakeholders were told, 'Oh, no, the design hasn't been completed,' while others were told, 'Yes, it has been completed.' Now we see that apparently the state government, through the state development agency, has already signed off. They are the big questions. Where is the design? What has this process actually been?

The state government and the Sunshine Coast Council have only one chance to get this right. Environmental groups, community groups, the business community and the surf-lifesaving club of Mooloolaba are all saying, 'Please put this on hold. Get the design right.' They are most concerned that this will have a negative impact upon one of our most iconic and beautiful beaches. We have only one chance to get this right, and the way this has been done is wrong. I call on the council not to issue tenders to do this work at this time but to get the plan right. I implore the state government to not approve this. It is an absolutely abhorrent suggestion to put concrete into the area in the way they are talking about.

As we all know, sand comes and goes. With a tiered seawall that reaches almost to the water's edge, when the sand goes—once people would have been walking in a natural environment—people could find themselves walking on concrete. That is not acceptable. Get it right, talk to the community and be careful with this very delicate area. The Sunshine Coast and I love this beach. We are highly concerned. These works need to be right but they are not currently. There must be a stop put to this so we can protect this precious, iconic area.

### Bribie Island Satellite Hospital


 **Ms KING** (Pumicestone—ALP) (2.15 pm): By late 2024 people on Bribie facing the fight of their lives will not have to travel long distances for chemotherapy. They will have six chemo chairs in the heart of our community, at our Bribie Island Satellite Hospital. From urgent care to kidney care, from mental care to dental care and from rehab to chemo, our Bribie satellite hospital is just what the doctor ordered for our community. Labor guarantees that our satellite hospital will offer 100 per cent-free public health care. Compare that to the Pumicestone LNP, which wanted the money spent on a private hospital instead. Bribie residents should not need private health insurance to get health care in our community.

The LNP's health spokesperson called our satellite hospitals shams. Is it a sham when your neighbour does not have to travel hours for dialysis or when a child gets quick care for a sports injury? Is it a sham when a grandmother gets chemo just down the road instead of having to do multiple trips per week for hours? When the LNP talk down our satellite hospitals, there is a deeper agenda at work. When the LNP tell us what they stand for, Queenslanders should believe them. The member for Mudgeeraba said that she aspires to the Newman health system, because she has the same plan for health cuts. She put health workers on notice because she plans mass sackings. The LNP talk down our satellite hospitals because they are itching to privatise them. I note the comments of the member for Currumbin.

A short look at the LNP's policy document shows that satellite hospitals are completely missing from their dodgy dot points. They simply do not support our satellite hospitals. The LNP's federal member for Longman did not get the memo. He likes Bribie's satellite hospital so much that he tried to claim credit for it! Terry Young called our commitment to offer chemo at the Bribie satellite hospital 'a great outcome and a win for our community'. Thanks, Terry! It is a shame your Queensland LNP colleagues were not listening. They cannot get on board with our satellite hospitals. They might get some inspiration, because LNP opposition leader David Crisafulli is certainly short on ideas. He has no solutions to increasing demands on our health system. He whines, but we get things done. He talks a big game, but he is taking a very small target approach. We have seen him flip-flop under pressure. He stands for nothing and will not come clean on his plans for health.

When it comes to their health, Queenslanders deserve a Labor government that does what matters: a government with policies—not pamphlets; delivery—not dot points. That is where the Crisafulli LNP opposition will always fall short. Our Palaszczuk Labor government is getting on with the job and doing what matters for Queenslanders, but the Crisafulli LNP opposition has no plan for health—just a plan for massive health cuts.

### Education

 **Dr ROWAN** (Moggill—LNP) (2.18 pm): This Friday, 27 October, is World Teachers' Day. It is a day when we all can celebrate and recognise the incredible and special role that Queensland teachers have in the lives of our students. As the LNP shadow minister for education, I wish to thank all of our hardworking Queensland teachers who go above and beyond each and every day. Our teachers across Queensland cannot be thanked enough for what they do. They certainly deserve recognition and appreciation. Importantly, Queensland teachers also deserve to be heard. They deserve a safe work environment and to be able to work within a system of education that supports them and works with them to deliver great results.


The Department of Education's annual report reveals that yet again not a single educational outcome target for reading, writing and numeracy was achieved for years 3, 5, 7 and 9. Under Labor, educational outcomes for Indigenous students across Queensland remain far worse than non-Indigenous students. Alarming, Labor is now actively keeping Queenslanders in the dark on the chaos and crisis that is plaguing our education system. Key accountability measures that used to be published in full have now been removed from the Department of Education's annual report, including: school attendance rates by region and demographics; learning days lost due to suspensions; retention rates of students in years 10 to 12; the proportion of young Queenslanders aged 15 to 24 years participating in full-time education and/or work; and parent satisfaction results.



It is clear that the Labor government is losing control of Queensland's education system, with teacher shortages, a broken student behavioural management framework, growing school maintenance issues and ballooning truancy as well as dismal education results. This is what happens when you have a state Labor government that does not have the right priorities for Queensland. This is what happens when a government fails to properly resource and manage our education system year after year. Queensland children and students are now paying the price for Labor's chaos and crisis.

Queensland students, parents, teachers and staff deserve a world-class education system—not a shambolic approach that is seeing student outcomes consistently behind other states. Twelve months from today Queenslanders will have a clear choice. They will be able to elect a Liberal National Party state government that will fix Labor's neglect of our education system, deliver greater transparency, focus on improving educational outcomes, invest in the vital school infrastructure that is needed, and ensure respect for our hardworking teachers and school staff.

### Fire Ants

 **Hon. ML FURNER** (Ferny Grove—ALP) (Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries and Minister for Rural Communities) (2.21 pm): Fire ants are one of the most invasive species on the planet and they threaten communities and economies across the globe. If uncontrolled they could cost the Australian economy up to \$2 billion a year, which is why the National Fire Ant Eradication Program is so important. Had it not been for our efforts, these superpests would have marched north to Bowen, west to Longreach and south to Canberra.


Fighting this scourge was on the nation's radar at the weekend when I joined federal Treasurer Jim Chalmers and Minister for Agriculture Murray Watt to announce the Albanese government's additional investment of \$286 million in the fire ant program. The national eradication program is complemented by the Palaszczuk government's \$37.5 million Fire Ant Suppression Taskforce. We are investing in bait drones. We have a team of dogs that are trained to find ants quickly. We are investing in hundreds of new jobs. We are establishing a centre on the Gold Coast. We are throwing everything at this insidious insect because we need to protect our communities where we live, work and play.

This is a far cry from the thinking of those opposite who, true to form, slashed 26 per cent of our essential Biosecurity Queensland staff. Nationally the former LNP government cut 25 per cent of biosecurity staff. Forty-five Queensland fire ant workers lost their jobs and funding was halved under the LNP when they were last in government. There has been much publicity about the spread of fire ants on the Gold Coast. There has been a huge response from the community, which has taken up the offer of free fire ant treatments because they know the importance of combating this pest. Even Gold Coast mayor Tom Tate knows the importance of combatting this pest. He stated that he is delighted with this recent announcement in a letter to residents, which I table.

*Tabled paper:* Document, undated, titled 'Mayor's message' regarding fire ants [\[1775\]](#).

After the weekend's announcement, how refreshing it is to have a federal government that takes biosecurity and fire ants seriously. I recall that the previous agriculture minister, Mr Littleproud, was so disinterested in fire ants and biosecurity that he rarely held agriculture minister's meetings. Fire ants did not even register, let alone meetings. It is absolute hypocrisy. The only interest the former minister ever showed in the Gold Coast was when he tried to charge taxpayers for a trip to the Gold Coast. The hypocrisy and self-interest of the LNP is quite clear. If they ever get the chance to be in this chamber on the government benches they will cut and slash every bit of biosecurity, including the fire ant program. That is an alternative we cannot afford to not treat seriously. Only a Labor government will make sure we eradicate this pest, and we will work consistently with producers right across this wonderful state to protect the food and fibre they grow.

### Glass House Electorate; Denver, Ms G

 **Mr POWELL** (Glass House—LNP) (2.24 pm): As we have heard, it has been an absolutely dreadful start to this year's fire season and my region, particularly around Beerwah, has not been exempt. I want to pay particular credit to the crews at the Glass House Mountains, Beerwah, Peachester, Landsborough, Maleny, Mooloolah Valley and Eudlo rural fire brigades, who have attended fires at Beerwah not once but twice already. On that note I want to thank first officer Ben and brigade chair James from the Ocean View Rural Fire Brigade for the invitation to attend their recent AGM. They look after the southernmost community of the Glass House electorate around Ocean View. They do a fantastic job and are certainly recognised as one of the more professional and larger rural fire brigades in this region.


Whilst talking about AGMs, I also want to thank the Montville Village Association for their invitation to attend, be guest speaker and oversee the election of office bearers at their recent AGM. I want to pay special tribute to outgoing president Michael Bradley, who served four very tough years as president and welcome incoming president Wayne Parcell, who is well known to the Montville community.

In the time remaining I want to say farewell to another community dynamo from Maleny, my dear friend Gail Denver, who on 30 September at age 67 sadly passed away. She beat cancer twice; unfortunately, the third time it got her. As her brother Simon shared at a recent memorial, 'Gail sucked the marrow from the bones of life. She loved it.' She had an infectious sense of humour and a dazzling dimple, but one of the things that really brought us together was our shared love of cricket. I mentioned her sense of humour. She managed to bluff her way into the members' pavilion at the Gabba at the 1988 Ashes by posing as the wife of English fast bowler Graham Dilley with her brother Simon in tow as a journalist supposedly representing the *Yorkshire Post*. They spent the afternoon sipping gin and tonics and munching on cucumber sandwiches. There are stories that, posing as a journalist, she also managed to get into a subsequent Ashes game as well.

She and I set up our celebrity cricket match each year to raise funds for the Lung Foundation. These celebrity matches saw the former member for Callide get stitches above his eye; the former member for Buderim have a shoulder reconstruction; her husband requiring stitches on his face; myself tearing a meniscus; and at least three cricket balls into the surrounding Mercedes Benz and various other cars at the Maleny showgrounds. Gail was involved in every community group: Pattermore House, the Maleny District Sport and Rec Club, the cricket club, Maleny Croquet Club, the Maleny Show Society and the Maleny players. She was one of those loved and invisible leaders who always let others take credit. Mankind needs a few more Gails. As others said—

You can close your eyes and pray that she will come back, or you can open your eyes and see all that she left behind. Your heart can be empty because you cannot see her, or you can be full of the love that you shared. You can turn your back on tomorrow and live yesterday, or you can be happy for tomorrow because of yesterday. You can remember her and only that she is gone, or you can cherish her memory and let it live on.

### Jordan Electorate

 **Mrs MULLEN** (Jordan—ALP) (2.27 pm): On Sunday I was pleased to welcome local families to my annual Welcoming the Babies event. Dubbed the cutest citizenship ceremony, it is also an important way to connect our young families with the vital health and social services that are available in our Greater Springfield community and surrounds. Having a baby is one of the most joyful and life-changing experiences, but those of us who have been there know that it can be exhausting and bring financial and emotional stresses as well. The event, which I co-hosted with our federal member for Oxley, Milton Dick, is our way of letting new parents know that they are not alone and we are there to wrap around them with support and assistance.

The event is also a great way to reflect on the many ways that our government—the Palaszczuk Labor government—is supporting young families in our communities. We know that the cost of living is impacting everyone at this time, and all households are looking for savings where they can find them. That is why our \$550 electricity rebate has been so well received as well as our cashback program for those hoping to purchase energy-efficient appliances.


One of the most popular cost-of-living measures has to be our government's free kindy. Our \$645 million investment will help every Queensland child get a great start in life and support parents in their return to work. The babies we welcomed on Sunday will directly benefit from the free 15 hours a week of kindy they will be receiving in a government approved educational program before they start school. Importantly, free kindergarten is set to save those local families around \$4,600 per year, putting money back in the pockets of mums, dads and carers where it is needed. Once they experience free kindy, they are ready for school. The record investment that our Labor government has made into schools in my electorate has been nothing short of incredible, with three new schools built and opened since I have been elected and millions of dollars spent on new buildings and facilities at all of our local schools, not to mention funding to ensure we have world-class teachers and support staff.

We also have the construction of the brand new Mater Springfield public hospital, which is an absolute game changer for young families in my electorate. Our government is proud to be delivering this new hospital in partnership with Mater Health Services. There will be such peace of mind to those young families knowing they will have an emergency department so close to home, an intensive care unit, 174 public hospital beds and, importantly, the well-known and regarded Mater Mothers maternity

services. They can also pop 10 minutes away to the brand new Ripley Satellite Hospital. We have already seen 2,600 patients go through the satellite hospital since its opening on 30 August. This is again peace of mind to local families.

There is one dark cloud hanging over the heads of young families in my electorate, and that is the LNP. We know that everything we are doing to make life better for young families is at risk if the LNP gain power in Queensland. They will not tell the people of Queensland what their plans are. We know based on their records that young families have much to fear under the LNP.

### Agriculture Industry

 **Mr PERRETT** (Gympie—LNP) (2.30 pm): Queensland's agriculture sector is facing confronting headwinds. Farmers are facing major challenges from the harsh reality of below average rainfall, out of control fires and weakening market conditions. If it gets worse, there will be difficulties servicing loans. I am hearing firsthand that many farmers are extremely stressed. Their mental health is under strain. Many are less positive about the future than they were 12 months ago.

The agriculture minister talks up selective record commodity prices. Spin and fluff are not good enough. Has the minister asked for advice from the local drought committees about the deteriorating conditions? Compounding this, farmers are being squeezed by policy pressures. They are worried about market fairness, the state of rural roads, labour shortages, biosecurity threats, increased regulation, native title claims, vegetation laws and whether they will be the sacrificial lamb to reach environmental targets. Farmers like straight talkers, no matter how brutal or confronting.

Government fishing policies are having a dire impact on the mental health of commercial fishermen. Now it is farmers. The minister should be loudly advocating for those he is supposed to represent at the cabinet table. The beef industry is experiencing 20-year lows and huge feed bills. Prices have crashed. Meat and Livestock Australia says this year cattle prices have plunged by 64 per cent and sheep prices by 70 per cent. DAF says the value of Queensland primary industry commodities has decreased by 3.12 per cent from last year to \$23.67 billion. It revised further down June's winter crop production forecast—forecasting a 38 per cent decline to 2.1 million tonnes in 2023-24. Winter crop yields are forecast to fall 37 per cent to 1.6 tonnes per hectare. DAF says—

This result is driven by below average growing season rainfall, below average soil moisture levels and an unfavourable climate outlook ...


Rabobank's rural confidence survey found that, on every measure, sentiment has declined. Queensland's rural confidence is down 32 per cent, investment intentions are down seven per cent and income expectation is down 25 per cent. Despite record sugar prices, it found even sentiment amongst canegrowers is down. The *Queensland Country Life* said horticulture insolvencies are expected from blowouts in production costs, higher interest rates and declining consumer spending. They said—

Several years of labour shortages and leaping labour costs combined with ... seasonal setbacks, plus steep rises in fuel, fertiliser, freight and packaging expenses have left many growers short of cash reserves and struggling to keep up.

Last week the Queensland Fruit & Vegetable Growers cancelled its 100-year gala event saying it was inappropriate when the industry is currently enduring one of the most trying periods in recent history. They said that the industry is grappling with financial, mental, emotional and physical hardships, and that there is a pressing need for substantial investment to help growers weather the current challenges and survive. They said that the growers require their undivided attention at this time. Minister, this is what you must address.

*(Time expired)*

### Lighthouse Crisis Support Space

 **Mr SMITH** (Bundaberg—ALP) (2.33 pm): Following the last parliamentary sitting, I was thrilled to inspect the brand new Lighthouse Crisis Support Space at the Bundaberg Hospital. This is part of an ED diversion for those patients who are experiencing some form of mental health distress or crisis. It was wonderful to tour the new facility with the CEO of the Wide Bay Hospital and Health Service, Debbie Carroll. We spoke about how the clinicians there will be able to provide the right care for people experiencing a mental health moment. It is about making sure that we have a plan for mental health to be a part of health in our plan. That is exactly what we are doing.

We should look at what the LNP's record is on mental health and health. The first thing we know is that the member for Broadwater, the Leader of the Opposition, wants to cut the mental health levy. He wants to cut a levy that would provide over \$400 million towards such an important service. I cannot

help but wonder how the clinicians at the new Lighthouse Crisis Support Space feel when they hear that from the Leader of the Opposition. What about when they hear the shadow health spokesperson call them duds for working in the regions to look after our health? Maybe they feel a bit like the nurses on medical ward 3 of the Bundaberg Hospital when they hear the member for Burnett say they are deliberately overdosing patients and killing patients. I wonder how they feel. Maybe they do not want to support an LNP that will not stand up for them but instead falsely accuses them of killing patients. What a disgrace.

It goes further. Every single week we find out something more about the LNP. We find out how they want to break the back of the 'unrealistic employee entitlements' of Queensland Health workers and how they are calling locally for cuts to the minimum wage, cuts to penalty rates and cuts to workplace health and safety.


We know they are not focused on hospitals, because when we look at their plan they have released on health they mention the word 'hospital' six times. That is how many times they mention the word 'hospital' in their right priorities plan. How many times do they mention the 'Labor Party'? 37 times. I wonder what they are focused on. They even mentioned the word 'Crisafulli' 11 times—more than hospitals. Apparently the right priority for the Leader of the Opposition is his own last name, his own job. In a very sad thing, which I know the member for Kawana will be upset about, the word 'Bleijie' is mentioned zero times. I can hear the footsteps as he is running to the editor right now.

How many times do they focus on health? In their plan here, it is just one page and they could not even fill the space. They have an entire page and they still could not fill the space, only mentioning hospitals six times. Meanwhile, what are we doing in our Queensland Health and Hospitals Plan? We have a new Bundaberg Hospital—

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Martin): Pause the clock. Member, I caution you to not use any props. There has been a lot of discussion this week and all members have received that advice. You have 10 seconds.

**Mr SMITH:** I am short-sighted so I will take off my glasses so I can read better. There is a new Coomera Hospital, new Toowoomba Hospital, Cairns Hospital, Hervey Bay Hospital and Ipswich Hospital. It is hospitals everywhere. They only mention it six times.

### Jewish Community

 **Mr LANGBROEK** (Surfers Paradise—LNP) (2.37 pm): Last week I was proud to represent the Leader of the Opposition at one of the largest gatherings of Jewish people in Queensland at the Robina Community Centre. I note the member for Logan was there, as was Councillor Hermann Vorster. Tom Tate, the mayor of the Gold Coast, addressed the community via video link. At the event emotions were high. We heard from young students who had escaped Tel Aviv in Israel when the attacks began and were still traumatised but happy to be home here in Australia. We also heard from a mum whose children were repatriated to London. She was apprehensively awaiting a reunion, as all parents would understand.

The Jewish community has a deep connection to my electorate of Surfers Paradise. I am proud to have two synagogues under the leadership of Rabbi Gurevitch and Rabbi Adi Cohen. Over the last 20 years when I have been going to my electorate office on a Saturday morning, I have often seen Rabbi Gurevitch with an ever-increasing band of children—his own children. I think he now has nine or 10 children so it has been quite a thing to see him on their Sabbath.

In August 1961 the synagogue of the Gold Coast Hebrew Congregation was established, and in 1972 Temple Shalom was established on the Isle of Capri providing services for the residents of Surfers Paradise and the hundreds of Jewish people who visit the area on holidays, many of whom I used to treat when I was a dentist visiting from Melbourne and Sydney. Many of those patients were there in the audience—still praising me for my dental skills.

As shadow minister for multiculturalism, I know firsthand how diversity in Queensland and across the nation is our greatest strength. The importance of a harmonious multicultural community is paramount, especially when we have numerous communities to whom we espouse tolerance, acceptance and respect. I want to acknowledge that the Queensland Jewish Board of Deputies president, Jason Steinberg, said that in Queensland we have not seen overt attacks against our community. That is something I acknowledge and we hope continues.


In May 2022, the synagogue on the Isle of Capri was attacked with anti-Semitic flyers stuck to poles outside the temple and distributed in surrounding letterboxes. I table an article by Brianna Morris-Grant from the *Gold Coast Bulletin* of 2 May 2022 about that particular matter.

*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' [1776].

As a result of not only that incident but also others, we brought in legislation recently with the Criminal Code (Serious Vilification and Hate Crimes) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill making hate symbols and anti-Semitic behaviour illegal. In that *Gold Coast Bulletin* article which I tabled, it was revealed that amongst those to receive the flyer which referenced a neo-Nazi group was a person whose family survived the Holocaust.

Hatred, prejudice and discrimination have no place in our community. I go to many citizenship ceremonies at which we espouse harmony, tolerance and respect. We welcome people from all over the world. We want them to be part of our community, and we value what they do.

### Secondary Vehicle Immobiliser Subsidy Trial


 **Mr WALKER** (Mundingburra—ALP) (2.40 pm): I rise to speak about the secondary engine immobiliser trial, another strategy used to address vehicle theft. In December 2022, the Palaszczuk government announced a \$10 million investment into an engine immobiliser subsidy trial to supply up to 20,000 engine immobilisers for residents in Mount Isa, Cairns and Townsville. The initiative is proposed to conclude on 30 June next year unless extended.

More than 11,000 vouchers have been obtained by eligible residents since the launch of the Secondary Vehicle Immobiliser Subsidy Trial on 2 August this year. That is 11,926 vouchers issued in less than three months. Just over 1,800 recipients have redeemed their vouchers and have a secondary engine immobiliser installed in their vehicle, with many more booked in with their local approved installer. The subsidy vouchers are valued at up to \$500 each.

We on this side of the House are committed to improve community safety every day of the week—unlike those on the other side of the House, the LNP, who would have the people in Townsville believe there was no crime under their watch. That is wrong. There were rapes, murders, stolen cars, domestic violence and armed robberies. There was even a defamation case brought against the arrogant member for Kawana—the attorney-general at the time—and his mentor, Campbell Newman. What the member for Kawana—'The Mask'—does not want to talk about is that the taxpayers of Queensland allegedly paid his legal bill and Campbell Newman's legal bill and also that the negotiated settlement, when combined, allegedly, totalled over \$500,000 of taxpayers' money. Why did the member for Kawana do a negotiated settlement behind closed doors? Why did he not let the sun shine in on the defamation case against him and Campbell Newman? Why was he not open and transparent to the people of Queensland? He needs to get back in this House and answer these questions in detail for the people of Queensland, who paid his debt.

Those opposite sit in this place and talk arrogantly like there will be no crime under their watch. That is wrong—absolutely wrong! There was a lot of crime under the watch of those opposite. There was a lot of crime and a lot fewer police and a lot less well-resourced police. We on this side of the House will invest in our police every day of the week and have more police boots on the ground. The member for Kawana needs to get in here and explain himself.

### Mount Isa, Resources Industry

 **Mr KATTER** (Traeger—KAP) (2.43 pm): The North West Minerals Province and residents, mainly in Mount Isa, were dealt some news last week about Glencore, the operator of a copper mine. What I want to speak to today is the reaction by the government, led by the Treasurer, which was disappointing to say the least—very disappointing. 'Irresponsible' and 'damaging' are other words I would use to characterise the response.

Glencore are a global commodity trader. They are not into mining; they are commodity traders that inadvertently participate in mining activities. They own copper mines in South America and the Congo, which they will gladly take advantage of. They have divested themselves of their base metal operations in Australia. They sold the Cobar mine. They sold Ernest Henry mine. They told us Ernest Henry did not have much life left in it, but then a new junior miner comes in and adds 17 years to it within 18 months because they are a miner; they take a long-term investment approach.

A responsible attitude from the government would have been to have a cursory glance at Glencore's December 2022 Resources & Reserves report, which states that there is 157 million tonnes of copper ore resource at a grade of 1.7 per cent. If you were to take that to a global mining analyst they would say, 'Well, something is going on there. They do not seem to want to really mine there.' That does not align with the vision or the spending of \$5 billion on the magnificent CopperString project. You do not do that and allow a mining participant to come out and say, 'You know what? This is getting a bit tricky for us now. We are just going to leave and dump 1,200 jobs.'

Proportionately, 1,200 jobs out there is the equivalent of 11,000 jobs in Townsville or 143,000 jobs in Brisbane. What would be the reaction if 143,000 jobs were under threat here? I can give you a bit of an example. Virgin announced that 1,200 jobs—the same number of jobs with Glencore—would be moving to Sydney, and the reaction from the Treasurer was, 'We will stop at nothing to ensure the headquarters of Virgin remains in Queensland.' Then he offered the company \$200 million to stay here in Queensland. Perhaps it was a good idea; I do not know—I will not criticise that decision. However, what happens when it is 1,200 jobs in North Queensland? 'We will give \$50 million and we will stop at anything. We will stop at the first road block.'

It is a lousy mining company that is not very good at making long-term decisions. There are plenty of other mining companies that will make that copper mine work. There is 157 million tonnes of copper—they can make that work. We need to get Glencore out of there. If they are not going to share the vision for the north-west, we do not want them here in Australia. They are not good people to have owning that mine. We do not have to lose 1,200 jobs. We do not have to talk about transitioning. There are 1,200 jobs that can stay well into the future if it is managed properly.

What do we do? We scrutinise the motivation behind this decision-making. You are well within your rights to do that and you are well within your rights to review the operating licences they have now and make sure they are playing by the rules.

## Education



**Mr POWER** (Logan—ALP) (2.46 pm): I want to say happy World Teachers' Day for tomorrow to all of the fantastic, hardworking teachers in Logan.

**Ms Pease:** You are a teacher, aren't you?

**Mr POWER:** You are right; I am a former high school teacher. I am not as good as the fantastic teachers who are in Logan. Each week they try to do innovative and fantastic lessons for their students, and they put in that extra preparation.

I have noticed lately—you may have noticed it yourself, Mr Deputy Speaker Martin—that occasionally members opposite hold up a yellow and blue document. It is titled 'right-wing priorities'. I wanted to ask members what it was and they were reluctant to give it to me, but eventually they gave me a copy of 'right-wing priorities'. I wanted to look up what were the right-wing priorities for education. There was less than half a page of information there. They made an attack on principals where they said that principals were making teachers spend too much time out of the classroom. In fact, what they were attacking was the time that teachers have to do lesson planning and preparation. I see the former principals here who know how important that is. As a former LOTE teacher, I knew how important preparation was. The other thing I found very disappointing in their 'right-wing priorities' was that there was nothing about investment in—

**Mr CRANDON:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The member for Logan is misleading the House. It does not say that. It says, 'The Right Priorities for Queensland's Future'.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Martin): That is not a point of order. Resume your seat.

**Mr POWER:** That is absolutely right. They are having right-wing priorities, not for Queensland but for themselves. There is no statement about investment in a growing population. There is nothing about investing in new schools. We have built four new schools in my growing area: Everleigh State School, a fantastic school which I share with the member for Jordan; South Rock State School; Yarrabilba State School; and the fantastic Yarrabilba State Secondary College. We have seen investment in new classrooms.

With no new investments amongst their right-wing priorities, we have a right to be scared in Logan. We are right to be scared that their right-wing priorities will mean cuts to the schools that we need. Instead, we are investing in classrooms. We can also look at their record. Do members know how many classrooms the LNP built in the growing area of Logan during their time in government?

**Mr Bailey:** Zero.


**Mr POWER:** The transport minister knows. The answer is zero, and that is what we can expect again. Let me say that that lack of investment in a growing area is—

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order!

**Mr POWER:** I put this question: can the teachers and students of Logan risk a party that does not make investment in students a priority? Can Logan risk a party that did not build a single classroom during their time in government? It is quite clear that we cannot risk their dangerous right-wing priorities. We need to keep investing in the classrooms and teachers of Logan. Happy World Teachers' Day.

### **Palaszczuk Labor Government, First Nations Justice**

 **Dr MacMAHON** (South Brisbane—Grn) (2.49 pm): In the past fortnight we have seen the LNP shamefully use First Nations justice as a political football in a cynical attempt to scrape together a few more votes for next year's election. It is appalling that the LNP cares more about using truth-telling and treaty as a wedge for Labor rather than standing up for First Nations people. To back away from the commitment to truth-telling and treaty that we all laid down in Cairns just a few months ago is unconscionable.


It is disappointing to see the Premier seemingly taking the bait and abandoning what principles Labor do have when it comes to First Nations justice. Instead of racing to the bottom on who can be the cruellest when it comes to First Nations justice or locking up kids, both Labor and the LNP could have some courage and win votes by fighting for the things that will actually make Queenslanders' lives better. How about freezing rents and fighting for everyone in Queensland to have a safe and affordable place to call home? How about full funding for health care, schools or bringing down the cost of transport? How about taking on the electricity corporations and bringing down the cost of electricity permanently? How about taking on Coles and Woolies, who are price gouging Queenslanders, and making sure that every Queenslanders can afford their groceries? What about fighting for genuine changes in the lives of Queenslanders instead of throwing First Nations people under the bus to score political points a year out from the election?

It is shameful. Frankly, it is shocking to hear Labor say they need bipartisan support to pursue meaningful change in Queensland like treaty, and we are still waiting for the truth-telling inquiry to begin. Are Labor really going to wait for the LNP's support to make real, transformative change in Queensland? If so, we are going to be waiting a long, long time. We could and should be pushing for genuine changes we need to ensure justice for First Nations people right now.

Queensland can have treaty, truth-telling and justice. In a wealthy state like ours we can ensure that all First Nations people have the things they need for a good life and we can start today. This government could start by ensuring that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people do not risk their lives in our state's watch houses and prisons. They could raise the age of criminal responsibility, helping keep First Nations youth out of watch houses and prisons. They could ensure that First Nations families can ask for help and support without the risk of the state taking away their children. The government could ensure that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health services and housing services are autonomous and fully funded. We could ensure that every First Nations family has a secure and safe place to call home. There is nothing to stop us from acting now except a lack of political will.

Both Labor and the LNP could have some courage and not back down on truth-telling and treaty, which we all committed to just a few months ago. We could get to work today implementing real and meaningful changes that will improve the lives of all Queenslanders.

### **Prince Charles Hospital, Access**

 **Mr SULLIVAN** (Stafford—ALP) (2.52 pm): I rise to discuss a really important issue for my community in Chermside and beyond, the Prince Charles Hospital, an icon on the north side. I regularly speak in this House about the government's significant investment in this hospital and our ongoing support for the hardworking staff right across the campus. Today I need to focus not so much on what goes on every day inside the hospital but, rather, on how staff, patients and visitors can enter and exit the campus.

What some people will not realise is that the campus of the Prince Charles Hospital is bordered on all four sides by council roads, including Hamilton Road to the north of the hospital. Tragically, about five years ago a nurse sadly crashed and died while trying to turn into Hamilton Road after finishing her shift. There has been significant community, government, union and other engagement about trying to

provide safer options for staff, patients and their family and friends who utilise this wonderful facility. I would like to recognise the hard work of my predecessor, Dr Anthony Lynham, and his advocacy in this regard.


There developed a fairly united view across the hospital executive, workforce and the community that something had to be done. In particular, the instalment of a set of lights that would provide safe entry and exit to the hospital while better aligning the intersection with suburban side streets opposite the hospital was needed. Despite this, the Brisbane City Council has acted like a petulant child and refused to deliver—and that is being generous. Despite this being a council road, the Palaszczuk government tried to help and do the job of the council for them. We set aside a million dollars in the 2021-22 DTMR budget for this purpose.

The hospital executive and Metro North HHS were negotiating in good faith with council to look at realigning the internal roads on the hospital precinct to ensure a good and safe outcome for hospital users and the neighbouring residents alike. Having presented an option to the hospital that would accomplish this, the LNP BCC released a completely different intersection plan to the wider community, completely moving where the intersection would be.

Even more crucial, in a solution meant to provide safer entry and exit for hospital staff and patients, the LNP council's latest proposal is to spend millions of dollars of council and state money on an intersection that does not provide any access in or out of the hospital. I feel like I am in an episode of *Utopia* or *The Hollow Men*. Let me say it again. In trying to address safe entry and exit for hospital staff in the wake of a death, the LNP council's proposal is to create a T-intersection that excludes access in or out of the hospital. You cannot make this stuff up.

The LNP need to take responsibility for their council roads. They need to listen to staff, the community, the residents and the HHS and actually deliver real outcomes for our community. I and the Palaszczuk government will continue to fight for their rights to achieve just that.

### Palaszczuk Labor Government, Performance

 **Mr CRANDON** (Coomera—LNP) (2.55 pm): The LNP have the right priorities for Queensland's future. Those priorities include saving Queenslanders from paying for Labor's failures, including reducing Labor government waste rather than hitting Queenslanders with higher taxes and fees and identifying opportunities to reduce fees and charges; and delivering better services and infrastructure for every taxpayer dollar invested. An LNP government will use a reinstated Productivity Commission to ensure every dollar that is collected achieves the maximum possible value for Queenslanders.

As an example of cost blowouts, we saw the cost of the Coomera Connector stage 1 blow out from \$1.5 billion and six lanes of road before the 2020 election to more than \$2.1 billion and four lanes of road. That blowout is a direct result of this Labor government being stuck in the slow lane, delaying the construction start date by years. Now we are told the completion of the Coomera Connector is 10 to 15 years away. We will actively look at attracting economic investment to Queensland, not scaring businesses away due to sovereign risk concerns. We will properly maintain our power plants to ensure certainty of electricity supply at peak times.


Driving down the cost of living by reducing the impact of crime on insurance premiums is a high priority. Many Queenslanders have seen their home and contents insurance, motor vehicle insurance and small business insurance skyrocket as a direct result of the increasing crime in our communities. Driving down the cost of living by reducing traffic congestion by investing in road infrastructure is a priority. Driving down the cost of living by investing in natural disaster mitigation is a priority. The Darlington Range in the Coomera electorate is a tinderbox with very little in the way of hazard reduction burns being completed in recent years. Once again, insurance premiums are impacted by natural disasters.

Reducing state and local government red tape for individuals and businesses and streamlining government processes that are stifling small and family businesses is a priority. Another priority is increasing opportunities and productivity for small and family businesses and their staff by investing in vocational training and skills for the future. Another is delivering the opportunities for small and family businesses to compete for state government work and improving payment terms for small and family businesses. As the Leader of the Opposition and the member for my neighbouring seat of Broadwater, David Crisafulli, said, Queensland needs stability, tax certainty and less regulation, not the steepest cost-of-living increase in the country.



On another subject, I have sponsored two petitions calling for sound barriers at exit 41 of the M1 and at Coomera Springs. When publicising these petitions, a massive issue has come to light with these two areas being just the tip of the iceberg. There are so many other residents identifying other areas of the M1 where sound barriers are desperately needed. We call on the state government to deliver those sound barriers for the people of the northern Gold Coast all the way along the M1.

### Wynnum Fringe Festival

 **Ms PEASE** (Lytton—ALP) (2.58 pm): Wynnum Fringe Festival is just over three weeks away from Yana Marumba and all the sensational delights that Fringe brings. Queenslanders know that the Palaszczuk Labor government values the arts and the people who work in the arts know that, too. However, let's compare that with the LNP. Whilst those opposite are often seen at opening nights enjoying the hospitality, performances or experiences, there is not one mention of the arts in their ridiculous, needy little 'vote for me' pamphlet. Obviously the opposition are happy to utilise the medical skills of the member for Moggill, but as the opposition spokesperson for the arts he obviously did not get a look in with the LNP pamphlet because there is not one mention of the arts. Come on, really—not one word! I would suggest to those in the arts sector that they need to be very scared if those opposite ever get into government.

We on this side of the House know how valuable the arts are to our economy and driving social change and strengthening communities, activating local places and spaces, and celebrating regional stories and storytellers. Contrast our government's support for the sector. Wynnum Fringe alone has received \$917,944 over three years, \$90,000 over two years for a BDM, \$149,000 over two years to support community programs and a further \$90,000 over two years to employ an emerging associate producer. Not only are we supporting Wynnum Fringe, we are also supporting community and industry development. Since the first festival in 2020, our government has supported Wynnum Fringe. Wynnum Fringe has generated over \$2.5 million in direct benefit to our local economy, attracted 70,000 attendees and employed over 1,000 arts workers.

Everyone here knows that the old Newman government razor gang is sitting on the opposition front bench and if elected cutting arts funding will be high on their agenda. They appear to be only interested in the freebies or getting candidates to have fundraising opportunities on the community capital of arts groups. There is no doubt that those opposite will come out swinging with their cuts and locally-led arts events will bear the brunt of their slashed funding. Who can forget one of the Newman government's first acts was to cut the Premier's Literary Awards and cut the arts budget funding, resulting in the defunding of so many arts organisations. No-one in the arts community has forgotten and nor have they forgiven.


We want to grow the arts. If members have not got their tickets for Wynnum Fringe, get online and get them now. It is a great event and I will be there.

## TRANSPORT AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE


### Report, Motion to Take Note

Resumed from 12 October (see p. 3051), on motion of Mr King—

That the House take note of the Transport and Resources Committee Report No. 28, 57th Parliament, *Examination of Auditor-General Report 18: 2021-22—Enhancing government procurement*, tabled on 16 December 2022.

 **Mr PERRETT** (Gympie—LNP) (3.02 pm), continuing: This government has been obsessed with engaging consultants and outsourcing jobs which should be undertaken by the Public Service. It uses consultants as a cover against openness, transparency and responsibility. In the last five years the government has spent at least \$423 million on the big four consulting firms. That is \$234,000 of taxpayers' money spent every day employing consultants from the big four firms. The Queensland Audit Office said that savings could also be found from consultant services 'if the corresponding expenditure were classified in a more consistent and detailed manner across departments.' It said—

The current expenditure data does not easily show why a consultant was engaged or how much each engagement has cost. This limits cross-department collaboration, as departments are unable to identify where a consultant has already been engaged by another department for a similar purpose.

 **Mr MICKELBERG** (Buderim—LNP) (3.03 pm): I rise to address the Queensland Audit Office report in relation to government procurement which was published in 2022 and we are getting around to debating now at the back end of 2023. What strikes me about this report is that this is an issue that

the Queensland Audit Office has investigated and reported on many times over the course of the Palaszczuk Labor government. The first report in 2016 made some important recommendations. That was followed up in 2017-18 reporting on progress. In 2021 it was reported that the recommendations had been fully implemented by the government but the Queensland Audit Office report states the opposite. The Audit Office report states—

Queensland Government Procurement reported it has fully implemented this recommendation and has developed a data strategy.

The Audit Office also states—

We continue to find, however, that the data being collected is not consistently categorised and new systems and processes have not always resulted in information suitable for procurement analysis.

It is quite concerning if the Queensland public cannot have confidence that when something is said to have been implemented it actually has been implemented. How can we have confidence that the government is governing in the interest of all Queenslanders.

We are talking about fairly significant issues with respect to procurement. The recommendations the Audit Office made in there make sense. I think they should be implemented. I would call on the government to pay attention to this issue. We are talking about the use of a considerable amount of taxpayers funds. The measures reported in the Audit Office report are genuinely concerning.

I want to focus on some of the reporting in relation to use of data and the limitations associated with the government's use of data. The Audit Office found that there are significant issues with the use of data for procurement analysis and decision-making. They talk about the fact that departments produce data to meet their financial, budgeting and reporting obligations rather than for procurement analysis and that that same data is not suitable for use as procurement analysis. They talk about the fact that there are a significant number of transactions that need to be removed from the data because they are not relevant and that finance expenditure transactions do not always adequately explain what goods or services are being purchased and why they are being purchased. It also goes on the say that the data does not link to supplier contracts or whole-of-government contractual arrangements.

The reason this is important is Queenslanders need to have confidence that the taxpayer money that is being spent by this government to fund their operations and the delivery of government services and infrastructure is spent in the best way possible. If we cannot assess that because the government either does not want to or is incapable of doing so through their collection of data and the reporting of that data, that should genuinely be a concern for all Queenslanders.

The Audit Office talks about the fact that the categorisation of expenditure by data is subjective. It is like so many things we see with the government—there is no leadership and no coordination from the top across departments. What happens is that Queenslanders lose as a consequence. Queenslanders lose and we spend more delivering government services and on government procurement than we would otherwise because there is a lack of coordination across departments. The Audit Office talks about the fact that there was an opportunity to improve the quality of the existing data through the implementation of a consistent classification system, but sees no movement on that front from the government.

The member of Gympie spoke about the use of consultants, which the Audit Office also raised in their report. They talk about the fact that savings could be found in the procurement of consultant services if the corresponding expenditure was classified in a more consistent and detailed manner across departments. They go on to say—

The current expenditure data does not easily show why a consultant was engaged or how much each engagement has cost.

I have a suspicion as to why the government may not want to know how much was spent and what was delivered. In many cases, I suspect not much is the answer. We know that this government has an addiction to spending money on big four consultancies rather than empowering the Public Service and using them to the best of their capability.

Perhaps even more concerning is the fact that the Audit Office identifies that this lack of data in relation to consultants actually means that consultants could be engaged by another department for the exact same purpose. We could be paying consultants twice to deliver the same outcome which would not necessarily have needed to be the case had the government had an overarching framework across all of government.

I am running out of time, but one thing I want to place on the record is that small and family business frequently talk to me about how difficult it is to do business with the state government. They talk about the fact that tenders are very difficult to navigate, there is a lack of genuine commitment to small and family business and that a number of government departments have poor payment terms. Queenslanders deserve better.

**Hon. MC BAILEY** (Miller—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads and Minister for Digital Services) (3.08 pm): I rise to make a brief contribution on the committee report. The reality is that there has never been a government in this state that has had greater requirements for local procurement than the Palaszczuk Labor government. All we get from those opposite, instead of praise and backing in good policy and backing small, medium and large businesses in this state, is whingeing and whining from the member from—where is he from?—Buderim. It is hard to remember sometimes given how mediocre his contributions are.

Anyone who follows government announcements knows just how high the level of local procurement is. Cross River Rail is regularly in the high 80 or low 90 per cent of businesses who are supplying to our projects—our record infrastructure program. We are spending double the amount on infrastructure than the previous LNP government. They are benefiting from us—

**Mr Mickelberg:** You get less.

**Mr BAILEY:** That is a bizarre interjection from the member for Buderim, who says that we are spending less. This is our \$32 billion infrastructure program—

**Mr Mickelberg** interjected.

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

**Mr Mickelberg** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Buderim—

**Mr Mickelberg** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. Member for Buderim, you are now warned under the standing orders.

**Mr BAILEY:** This is our \$32 billion infrastructure program—double their last one—and we get silly interjections like that from the member for Buderim, who obviously is not across his brief. We are seeing record low levels of unemployment in this state because of our infrastructure program and because of our very strong local procurement policies which have often been criticised by those opposite and now they are saying that we are not doing enough. It is just the same old whingeing and whining. We saw the 44-page pamphlet that said nothing, no commitments to projects, no commitments to policies—absolutely nothing. You would think a year out they would actually have a policy, but there was not a policy. There was no policy in there on procurement, that is for sure. I do not recall seeing the word 'procurement'.

**Mr Millar** interjected.

**Mr BAILEY:** The member for Gregory has had the rug taken out from under him in his own seat and he is obviously a bit cantankerous, but I digress. You can bet one thing: he has a safe seat. It will not be a woman that the LNP puts into that seat, that is for sure, because the LNP does not give safe seats to women. It keeps them for the boys' club over there.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Members to my left, order!

**Mr BAILEY:** It obviously landed, didn't it? We have a very strong record on procurement. Businesses know that. Right across the state businesses are doing our 459 Bruce Highway upgrades, businesses are supplying to the Cross River Rail and businesses are supplying to the Coomera Connector, the second M1. I heard a contribution from the member for Coomera earlier. That was blocked when the member for Coomera was part of the Newman government but is being built under this government and all they can do is whinge and whine. There are a huge number of local suppliers going into that project as well as all of the M1 upgrades that we are doing. Then there are the interchange upgrades up the Bruce Highway. I know the member for Kurwongbah is a very strong supporter of upgrades to our road and rail system and it is local companies providing the bulk of that because we require local procurement.

We are seeing local procurement at levels never seen before under any other government and one would think that if the opposition had any integrity it would be backing it in saying that it is good policy and it supports it, yet we get the same old whingeing and whining. Those opposite have had three years to come up with a policy, three years to come up with a project that they support, yet we get 44 pages of waffle with pages that virtually have no words on them. They have really big italics to take up a bit of space but no actual content in it. This is an opposition that has spent three years whingeing and whining. It has done nothing in terms of policy development and nothing in terms of projects. We have an opposition leader whose wheels are spinning. You can see that. They know it on the other side because all they have is whingeing and whining. They do not have a vision. They do not have the policy development. It is whatever today's lines are. They have principles but then walk away from them, so you cannot trust anything they say.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

## TRANSPORT AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

### Report, Motion to Take Note



**Mr KING** (Kurwongbah—ALP) (3.13 pm): I move—

That the House take note of the Transport and Resources Committee Report No. 29, 57th Parliament, *Inquiry into coal mining industry safety*, tabled on 16 February 2023.

A 2019 study found the Queensland mining industry has the third highest work related fatality by industry rate. The 2020 Grosvenor Mine serious accident which saw five workers catastrophically injured in a gas explosion near Moranbah resulted in the Queensland Coal Mining Board of Inquiry. The board of inquiry made numerous recommendations aimed at improving coalmine safety. However, workers continued to be killed at coalmines. Since the board of inquiry three men have lost their lives due to accidents in Queensland mines. Their deaths were utterly preventable.


Prior to entering parliament I worked as an electrician on mine sites. I am aware that mines are dangerous places, but I also understand that safety management systems that are effectively designed, implemented, followed and audited can minimise incidents and injuries. Mining companies make large profits from their Queensland coalmine operations. However, productivity should never come before the safety of their workers. As the minister says, the most important thing to come out of a mine at the end of the day is its workers and they should all be able to go to work knowing that they will return home safely at the end of their shift.

During our inquiry the committee observed a theme that has permeated multiple government inquiries into safety in the mining sector. Mining companies speak loudly about how committed to safety they are, but individual workers feel there is a fear of speaking up for safety and a risk of reprisal for doing this. During our inquiry we had the opportunity to visit the Grosvenor Mine and see for ourselves the conditions in which underground coalminers work, and I thank Anglo American for hosting us in November 2022 during that visit. It was amazing. Having worked in an open-cut mine, just to see the conditions in which they work in an underground mine is a real eye-opener and my commendation to everyone who goes underground. It is not a good environment to work in and they all need to be safe.

Our committee made 11 recommendations largely around enhancing tripartite consultation and consensus between the companies, workers, their representatives and safety authorities. We also recommended that there be more unannounced inspections and that any safety related bonuses be based on lead rather than lag indicators to stop financial gain potentially hindering genuine safety reporting. I am pleased that the minister has acknowledged our recommendations and hope the Resources Council of Queensland can work with other bodies to help address the ongoing perceptions and issues to help make our mines safer.

There was some confusion about a 1800SAFE number that the Resources Council brought up which no-one seemed to really know about, and that is the problem. These mines all need to be on the same page and the same safety standards need to be throughout the whole industry. It is disappointing to me personally that the same concerns about safety versus production are still perceived to be part of an industry over 18 years after I left the industry. In saying that, there have been some marked improvements, and commendations to the companies for that.

We held public hearings in both Moranbah and Brisbane and I want to thank those witnesses for their time and their helpful insights. Finally, I also want to thank the individuals and organisations that made written submissions to the committee. As always, I thank our Transport and Resources Committee and the secretariat for all of the hard work they did. I commend the report to the House.

 **Mr WEIR** (Condamine—LNP) (3.17 pm): I rise to speak to the committee report titled *Inquiry into coal mining industry safety*. Mining has always been a high-risk industry and history shows that far too many miners have had their lives cut short working in this industry, particularly coalmining. Only a few weeks ago I attended the 38th annual miners memorial service held at Mount Isa to remember fallen miners. It was, as always, a very touching service and at the conclusion an honour roll of miners who have lost their lives was played which brings home the scale of some of those disasters and how many miners have lost their lives over the years, none more so than the Mount Mulligan disaster where a coal dust explosion resulted in the death of 75 miners on 19 September 1921—one of the worst mining disasters in our history.


While safety processes have improved a lot since those days, we still see too many coalmine incidents and must continue to remain vigilant for areas where practices can be improved. It is the government's job to drive that process and support industry with the right regulation and mechanisms to implement changes. That is what this government should be focused on. The Palaszczuk government is reaping an enormous windfall in coal royalties, yet in the committee report recommendation 6 suggests a fee increase to increase resourcing for Resources Safety & Health Queensland for compliance and enforcement. Whilst I support a properly funded Resources Safety & Health Queensland, I believe the government should return some of these coal royalties to the industry that has provided it with so much revenue and increase the funding through that source.

It is also important to note that the Palaszczuk government was reaping in record coal royalties even prior to the increase in the royalty rate this financial year. Why has that money not been better used to resource RSHQ? Recommendation 6 as written only specifically mentions compliance and enforcement programs. This wording implies that regulation and legislation are currently adequate to address safety concerns. The results would say otherwise. It omits the need for RSHQ to be proactive in working with industry to improve safety procedures and culture by sharing learnings from the incidents and near misses or new technologies and practices that may be applicable today. That is what should be happening. It is something this side of the House wants to see.

The report referenced the Brady review, a review which identified that a large number of fatalities involved inadequate training of workers and that controls meant to prevent harm were ineffective, unenforced or absent, with no or inadequate supervision. These are serious findings. The review found that almost all of these fatalities were the result of systemic organisational and supervision-of-training failures and that human error alone would not have caused all of these fatalities. Again, that is a very serious finding.

The report also recommends an increase in unannounced inspections. We were all shocked by the explosion at Grosvenor Mine, where five miners suffered serious burns and were lucky to escape with their lives. I am visiting Grosvenor next week. I made a promise that I would go down when that mine was operating again, and I am doing that next week. This event led to the Queensland Coal Mining Board of Inquiry. This inquiry was concerned to understand how the Queensland coalmining industry has responded to the findings and recommendations of the board of inquiry. Many of these recommendations remain to be implemented.

There have been a number of legislative changes that are having an impact on the number of statutory officers coming through the system. The Board of Examiners' annual report shows a significant decrease in the number of statutory officers. These mines cannot operate without experienced, qualified SSEs and OCEs in these positions. The LNP wants to achieve zero harm in the coalmining industry. We believe that this is a goal that should be strived for, as every person deserves to return home at the end of their shift. I urge the government to put actions ahead of words and ensure this can be the case. Positive and constructive action on safety will always be supported by the LNP. A strong and safe resources industry is in the best interests of all Queenslanders.


 **Mr WALKER** (Mundingburra—ALP) (3.22 pm): I rise to speak to report No. 29 of the Transport and Resources Committee, *Inquiry into coal mining industry safety*, dated February 2023. I would like to thank the chair, Mr Shane King, member for Kurwongbah; the deputy chair, Mr Lachlan Millar, member for Gregory; and fellow committee members Mr Bryson Head, member for Callide, and Mr Trevor Watts, member for Toowoomba North; and former committee member Mr James Martin, member for Stretton, who has since moved to another committee. I thank him for his service with us on

the Transport and Resources Committee. I also thank our Parliamentary Service staff, who do an excellent job supporting this committee. The report is 94 pages in total and is an exceptionally good report.

I want to mention section 1.4 of the report in relation to the inquiry process. On 31 August 2022 the committee invited stakeholders, subscribers and any interested persons and organisations to make written submissions on this very important issue, addressing any or all of the terms of reference. The submissions closed on 5 October 2022. The committee received a number of requests for extensions, which were agreed to. The committee also wrote to the Premier seeking a whole-of-government submission. Twenty-three submissions were received in total, including a submission from Resources Safety & Health Queensland on behalf of whole of government; submissions from coalmining operators in Queensland including Anglo American, BHP Group Ltd and BM Alliance Coal Operations Pty Ltd, Peabody Energy Australia, Idemitsu Australia Pty Ltd, Kestrel Coal Resources, Glencore Coal and one company which made a confidential submission; submissions from the Queensland Resources Council and the Mining and Energy Union Queensland Division, the MEU; submissions from current and former mine industry workers; and submissions from academia and community. As members can see, there was a lot of engagement across many stakeholders in the coalmining industry. A list of all of the submissions received are contained in appendix A of the report.

The committee received a public briefing from RSHQ on 24 October 2022. The committee then held hearings on 2 November 2022, 28 November 2022 and 10 January of this year. The first of these public hearings was in Moranbah, the second was in Brisbane and the third was via teleconference. The committee received responses to questions on notice taken at the hearings and the committee wrote to various stakeholders seeking additional written information. The submissions, correspondence, tabled papers and transcripts of the briefing and hearings are available on the committee's webpage. A list of all of the witnesses who appeared at the public briefing and public hearings is contained in appendices B and C. We covered a lot of ground and we dug deep with this inquiry. I must say that I have learned a lot about the coalmining sector, more so about underground coalmining.

I sincerely thank all of the miners and former miners who spoke with us for sharing their experiences and knowledge and also mining companies for their input. After visiting a coalmine in Moranbah and going underground to see and experience the environment coalminers work in and the safety features and practices that are in place, I can say that the coalminers have my total respect. I must add that they earn every dollar. There are 11 recommendations in this report which I support and I commend the report to the House.

 **Mr LAST** (Burdekin—LNP) (3.26 pm): I rise to speak to the Transport and Resources Committee's report into coalmining industry safety. Even though the board of inquiry made 11 recommendations relating to the government, the motion establishing this inquiry singles out mine operators, labour hire companies and associated entities for the committee's scrutiny. It goes without saying that government has a role in improving safety in Queensland's mines—something the committee obviously agrees with, given it made four recommendations that directly relate to actions of this government. But still this government refuses to act, with the response to three of those four recommendations being little more than 'I will seek advice'.

In this report is yet another recommendation to increase the number of unannounced inspections in mines. The Coal Workers' Pneumoconiosis Select Committee's second report in 2016 highlighted the importance of increasing unannounced inspections, but instead we saw not only a reduction in unannounced inspections in 2022-23 but also a reduction in total inspections. The RSHQ annual report refers to this committee report and gives reasons why the proportion of unannounced inspections should not increase, including that they had identified no real difference in the rate of noncompliance or substandard practices between the two types of inspections. Is it any wonder no difference was identified when workers tell me that on an arrival to conduct an unannounced inspection inspectors are greeted with a platter of sandwiches from a well-known food chain—something that can only be described as a miracle in a mine an hour away from the nearest town. The system is clearly broken and, despite the best efforts of the committee, it is a fait accompli that unannounced inspections will not increase.

The genesis of this committee inquiry and report was the recommendation stemming from the Coal Mining Board of Inquiry, an inquiry also referred to in the RSHQ's annual report. In the more than two years since the board of inquiry concluded, 10 of the 30 recommendations made to government have been implemented. As for the rest, RSHQ says that many of them 'propose legislative amendment and are subject to government consideration'. Perhaps the minister in his contribution today can explain


why we are still waiting. One issue identified by the board of inquiry more than three years ago is the issue of compulsion of witnesses—something the former resources minister told the board would be given careful consideration by government but clearly has not.

When he appeared before the committee, my constituent Scott Leggett explained the importance of compelling witnesses. Scott has worked in coalmines for 30 years. He has worked in mines rescue, he has been an open-cut examiner for 10 years and he holds a site senior executive ticket. Scott told the committee—

If you cannot get the information then you are never going to get a result. You need truth. You need to be able to compel people to tell the truth about what happened. If you cannot get that information you will never get to what caused it. If you cannot understand or find what caused it you will never fix it. It will happen again.

This government has a responsibility to every worker in Queensland's mines and a responsibility to their families—families like that of Phil and Michelle Dodunski who, for 10 years, have sought answers into the circumstances surrounding the death of their son Gareth. Coroner MacKenzie addressed the delay in delivering his findings, citing a loss of important evidence as a direct consequence of the absence of the power to compel witnesses. The coroner found the inability to compel witnesses hindered the investigation and included a reference to the director of the Serious Incident Investigation Unit at RSHQ, advising that the inspectorate had previously sought those powers but was unsuccessful.

It is clear that mine operators, labour hire companies and associated entities have a responsibility when it comes to mine safety, but so does the government—a fact proven by this committee. This report is another opportunity for the government to play its part, to take some responsibility and to do the right thing in the interests of safety in Queensland's mines. The people who work in our mines deserve nothing less. Coalmining is like no other industry: I see the camaraderie and I see the way that the miners work and support each other. As I always say, safety must come before production.

 **Mr MARTIN** (Stretton—ALP) (3.31 pm): I rise to speak on the parliamentary Transport and Resources Committee's report No. 29 into coalmining industry safety. The report looked at the current practices and activities of the coalmining industry to cultivate and improve safety culture. The scope included both surface and underground operations, and involved coalmine operators and their senior management, contractors, labour hire, unions, companies and the Queensland Resources Council.

I thank all the members of the Transport and Resources Committee as well as the committee chair, the member for Kurwongbah, for their work on the inquiry. The committee held public hearings in Moranbah and Brisbane, as well as a number of teleconferences. I thank all the witnesses who gave insights during those hearings. Thanks also to the individuals and organisations that made written submissions to the inquiry.

During the inquiry, members of the committee had the opportunity to visit the Grosvenor Mine and experience the conditions that underground miners work in. I have to say that going underground with the committee was a pretty eye-opening experience. Before we went underground, we had training in the oxygen tanks that miners carry. They are known as self-contained self-rescuers. That training leaves you with no doubt as to how serious it is to go underground and that, when something goes wrong, it can have very serious consequences.


We also had the opportunity to visit the miners' memorial in Moranbah Town Square, which commemorates those miners whose lives have been tragically lost in the Moranbah coalfields and while travelling on the roads to and from work. It is a very moving memorial. If members have not been there, I encourage them to visit it. It is a bronze sculpture depicting a seated miner who is looking at the plaques with all of the names of the miners who have been lost, contemplating when he might see his mates again.

Currently, there are 66 operational coalmines in Queensland and most of them are located in the Central Queensland region. There are 53 open-cut and 13 underground mines. Since 2020, the Queensland coal industry has benefitted from unprecedented high coal prices. Queensland continues to offer a very attractive environment for investment in coal. There are several competitive advantages including high-quality hard coking coal, proximity to fast-growing Asian regions, efficient supply chains, good infrastructure and, most importantly, a skilled workforce. Substantial investments and acquisitions in the Queensland coal industry indicate coal producers' ongoing confidence in investing in Queensland, which is in contrast to some of the criticisms from the Queensland Resources Council.

With the number of new coal projects increasing, we are required to increase our commitment to safety and risk management. Therefore, while we know that operators make substantial profits from Queensland coalmines, it is vital that the productivity of the mines never comes before the safety of the workers in them. The safety of Queenslanders should always come first because every person has the right to feel safe in their workplace. Any mineworker death is a preventable tragedy.

Risk-based legislation plays a major role in upholding mine safety, but it is just as important that there is collaboration and information sharing between industry workers, unions and regulators. Some of the key issues that the inquiry paid attention to were the competing priorities of coal production rates and worker safety and, in particular, the impact of production, safety bonuses and incentives on workers and worker behaviour; appropriate and effective incident reporting; the safety implications of the use of labour hire; general site safety; and the distinction between process safety and personal safety, which the member for Kurwongbah spoke about.

The committee identified that coalmine operators often emphasise their company's commitment to safety above all else while worker representatives and community submitters often identify health and safety deficits. It emphasised the need for the improved sharing of information between employers, workers, regulators and the union. The committee also noted that workplace cultures were often crucial to successfully achieving sustainable coal production in a safe way. Further research into how coalmines in Queensland are managed and the competing demands of production and safety would also be of great benefit to the industry as a whole. I commend the committee's report to the House.

 **Mr MILLAR** (Gregory—LNP) (3.36 pm): I would like to make a short contribution on what was obviously an important inquiry. The coal industry is the lifeblood of Queensland, along with agriculture. I pay tribute to every coalminer. They all do a fantastic job. I have been underground quite a few times. I have been down to what they call the shaver, which is right at the bottom where they cut the coal and then transport it back up to ground level. I can say that those coalminers earn every dollar that they get. People talk about how coalminers get a lot of money and are on this or that. I can tell members that, with the hours that they work—often 12 hours a day for seven days in a fortnight—they deserve every dollar they get. They do a fantastic job.

We have been looking at this issue for quite some time and not only for this report; since my time in parliament, we have done a couple of inquiries into coalmine safety. We have to get it right. It is an important industry, but the lives of the coalminers are paramount and their communities are small. In my area, when you hear of an accident at a coalmine your heart sinks because you might know the people involved. I can give an example of how close-knit the community is. We went to Grosvenor Mine where the general manager is a bloke I played footy with. We played junior Rugby League with the Emerald Tigers. I have known Paul all my life. He was a coalminer and has risen through the ranks all the way to a management position. He is committed to the industry. I pay tribute to Paul. He is a really good bloke. They are doing a wonderful job there.

Of course, the tragedy at that mine was incredibly significant and it broke many hearts. People were very worried about the miners who were affected. I can only hope that they are recovering in the best way they can and can live the best lives they can. Hopefully, they will get back into the industry.

This issue has not happened overnight. Coalmining safety has been an issue for a very long time. I remember back to 1994 when I was a young ABC rural reporter and the Moura tragedy happened. To learn what happened to the men who lost their lives in Moura broke everybody's hearts. We have to get mine safety right.

I take the point made by the member for Burdekin: people want to be able to do their job and arrive home safely, but they also want to know that if they do report something then it will be taken notice of. This is about information. It is about ensuring that the next shift to come on will know what is going on. It is about knowing that if there is a safety issue at that mine then everybody is aware of it. We have to make sure that everyone knows that.

It is such an important industry. We have such great wealth from our coalmining industry. It paves the way for a lot of royalties that come to this government and pays for a lot of things. If we are taking these royalties, can we please start spending some of these royalties where they came from?


**Ms Boyd:** That is exactly what they do!

**Mr MILLAR:** I take that interjection from the member for Pine Rivers. I have been waiting for the Blackwater Hospital for over five years now. Blackwater is a town of 6,000 people, but it caters for 12,000 people. The hospital has been promised for a very long time, yet nothing has been done to get the Blackwater Hospital going. We need that very urgently.



Returning to mine safety, I note non-government members' concerns. Obviously, we have to increase the resources of Resources Safety & Health Queensland, RSHQ. That needs to be funded so it can operate to the best of its ability. It needs the authority to make sure everything is safe. All I ask is that we fund these bodies to make sure they have the resources to protect our miners.

Finally, I again pay tribute to every coalminer in Queensland. They pay a high price in terms of their time. They are away from their families for a long time. They sometimes work in extreme circumstances, going down to the shaver. If anybody has not done that, they should. If they do, they will understand how hard that work is. I commend this report to the House.

 **Hon. SJ STEWART** (Townsville—ALP) (Minister for Resources) (3.41 pm): It is only right that I follow the member for Gregory. I acknowledge the heartfelt comments he has made today. I share a lot of his sentiments. A couple of times I have had to ring the member for Gregory to inform him of a fatality in his electorate. They are not easy conversations; nor are the conversations with the families. I never want to make those phone calls; I have had to make too many in my time as minister.

Last year, following discussions with them, I asked the Transport and Resources Committee to consider initiating this inquiry. I thank members from both sides of the House for their work. It is outstanding. I have always said, and I will say it again: safety is my No. 1 priority, and it must be for every single stakeholder and every single person involved in the industry. This inquiry was about investigating what the coalmining industry has done and plans to do in response to the Queensland Coal Mining Board of Inquiry's recommendations. It was about making lasting changes to improve safety culture in the mining industry.

Let me make this plain and simple: the resources industry must make safety—not production—its No. 1 priority. Time and time again onsite I have heard from workers regarding the day-to-day effects of decisions made by companies. What they say to me is not always what I am always advised is happening in the industry. Industry must make sure there is no higher priority than a worker's safety. Safety in the resources industry is everyone's responsibility. As a government we will continue to work with the independent health and safety regulator, Resources & Safety Health Queensland, worker representatives and industry to make sure workers are kept safe.

I carefully considered the recommendations relevant to government with a focus on the matter of production being prioritised over safety. I have written to Mark Stone, CEO of RSHQ, asking how he considers the recommendations can be applied to hard rock mining as well. However, companies such as Anglo American, Peabody, BMA, Bravus, Kestrel, Middlemount and Coronado must continue to implement the recommendations from the Queensland Coal Mining Board of Inquiry and must consider this parliamentary inquiry as well. Every person—we all say this, on both sides of the House—should go home safe from work, regardless of what industry they work in. People are our greatest resource in Queensland.


I have worked and will continue to work with the industry, through peak industry body Queensland Resources Council and its chair, Ian Macfarlane, to make sure it is addressing the recommendations of that board inquiry. I will also continue to work with the Mining and Energy Union and other worker representative groups.

The board of inquiry made 65 recommendations for improving safety and health in the coalmining industry, Grosvenor Mine, the Miners and Energy Union, Resources Safety & Health Queensland and the Coal Mining Safety and Health Advisory Committee. I am advised that 30 recommendations made to RSHQ either are completed or have work underway as part of proposed legislative changes detailed in RSHQ's *Facilitating high reliability organisation behaviours in Queensland's resources sector and modernising regulatory enforcement* regulatory impact statement. The remaining recommendations are for industry. This inquiry was about ensuring they are continuing to implement them, and that is incredibly important.

Let me be clear: it is incredibly fortunate that none of those five men died during that terrible incident at Grosvenor. I heard the shadow minister indicate that he is going to Grosvenor next week. I say to him: well done. When I was underground at Grosvenor on 5 April this year, I had the ability to talk directly with workers and listen to their safety concerns. That is where these recommendations from the board of inquiry have come from and why industry must continue to act on them.

Every person deserves to go home safe from work, regardless of what industry they are in. 'Safety is everyone's responsibility' are words that roll easily off the tongue but it is hard to put in place. It is everyone's responsibility, from cleaners all the way through to our SSEs onsite. Everyone has to

look after their mates and themselves when it comes to safety. As we have said, the most important resource to come out of our mines is our workers. There will always be improvements to make and we will continue to work on those improvements. I expect that industry will continue to work on that as well. We will remain vigilant.

 **Mr HEAD** (Callide—LNP) (3.46 pm): I second some of the comments made today by members across the chamber, because we all fundamentally agree when it comes to the safety of workers in Queensland, regardless of what industry they come from but, in this instance, specifically the coalmining industry. I am a former coalmine worker. I worked at a number of coalmines across Queensland and across the country. It was an absolute tragedy when Gavin Feltwell was killed at Moranbah North. I was a worker at that coalmine not that long ago. His death was a deep shock to everyone who worked there and that shock is still felt by the Moranbah community. I am sure that his family are still grieving.


I thank the committee for its efforts in compiling this report. This was a genuinely bipartisan effort to work towards improving coalmine safety in this state. It is clear that there is a long way to go, because there have been far too many incidents across Queensland in recent times. Of course, this inquiry came about after the explosion at Grosvenor coalmine, where I had been an employee. I was part of the exploration crew doing some gas testing and working on the model for that mine to operate again in a safe way. It was great to be able to visit Grosvenor Mine and go underground. As an exploration geologist I spent a lot of time on the surface looking at core samples, but it was fantastic to see that coal underground in situ.

Coal is a key pillar of Queensland's economy and it is a key pillar of Callide as well. There are a lot of communities in Callide that would not be anything like they are without the coalmining industry. I pay credit to all of those coalmine workers who go to work every day and face the risks the coalmine industry brings in order to support their families, their communities and the Queensland economy. They do not get enough thanks from people across Queensland. They are demonised by parts of society, but they are providing great revenue and prosperity to our state.

I second members' comments that every worker deserves to come home to their families at the end of every shift. That is something that is fundamental to us all. I note that non-government members of the committee outlined in the statement of reservation some of the ways the government could step up and be more active in this.

The minister has spoken about the recommendations the board of inquiry is implementing, and he said all 30 have either been implemented or they are working on them. I do note that in the RSHQ 2022-23 annual report they said that as of 30 June they have only formally implemented 10 of these and there are 20 remaining. They do note that progress is underway, but these board of inquiry recommendations were handed down some time ago. We all know how important mine safety is, and all I would ask of the minister is to get moving. We are nearly at the end of the year. There are only two sitting weeks left in this year. If more legislation to fix some of these problems is not tabled this year, then we are not going to have much time to deal with it next year. Mine safety is not something that should be put on the backburner because you have other priorities. One of the LNP's priorities is to make our community safer, and safety regulation in the mining industry forms part of that broader picture.

I would like to touch on a couple of things from our statement of reservation. In achieving zero harm in the industry we must be able to find a way forward that also allows the coalmining industry to continue. We could achieve zero harm by shutting it down, but then we would be shutting down a huge part of our economy and drying up a huge amount of our tax revenue and jobs across the state. That is something we have to avoid, but let's all work together. Let's achieve zero harm in the industry. We must do better, and I urge the minister to table some of that legislation before the end of this sitting year.

 **Mr WATTS** (Toowoomba North—LNP) (3.51 pm): I rise to make a brief contribution to the report titled *Inquiry into coal mining industry safety*. Nobody in this House should underestimate how important the coalmining industry is to Queensland. When you need a hospital bed, when you need an ambulance, when you drop your kids off at school or when you drive down the road, the royalties and income generated from this resource extraction in Queensland is fundamentally underpinning many of our electorates, and it always has. That should never get in the way of a miner being able to go to work and arrive home safely. We may be able to benefit from the sweat of their work, but we should not benefit from their blood or the tears of their families in giving Queenslanders the things we want to make our society better. We had a board of inquiry and there were many recommendations. Others have


spoken about those. I would encourage the government and the minister to make sure that all of those recommendations are followed as quickly as possible, whether there are regulatory, legislative or financial resources required.

We have heard about the RSHQ. Some would say this is an industry where workers are paid well. Having gone underground at Grosvenor—and I thank Anglo American for that—I would say this is a pretty tough environment. It is a very unfriendly environment for a human to work in. We must make sure that RSHQ has the resources and the people at RSHQ are paid appropriately so they choose to do their job well. They should make sure we fund that better, because at the end of the day we need to change the entire—not change; that is not fair—we need to support the culture, being one of safety across the industry, across the regulator, across the ministry, across the owners of the mines, across everybody involved in the industry from start to finish. We have heard about lead and lag indicators and we have heard about recommendations, and there are recommendations from this committee report as well. I want to encourage those people who want extra things in their electorates to understand where that money comes from and to go and read these recommendations and support them being implemented. We need a culture of safety across the entire industry and everybody who participates in it.

It is intimidating. I have been to open-cut mines. When you see those massive pieces of equipment you can understand how things go wrong, but let me tell you that going underground is an intimidating experience. As you drive down you realise that if something goes wrong your chances of survival are very limited. You are going into an environment where there is gas, where there is a chance of collapse, where there is the chance of an explosion and where there is heavy machinery operating. We went along and looked at the shaver, but it was non-operational. It was intimidating because, as you are standing on the boardwalk just behind where it shaves the coal, behind you is collapsing 500 or 600 metres of earth as the coal is being extracted and you are completely dependent on this piece of equipment. At Anglo it was great to see that they are looking at the remote control of some of that equipment. They are trying to remove human interaction from some of the machinery, but at the end of the day this is a tough job. Some say that the people who do this job earn a lot of money, but in my opinion they earn every cent of it; there is no doubt about that.

As the Queensland parliament and as the executive, the government in charge, we owe it to them to make sure we are a world leader in both technological solutions to keep them safe and cultural practices that we all support and adopt throughout the state to make sure everybody is approaching this from the point of safety. With that, I would say read the board of inquiry's recommendations and let's get on with it. Look at the committee's recommendations. Let's get them implemented and let's make sure everybody gets home safely.

*(Time expired)*

 **Mr ANDREW** (Mirani—PHON) (3.56 pm): The committee's report on the current health and safety culture within the coalmining industry reveals a very sharp divide between the views of coalmine operators and those of workers and the general public. As the report states—

Coal mine operator submissions habitually emphasise their company's commitment to safety above all else, while worker representatives and community submitters identify ongoing health and safety deficits.

Ultimately, however, the committee comes down on the side of industry, stating—

Given the regulator's explanation that implementation of the BOI recommendations will reasonably take industry some time to achieve, the committee is generally satisfied with the progress being achieved by industry.

The committee does note, however—

Some worker representative and community submitters express frustration with the perceived lack of action on recommendations coming out of various governmental inquiries into coalmining safety, including the BOI.

The committee later adds—

We remain very concerned that coal mine worker and community submitters do not believe there has been significant progress towards making mine sites safer since the BOI. The frustration of these submitters is palpable.

Is it any wonder? There is, in fact, a very simple explanation for all of the cynicism and lack of trust the committee witnessed. It can be summed up in a single word: secrecy. While all industries are unique, there is much for the mining industry to learn by comparing its own safety practices to that of the aviation sector, particularly in terms of accident response times, the speed of its investigations, and the transparency with which accident reports, both preliminary and final, are routinely made publicly available.

Early in January there was a collision between two Sea World helicopters which killed four people and injured nine. The ATSB released its preliminary investigation report just two months after that tragic accident. When you compare that to the mining regulator RSHQ, since 2018 there have been 10 coalminers killed at work in Queensland mines and quarries. To date, no investigation reports for any of these fatalities have been made publicly available by the regulator. Of the 47 fatalities before 2019 reviewed in the Brady report only three reports have ever been released, and those three were only released as part of the Coroner's proceedings. As I said, each industry is unique, but I am yet to hear a satisfactory explanation as to why there is such a stark difference between the aviation and mining sectors when it comes to sharing vital safety information. How are we to learn from past mistakes if they are continually being hidden behind a veil of secrecy? How are the families and loved ones of victims to achieve closure after such a traumatic event in their lives? The reason the operators and regulators are able to get away with it is all down to one simple word in the relevant acts. Under the Transport Safety Investigation Act 2003, the relevant clause states—

The ATSB must, as soon as practicable after an investigation has been completed, publish, by electronic or other means, a report in relation to the investigation.

The Coal Mining Safety and Health Act, however, states—

The Minister, CEO or chief inspector may make or issue a public statement identifying, and giving information about, the following—


- (a) the commission of offences against this Act and the persons who commit the offences;
- (b) investigations conducted under this Act about accidents or high potential incidents at a coal mine;

There is just a small difference in the wording—'may' instead of 'must'—yet the difference it has made could not be more telling.

Debate, on motion of Mr Andrew, adjourned.


## COMMITTEE OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

### Portfolio Committees, Reporting Dates

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Leader of the House) (4.00 pm): I seek to advise the House of determinations made by the Committee of the Legislative Assembly at its meeting today. The committee has resolved, pursuant to standing order 136, that the Transport and Resources Committee report on the Energy (Renewable Transformation and Jobs) Bill by 1 March 2024; and the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee report on the Casino Control and Other Legislation Amendment Bill by 2 February 2024.

## MOTION

### Referral to Community Support and Services Committee

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Leader of the House) (4.01 pm), by leave, without notice: I move—

That the Community Support and Services Committee inquire into and report to the Legislative Assembly by 22 March 2024 on the provision and regulation of supported accommodation in Queensland, considering:

1. residential services as defined under the Residential Services (Accreditation) Act 2002 and other shared living arrangements, including but not limited to:
  - (a) appropriateness of standards and their enforcement;
  - (b) provision of support services funded by the NDIS;
  - (c) provision of accommodation and support services to Queenslanders in this variety of settings, including if the current service delivery model by which level 3 residential services are provided is appropriate or alternative model/s that should be adopted and what role the NDIS should play in supporting these models;
  - (d) sustainability of proposed model/s, market constraints and potential impact on other government systems;
  - (e) resident wellbeing, including the differing needs of vulnerable population groups, and adequacy of current service delivery, quality and safeguards and oversight arrangements in place across all levels of government;
  - (f) the complex state and federal regulatory arrangements that apply.
2. the Public Advocate's report '*Safe, secure and affordable?*': *the need for an inquiry into supported accommodation in Queensland*, its two overarching and 29 detailed questions;


3. the views of residents and former residents, with a formal role for two independent non-government organisations to support residents to contribute their views on their services and support; and
4. the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability and the Independent Review of the NDIS reports as appropriate.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

## MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

### Ward, Mr K

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence) (4.03 pm): Today I would like to give a special acknowledgement to Mr Kevin 'Hoppy' Ward, who recently retired from the Southport Courthouse after achieving a remarkable 55 years in the Queensland Public Service. I am sure we can all agree that it is a substantial and noteworthy period of time to serve our great Queensland community.

Mr Ward commenced his lifetime of public service at the young age of 15 when in 1968 he took a position in the then works department. It was about six years later that he transferred to the Department of Justice and Attorney-General, where he has remained since. Throughout his decades long career, Kevin has worked at a number of Queensland courthouses, including Cloncurry, Brisbane and Coolangatta, but he spent the majority of his employment at the Southport Courthouse. His accomplished service was undertaken in many areas of the court, but he always preferred a frontline role at the courthouse counter which allowed him face-to-face interaction with the public and the occasional opportunity to show his vocal support of the Maroons during State of Origin time.


Mr Ward—Hoppy, if I may—is a fine example of the committed and hardworking court staff who provide vital services to the Queensland community. Hoppy, you will be dearly missed not only by your colleagues in the registry but by the entire Gold Coast legal community. Hoppy, I wish you all the best in your retirement and a sincere thank you for the contribution that your 55 years of service to the Queensland community has made to our great state.

## BODY CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY MANAGEMENT AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

### Second Reading

Resumed from p. 3320, on motion of Mrs D'Ath—

That the bill be now read a second time.

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence) (4.05 pm), continuing: Owners and other affected parties will be able to apply to the District Court for orders to stop the implementation of a termination plan or to vary its terms. The body corporate will be responsible for the reasonable costs of the proceedings. I recognise that there may be a degree of uncertainty about how the termination reforms will function. To that end, the Office of the Commissioner for Body Corporate and Community Management provides an information service under the BCCM Act.

As a part of the implementation of this bill, the commissioner's office will be updating its resources and providing updates to the sector about the reforms, including changes to arrangements for the termination of community titles schemes. The commissioner's office also proposes to engage with key stakeholder groups for the community titles sector, such as those involved with the Community Titles Legislation Working Group, to educate their membership about the reforms and to also encourage their membership to share BCCM office resources.

Recommendation 5 also relates to the provision of information. The recommendation is that the Queensland government, in collaboration with the Community Titles Legislation Working Group, consider providing additional guidance and resources to bodies corporate regarding their powers to tow vehicles that are parked in contravention of a by-law, in particular, vehicles owned or operated by visitors. The government supports recommendation 5.

Recommendation 3 is that the Queensland government review the proposed amendments to section 167 of the BCCM Act and consider whether guidance, such as statutory notes or examples, should be provided around the word 'regularly' contained with the section. The Queensland government supports this recommendation in principle. Clause 10 amends section 167 of the BCCM Act, which

currently requires owners and occupiers to refrain from using their lot or the common property in a way that causes a nuisance or hazard, or unreasonably interferes with the use and enjoyment of another lot or the common property. The amendment provides that a lot occupier contravenes section 167 if they regularly use, or regularly permit an invitee to use, a smoking product on the lot or common property, and the occupier of another lot or their invitee, or a person who is lawfully on the common property, is regularly exposed to the smoke or emission from the smoking product. The policy intent behind the amendments is to capture regular or frequent exposure to smoke. 'Regular' will have its ordinary, everyday meaning.

Providing a specific definition of regular through statutory guidance, such as statutory notes or examples, may be overly proscriptive and not suit the wide range of circumstances in community titles schemes. However, there will be more general guidance and information published by the BCCM office as part of the implementation of the bill, including changes relating to smoking.

Recommendation 4 is that the Queensland government, in collaboration with the Community Titles Legislation Working Group, review the interaction between the Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation Act 2008 and the Body Corporate and Community Management Act 1997 regarding time frames for requests to keep pets from a lot owner or tenant. The Queensland government does not directly support this recommendation. A landlord is required to respond to a tenant's pet request within a 14-day period under the Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation Act. Community titles schemes involve joint decision-making through a body corporate or its committee. The processes for making decisions in a body corporate do not enable the 14-day time frame to be adopted for the body corporate approval of a request to keep a pet.

The interaction between the relevant acts regarding time frames for requests to keep pets from a tenant is clear. The Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation Act states that an authorisation to keep a pet or animal is subject to body corporate by-laws. Therefore, even if a landlord of a property included in a community titles scheme approved the keeping of an animal under a lease, approval from the body corporate would also need to be obtained if this is a requirement under the body corporate by-laws.

In recommendation 6, the committee recommends that the Queensland government consider amending the relevant sections of the five module regulations made under the BCCM Act to clarify whether the prescribed fee for obtaining a copy of a record kept by a body corporate applies to digital copies as well as printed copies. The Queensland government supports this recommendation in principle. The government will consider the prescribed fees for obtaining electronic copies of body corporate records when next reviewing the regulation modules.

Recommendations 7 and 8 relate to the off-the-plan amendments in the bill. Recommendation 7 concerns the amendments related to sunset clauses in off-the-plan contracts for land. The recommendation is that the government review within 24 months of the implementation of the bill the exercise of sunset clauses. The Queensland government supports this recommendation in principle. As announced, a review will commence one to two years after the sunset clause amendments have commenced. It is anticipated the review will consider a number of matters including the effectiveness of the amendments in addressing the issues being experienced by consumers in relation to the use of sunset clauses, property market conditions following the introduction of the amendments, and whether further reforms are required to protect people buying proposed community titles and similar lots off the plan.

Recommendation 8 concerns the minor amendments related to the release of deposits under off-the-plan contracts and seeks that the government conduct a review within 24 months of the commencement of the bill to determine and address any unintended consequences that may have arisen by the proposed amendments. The Queensland government supports this recommendation in principle. These amendments are minor clarifying amendments to confirm the policy intent of existing provisions of relevant acts. These amendments will be monitored as part of the general policy responsibilities of my portfolio. If necessary, further amendments will be considered.

Recommendation 9 is that the Queensland government, in conjunction with organisations, such as REIQ, review the interaction between the BCCM Act and the minimum housing standards, as prescribed by the Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation Act, in particular with respect to how these reforms impact on owners in a community titles scheme. The Queensland government does not directly support this recommendation. A community titles scheme includes individual lots as well as common property that is jointly owned by the owners of all lots in a scheme. The body corporate has a responsibility to maintain common property in good condition, including to the extent that common property is structural in nature, in a structurally sound condition. A body corporate is also responsible

for maintaining other parts of a building if it is created under a building format plan. For landlords whose property is in a community titles scheme, a particular minimum housing standard may relate to part of the landlord's property or common property that the body corporate is responsible for maintaining. If the body corporate is responsible for maintaining property, owners and tenants may ask the body corporate to undertake the maintenance. If a body corporate does not meet its maintenance obligations, the owner or tenant may seek dispute resolution under the BCCM Act.

The new minimum housing standards came into effect on 1 September 2023 for new tenancies, and will come into effect on 1 September 2024 for existing tenancies. Given the extensive information campaign to support the implementation of the minimum housing standard reforms by owners of community titles schemes, the government does not support the committee's recommendation. The government will, however, closely monitor the operation of the minimum housing standards in relation to community titles schemes.

Before I finish, I would like to address a few more issues raised in the statements of reservation. The opposition members claimed there had been a pattern of little consultation by the government on these reforms. As noted, many of the amendments, such as the termination amendments, have their origins in the Property Law Review, which included substantial public consultation processes.

**Mr Hinchliffe:** Extensive.


**Mrs D'ATH:** I will take that interjection. It was substantial and extensive, yes. There has also been significant consultation with the Community Titles Legislation Working Group on the BCCM Act amendments in the bill. This working group was really important because we understand the significance of these reforms and that, although there had been extensive consultation through the Property Law Review, it was important to get the key stakeholders around the table in a working group to work through how those recommendations should be turned into law. The working group is made up of groups that represent the breadth of the sector from unit owners to body corporate managers and caretakers and legal and real estate professionals. The member for Noosa made comments about the insufficient unit owner membership on the Community Titles Legislation Working Group. However, I can advise that organisations representing unit owners make up two of the seven members of the group. Views from other stakeholders that represent unit owner interests were also invited by the chair of the group on these issues.

Additionally, in relation to the off-the-plan consumer protection amendments, these changes were informed by consultation, including surveys of both consumers and property developers. While I note the opposition's comments about the termination of community titles schemes and the concerns that unit owners have expressed about the future of their homes, the government has ensured that the bill provides that protections are in place for unit owners. As noted earlier, there will also be clear communication and education activities regarding these reforms, including the termination processes.

Termination is a key action from the Housing Summit. This government has listened to the summit's attendees on what measures should be put in place to help tackle housing issues in the state.

I note the member for Noosa's comments regarding the review time frames for recommendations 7 and 8. These particular recommendations related to the off-the-plan consumer protection amendments, rather than the termination amendments. The government remains committed to commencing a review of the off-the-plan consumer protection amendments one to two years after the amendments commence. The termination changes will, of course, be monitored by the government following their commencement.

Again, I would like to thank the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee for its consideration of the bill and acknowledge the very valuable contribution of all of those who have made submissions on the bill and assisted the committee during its deliberations. I also acknowledge the work of the working group, and I also acknowledge the significant work over five years by the QUT Property Law Review. Lastly, because this has been such a significant body of work, I want to also acknowledge the staff of the Department of Justice and Attorney-General and the work they do to bring these bills to fruition and into this parliament. We should not underestimate the amount of work involved to work through the technicalities of these sorts of amendments. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mrs FRECKLINGTON** (Nanango—LNP) (4.16 pm): I rise to contribute to the Body Corporate and Community Management and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023. I do so while my great friend and colleague the member for Clayfield is currently unable to attend the parliament this week. It gives me great pleasure to act in his stead in relation to the passing or not of the Body Corporate and

Community Management and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. I would like to thank him, given I have had one bill in this whole term with the water minister. In one week, this is now the second bill. Thank you very much, member for Clayfield.

On Tuesday I spoke of the value of Queenslanders owning their own home. We want to see more Queenslanders get into their own home. I once again place on record my support for the member for Toowoomba South as Queensland's first shadow minister for home ownership. Many of us know what it is like to save and save to purchase that perfect house, to make it our perfect home—not just how we choose to furnish it or how we choose to paint it but for the memories that are made there through family and friends. We also know what it is to learn the best walking paths around our homes, the best coffee shops and the best local restaurants. We become part of our community and it makes a mark on us. It is not just the act of owning a home that is a great source of pride for many people; it is the home that they have chosen themselves, and it is their right over this property that we on this side of the House take very seriously.

That is why on this bill the LNP will not be supporting provisions for the termination of community titles schemes. While we understand the need to reduce hold-outs from preventing the right redevelopment and renewal, this bill does not offer the protections needed to ensure home owners have their say over their own home. We also want to ensure that people who genuinely love their home and their community, and would be left with few options for staying with that community should that clause of the legislation go through, are simply not characterised as hold-outs. It is easy to make this characterisation, to paint these people as selfish or as greedy investors who are protecting their own interests, but for those who are genuinely in this position—and I am talking about the elderly and the mums and the dads—this bill does not provide protection of their property rights.

Before I go further into other areas of this bill, I would like to raise an issue that is becoming all too familiar. I note the Attorney-General just spoke on this exact issue. It is imperative that we address it. The issue is consultation conducted by the government on the bills that come before this House. The bill was introduced on 24 August and submissions closed on 2 September. That allowed just six business days. That is all the time people had to get their submissions in on this bill. I heard what the Attorney-General said in relation to the property law review and the working group, but that is completely different to open and transparent consultation. It should be open to the public.

Queenslanders do have a right to have their say on all bills in this House, not have consultation classified as closed door meetings. They have a right to have their say. I say to the Attorney-General that it is very difficult to justify such massive changes that affect so many different interest groups. It is my submission that landholders and property owners would not have had the time to submit to their local members or the committee about their concerns with this bill. That has been obvious and it keeps coming up more and more with this closed door Palaszczuk government.

The provisions around the termination of community titles schemes was a recommendation from the QUT report given to the government many years ago. Yet all the government offered stakeholders on a significant change to this area of law was those six days. The QLS stated in their submission that the short turnaround time highlights the risk of errors in legislation which is passed without adequate time for public scrutiny. We saw it at its worst with the amendments slipped into the Child Protection Reform and Other Legislation Amendment Bill when significant unrelated amendments were moved on the afternoon before the bill was due to pass and within minutes of the opposition members speaking to the bill. It is clear that this government has stopped listening to Queenslanders. Queenslanders are sick of this government talking at them rather than listening to them.

The provisions in clause 7 around the termination of community titles schemes were a key action of the 2022 Housing Summit. One was to 'reform body corporate legislation to allow for terminating uneconomical community titles schemes to facilitate renewal and redevelopment having regard to the New South Wales approach'. The bill retains the existing arrangements for the termination of community titles schemes by resolution without dissent of the body corporate or by order of the District Court. However, it establishes a new process for the termination of community titles schemes in circumstances where there are economic reasons supporting the termination.

The process for termination is laid out in the explanatory notes and has a number of steps to it. It involves the preparation of a pre-termination report containing information to assist the body corporate to decide whether there are economic reasons for termination. There is then a general meeting to decide whether there are economic reasons for the termination, which must be voted on by the majority. If passed, they then must pass a resolution to prepare a termination plan, which is provided to lot owners 120 days before the general meeting in which the final vote for a termination resolution takes place. Seventy-five per cent of lot owners must vote for the motion in order for it to succeed.



While lot owners can dispute the economic reasons resolution by taking the matter to the District Court to prevent the implementation of the termination plan, we know that for so many people the cost of those legal proceedings would not be realistic. Again, it is these people, in particular the elderly, for whom we are concerned today. Owning a home should not be something we take away as legislators. We should not take that away from people apart from in the most desperate situations.

The termination plan must provide at least a minimum compensation amount for lot owners. However, our concern is that this bill would push residents out of their community. The Main Beach Association pointed this out in their submission—and I note the many speeches that the member for Mermaid Beach has given in this House on this particular issue—and that is why we stand on this. The Main Beach Association has pointed that out, noting that even with compensation, the variance in levies between a three-storey walk-up and a high-rise apartment building is considerable and will render it impossible for many to afford. There was a substantial variance in submissions, a clear indicator that this clause does not strike the right balance.

The Property Council of Australia supported the change to 75 per cent, but believed the bill is overly complex and contrary to the policy intent, a view similarly shared by the Town Planning Alliance and the Planning Institute of Australia. A number of stakeholders, including the UDIA, do not believe the bill delivers on the policy intent and would like to see it better reflect the New South Wales model, as the Housing Summit key action pointed to. The UDIA stated—

In regard to scheme termination, the Bill does not deliver on the policy intent, which was a commitment made by the government at the Housing Summit. The process created by the Bill is applicable to only a few Community Titles Schemes ... paves an overly convoluted pathway to termination, and as drafted, represents a missed opportunity to deliver on the potential of policy change.

There we have it: the policy intent has been completely missed. That is why we will not be supporting this element of the bill.

The Australian Resident Accommodation Managers Association believes 75 per cent is too low. They would like to see a higher level of about 90 per cent to provide greater protection for those long-term residents who would like to vote against it. Unsurprisingly, it was the organisations representing owners and residents who disagreed with the bill to the greatest extent. I again refer to the Main Beach Association, who think the 75 per cent rule will have, in fact, the opposite effect of freeing up lots in Main Beach, diminishing the housing supply for the next few years given how long construction will take. They also raised the issue that there were no public hearings in two areas with significant numbers of community titles schemes. I point to both the Sunshine Coast—and I know the member for Maroochydore has raised this with me—and the Gold Coast, which also has one of the highest numbers of CTS schemes. Neither of those areas of Queensland had public consultation. That just does not make sense. It simply does not make sense.

The Community Alliance Association was strongly opposed to the bill, stating that they are very concerned that the government, seemingly heavily influenced by the development lobby, is using the current housing shortage to justify—

**Mr Russo:** Ha! You say that with a straight face.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** Madam Deputy Speaker, I am happy to start that again. The Community Alliance Association was strongly opposed to the bill, stating that they were very concerned. I note the chair of this committee, a former lawyer, Peter Russo, the member for Toohey, is laughing about the support that he is taking from the development lobby and using the current housing shortage. Here we have in Queensland a current housing shortage but yet we have—

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Lui):** Member for Nanango, direct your comments through the chair.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** Madam Deputy Speaker, we have a housing shortage in this state, yet the chair of this committee is being backed by the development association to tear down the homes of mums and dads in Main Beach, Maroochydore, Sunshine Coast and the Gold Coast. It beggars belief, but that is where we have ended up with the Palaszczuk government. They have completely stopped listening to the mums and dads. They have stopped listening to the home owners. They have stopped listening to the elderly, who are genuinely stressed about this clause. It is obvious the chair of this committee has a tin ear when it comes to the mums and dads and the elderly of this great state.

**Mrs Gerber:** Hear, hear!

**Mr Krause** interjected.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** I thank the members for Currumbin and Scenic Rim for actually listening to those people and submitting that those on this side of the chamber will stand with those people and will be voting against that part of the bill. The Unit Owners Association of Queensland also voiced these

concerns. They raised concerns that there is a great potential to see an increase in bullying and harassment, just like we see here in this chamber today, within the community titles schemes due to these changes.

**Government members** interjected.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** I will take the interjections from all those members opposite who laugh about bullying and harassment of the LNP. On this side of the House we are not going to stand for it.

The Unit Owners Association talked about the potential bullying and harassment within community titles schemes with these changes. They conducted the UOAQ strata survey and found that 60 per cent of respondents were subject to or witnessed bullying and harassment. This is without the pressure of even getting 75 per cent support for the scheme termination. It is easy to imagine how this issue will only get worse for those vulnerable residents.

I raise all of these views because they deserve to be heard. Queenslanders deserve to have their say. Given the extremely quick turnaround for the consideration of this bill, there was very little ability to genuinely consider how to balance these different perspectives. It is Queenslanders on the ground who are fearing what the change will mean for them.

**Government members** interjected.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** I am happy to take those interjections because it is an example of how the Labor government has stopped listening to Queenslanders. It is arrogance of the first order.

We have heard from many constituents who are seeing their body corporates let their units become run-down in order to make it easier for them to get through this termination process. We have also seen evidence of real estate agents asserting that this law has already passed and trying to coerce people to sell up now. On this point, I had a constituent contact me. They have owned a property on the Gold Coast for many years. This exact thing happened to them. They had a call from the real estate and they said, 'The Palaszczuk government have changed the law and you are forced to your sell your property to the developer.' It is completely unbelievable.

The ABC reported on the impacts of this change earlier this year in an article titled 'Queensland unit owners fear body corporate law reform could force them from homes in property hotspots'. I am more than happy to table that article.

*Tabled paper:* Article from ABC News online, dated 14 July 2023, titled 'Queensland unit owners fear body corporate law reform could force them from homes in property hotspots' [\[1777\]](#).

I will read some of this article. It states—

Gold Coast unit owner Phil Hoile lives in a three-storey complex of nine units surrounded by apartment towers at Main Beach.

Mr Hoile said he and other unit owners in the complex had refused offers from developers for years, but feared the proposed legislation could open the flood gates and potentially strain neighbourly relations.

Suddenly your neighbours are people that you need to know better because you need to understand their finances ...

If they're under financial stress that's something that could directly impact your life.

The article goes on to describe another owner's experience. It states—

Beverley Robinson said she too struggled to see how a potential redevelopment of her three-level unit complex at Tugun, on the southern Gold Coast, would create more affordable housing.

It all comes down to money and greed, Mrs Robinson said.

She continued—

I get very anxious when I know that there's a unit for sale here because I think it could be an opportunity for developers to come in and take a foothold ...

Mrs Robinson and her husband have owned their ground-floor unit less than 200 metres from the beach for almost a quarter of a century, and have watched developer interest in the area grow in recent years.

She states further—

I could never replace what I have, especially at our stage of life ...

**Mrs Gerber:** You have met them, Deb.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** I have met them. I will take the interjection from the member for Currumbin. It breaks my heart that the member for Currumbin's constituents, the Robinsons, are so stressed about this piece of legislation.

It is no small thing to lose one's home. We know how hard it is to find something else affordable within some of these areas. This is more than just about the money; it is about protecting property rights and home ownership. We are not convinced this bill does enough to protect the property rights and interests of owners and we will be voting against this clause.

The other major change in this bill is to provisions around sunset clauses. In terms of the provisions around sunset clauses we must give full credit and pay respect to my great mate and colleague the member for Theodore who has been fighting for this change. He has come up against road block after road block. He has gone up against two attorneys-general. What do we now see? Thank you, member for Theodore, we finally see this happening in this bill. Thank you Attorney-General.

It was the member for Theodore who in December 2021 wrote to the former attorney-general, the now health minister. She came back and said, 'Thanks, but no thanks, member for Theodore.' What did the member for Theodore do on behalf of his constituents? He wrote another letter and I think he again got, 'Thanks, but no thanks.' There was a bit of flip-flopping here and there. The current Attorney-General ended up putting it into this bill.

It was after the advocacy of the member for Theodore and his 4 April 2022 letter to the former attorney-general that the ABC picked this up. They covered this issue in an article titled 'First home buyers "missing out" on property boom as Qld developers strike out with sunset clauses'. I table that article.

*Tabled paper:* Article from *ABC News* online, dated 16 April 2022, titled 'First home buyers 'missing out' on property boom as Qld developers strike out with sunset clauses' [\[1778\]](#).

In this article it is interesting that then the attorney-general stated—

There has been an increase, I think, in developers utilising these clauses ...

She went on to say—

These sunset clauses are not in the approved Real Estate Institute of Queensland Law Society contract.

Buying a house is a really big decision and I would urge people to know what clauses are in your contracts and make sure you get that legal advice.

**Mrs Gerber:** Disgraceful; telling them that they should read their contracts.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** I will take that interjection from a former lawyer. The article continues—

Ms Fentiman said—

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I seek your protection.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Lister): Member for Nanango, you shall have it. Members on both sides, may I ask you to keep your conversations down. It is almost as though we are in question time even though not much is being thrown at the member. Member for Sandgate, member for Jordan and Leader of the House, would you please refrain from your conversations? I can hear them clearly here. We need to give respect—

**A government member** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** What was that, member for Sandgate?

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** I asked what they were.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Please keep the conversations down.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** The article continues—

Ms Fentiman said Queensland's property rules were under review.

'We are rewriting the entire Property Law Act right now in Queensland and it's been a long time coming—

We all agree with that. We talked about that yesterday. She went on to say—

I hope to have legislation in the parliament at the end of this year or early next year.

We waited until yesterday in actual fact. A month later, in May 2022, the former attorney-general stated in an MPI—

I have arranged for this to be considered as part of the work we are doing on a brand new Property Law Act.

We expected this part to be in a previous bill. She was saying in that MPI how the government will be consulting with buyers and sellers. She was talking about grappling with sunset clauses. She went on to state—

Property law is complex and we do have to take the time to consult, but they are being examined as a priority.

I note that six days is probably not consultation. We will let that slide on this occasion.

When we saw the introduction of the Property Law Bill in February 2023 there was no inclusion in it of movement on sunset clauses. The meaning of priority for the Palaszczuk government is perhaps something those opposite could examine.

We have heard the real impact this can have on buyers. Eighteen months after buying their land, after investing money in drawing up plans for their dream home, paying what always seems to be the endless fees involved, they are contacted by the developer informing them that the developer will be enacting the sunset clause. Can you imagine the devastation and disappointment for a young couple who has saved and done everything they can to put money down on their first home? It destroys relationships. It has destroyed relationships. We have met and spoken with many people, particularly in the more highly populated areas of the Gold Coast, where this is happening more and more. I am devastated for those people, so this change is much welcomed and much needed.

The other point in relation to this clause is that people have the disappointment, they have the heartbreak and they have lost all of their money, but then the developer comes back and says, 'You've got the chance to buy the land again, but now we're going to charge you an extra \$200,000.' It is just criminal. It is absolutely heartbreaking and criminal. This has happened to Queenslanders who are desperately trying to enter the property market. They are trying to get into the property market and the practice of those unethical developers locks them out. We know that it is far from being every developer, but they are important changes to ensure that this behaviour does not continue.

The bill amends the Land Sales Act to ensure sellers can only use a sunset clause to terminate off-the-plan contracts for land through written consent of the buyer or under an order of the Supreme Court or in another way prescribed by regulation. It does not apply to sunset clauses contained within building contract terms, even when part of a linked land and house building contract or a single house and land contract. The amendments will apply retrospectively for contracts that have not been settled to date. We acknowledge that there were a range of views on those amendments, but we have heard the stories of devastation that have impacted young people in particular—anyone of any age but young people in particular. I know the member for Theodore is incredibly passionate about this issue because he has one on one dealt with the heartbreak experienced by these people. The LNP will be supporting that element of the bill and we are very proud because the member for Theodore has championed this part of the bill.

The explanatory notes provide that a review will commence one to two years after the reforms have commenced. The review will consider whether further reforms are required to protect people buying proposed community titles and similar lots off the plan. This is something—and I say this to the Attorney-General—that we strongly support and I note that, prior to this two-year date—even one- to two-year date as of today's date—there could very well be a change of government and it is the right priorities of the LNP that we get home ownership right for Queensland's future. If it is the case that it is the LNP that is elected at the next election—and I sincerely hope for Queenslanders that we are—and we are elected to government in October next year, we will give a guarantee that the LNP will do that review. I say this to the current Attorney-General: if it is the terrible case that the government gets in again and if the current Attorney-General is to keep that job, we will be holding her to account on that because it is important—

**Mr Mickelberg** interjected.


**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** I take that interjection that we secure our housing foundations, because they are the right priority for Queensland.

In the short time that I have left I note that there are several other changes that are coming. I note that the Attorney-General did speak on those issues and they are not contested by the LNP. I note that other members on this side will be addressing those issues in support of that. The bill makes the change to allow an adjudicator rather than a commissioner to consider applications and I note that this is something that the Palaszczuk government went to the 2020 election on. Even though it is three years past that date, having that eventually come into this bill is welcome.

**Mr Mickelberg:** Better late than never.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** I take that interjection: better late than never. The reason is obviously for alternative insurance where they cannot get their insurance in full for full replacement of buildings, and this is a real issue, Attorney-General, and I am pleased to see that change.

This bill brings many significant changes. While we will vote against clause 7 around the termination of community titles schemes, we will not be opposing the remainder of the bill and hope those clauses at least bring more protections for Queenslanders buying homes and living in community titles schemes. We are prepared to act to fix Queensland's housing crisis and see more Queenslanders own their own homes. It should not remain an unattainable goal for many. We have listened and we will act should we be given the privilege of government next year.

 **Mr RUSSO** (Toohey—ALP) (4.44 pm): I rise to speak to the Body Corporate and Community Management and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023 and the amendments to be moved during consideration in detail to correct a technical drafting issue. The Legal Affairs and Safety Committee in its report No. 56 tabled in this Assembly on 6 October has recommended to the Assembly that the bill be passed. Our committee made a total of nine recommendations as a result of our consideration of the proposed bill, including our recommendation that the bill be passed.

The proposed changes include to allow for the termination of uneconomic community titles schemes—for example, unit blocks—for defined economic reasons with the agreement of 75 per cent of lot owners; to strengthen protection for off-the-plan homebuyers from developers invoking sunset clauses in contracts for the sale of land; to permit bodies corporate to prohibit smoking in outdoor and communal areas; to prevent bodies corporate from blanket banning pets; and to clarify and enhance the ability for bodies corporate to tow vehicles from common property in a timely manner.

The policy objectives of the bill are to deliver a key action of the 2022 Queensland Housing Summit by reforming the Body Corporate and Community Management Act to allow for termination of uneconomic community titles schemes to facilitate renewal and redevelopment; to deliver a 2020 election commitment to implement Body Corporate and Community Management Act amendments to allow an adjudicator the power to approve alternative insurance arrangements and make supporting amendments to complement this change; to modernise and improve the operation of the Body Corporate and Community Management Act in relation to by-laws and other governance issues, including administrative and procedural matters; to strengthen buyer protections under the Land Sales Act by limiting when sunset clauses can be used to terminate off-the-plan contracts for the sale of land; and to make minor amendments to confirm the policy intent of existing provisions of the Body Corporate and Community Management Act, the Building Units and Group Titles Act, the Land Sales Act and the South Bank act, collectively referred to as the 'relevant acts', about the release of deposits paid by buyers under off-the-plan contracts for the sale of land, including the Land Sales Act, or lots in community titles style developments.

The committee received 95 submissions from stakeholders and interested parties. It has been one year since the Palaszczuk government held the landmark Queensland Housing Summit. In October 2022 more than 200 experts and stakeholders were brought together to identify how to address national housing pressures impacting Queenslanders. Reforming body corporate legislation to allow for the termination of uneconomic community titles schemes was a key action identified by these experts and stakeholders. The key takeaway from this reform is that it will allow for uneconomic community titles schemes to be terminated to enable renewal and redevelopment. The opposition would have us believe that this will give unit owners an open door to bully other unit owners and their families out of their homes and push them away from their community. This is not an endorsement for people to be bullied. I repeat: this is not an endorsement for anyone to be bullied.

The bill mentions terminating community titles schemes, and this has caused alarm in certain quarters. I urge against thinking this way. The bill is about renewal and rejuvenation to increase Queensland's housing. Queensland is at a critical juncture in our state's fight against the housing shortage. Old legislative frameworks are no longer suitable and the time for change is now. This process of change involves examining the frameworks of other states and seeing how their reforms have impacted the housing, body corporate and real estate sectors.

I was pleased to see that nearly every stakeholder recognised the grave nature of the housing shortage. This provides a common platform for all stakeholders to work from and identify solutions. Some solutions may seem unorthodox, or outside the box, but it is only with this kind of thinking that we can identify the right changes for Queensland.

The amendment to allow the termination of uneconomical community titles schemes, when passed, proposes to create a mechanism where a community titles scheme can be terminated for economic grounds. Economic grounds include when the scheme is not economically viable, in the case of a scheme of commercial lots, or when it is not economically viable for the body corporate to carry out the repairs and maintenance required to keep the property in good condition. I am at a loss as to why the opposition would want to condemn a unit owner or tenant to live in a property that has become


dangerous or is in disrepair due to the sheer cost of maintaining the property which, by the very definition of being not economically viable, unit owners can no longer afford to maintain in good condition.

The opposition must have forgotten that it was under their leadership that social housing was sold for a number of reasons and, at that time, they cited reasons such as properties being no longer fit for purpose or were not cost-effective to be repaired. From 2013 to 2015, under the former LNP government the state saw a reduction of 427 public houses. The explanatory notes further state that the bill aims to provide a balanced approach to termination of community titles schemes, recognising the need to facilitate renewal and redevelopment but also respecting the property rights of individual owners. As such, the bill contains multiple steps before a community titles scheme can be terminated for economic reasons.

The committee noted that most stakeholders broadly supported the proposed new framework for the termination of community titles schemes that were not economically viable. The Property Council saw it as a key measure in removing barriers to the redevelopment of older apartment buildings and delivering increased housing supply in locations well serviced by infrastructure. The Queensland Law Society broadly supports the reforms and states that the scheme strikes an appropriate balance between the ability to terminate uneconomic schemes and the rights of owners. The Real Estate Institute of Queensland found the reforms beneficial and believes they should be progressed. The Strata Community Association Queensland also supported the amendments, stating the bill balances property rights, body corporate governance and public policy in a reasonable and equitable fashion and welcomes the flexibility of the process. I acknowledge there were varying recommendations on its application and its operation. Representatives of the property developer sector supported the scheme generally but recommended opening the scheme termination process to all community titles schemes over 30 years old, removing the economic reasons test.

The damage caused by smoking has long been identified as a problem, with one of the earliest known instances of smoking being linked to ill health going back to the 1950s and 1960s, with major medical reports confirming that tobacco can cause a range of serious diseases. Queensland Health has stated that passive smoking—when someone breathes in tobacco smoke from another person—is a proven health hazard, with more than 600 medical papers linking passive smoking to disease. In its review of Queensland property law, QUT's Commercial and Property Law Research Centre recommended that bodies corporate be authorised to adopt a by-law without dissent that prohibits smoking in common property or a lot's outdoor areas, such as a balcony or courtyard.

The explanatory notes state that the bill proposes amendments based on the Commercial and Property Law Research Centre's recommendation but with modifications. The explanatory notes state that the proposed amendments will support Queensland's smoking laws, which seek to improve health by creating a culture that reduces exposure to tobacco and other smoking products and second-hand smoke, supports smokers to quit and discourages people from taking up the habit. The REIQ, Unit Owners Association of Queensland Inc., Strata Community Association and Strata Solve broadly supported the amendments to the BCCM Act related to second-hand smoke. The REIQ commended the bill for providing clarity to bodies corporate but also outlined reservations, noting that the language used may be too broad. REIQ stated that the adjudication process might become too difficult and onerous for a complainant, who will be required to establish the meaning of terms such as 'regular use' and 'regularly exposed to'. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mrs GERBER** (Currumbin—LNP) (4.55 pm): This afternoon we are debating the Body Corporate and Community Management and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023. I want to turn first to a significant aspect of this bill that the LNP is really pleased to see, and that is the part that deals with sunset clauses. The Labor government's failure to free up new lots for residential builds is evidenced by the fact that building approvals have declined by 30 per cent since the Labor government came to power, sending property prices soaring. Demand for buying properties off the plan is growing, in particular as this allows first home buyers buying a home off the plan to activate the first home buyer concession. This is where sunset clauses come into play. Some individual contracts for off-the-plan sales include a clause which provides the seller with a right to terminate a contract if it is not settled within a certain period of time. Over the past several years the LNP has been sounding the alarm regarding troubling reports of developers deliberately delaying developments to enact a sunset clause, terminating the contract and then relisting the property and selling that same property for a higher price. Some unscrupulous developers were even offering that property back to the former purchaser.

**Mr Boothman:** For hundreds of thousands of dollars more.

**Mrs GERBER:** I take the interjection from the member for Theodore—for hundreds of thousands of dollars more. After almost a decade of this Labor government governing, buying a home in Queensland is officially the toughest it has been in 16 years. First home buyers are losing hope that they will ever be able to attain the Australian dream of owning their own home, let alone if they come across an unethical developer that pulls the rug out from underneath them.

I want to sincerely thank the LNP member for Theodore, who since 2021 has been advocating for legislative change to prevent this unscrupulous conduct. He raised it with the former attorney-general in at least four pieces of correspondence. He noted that in 2015 New South Wales had acted to prevent this unscrupulous conduct. He implored the state government to bring legislation to this parliament to protect Queenslanders in the same way New South Wales had done. Back then, the attorney-general said that buyers need to read their contracts thoroughly and did not commit to any action to fix this legal loophole. The member for Theodore did not give up. He again wrote to the then attorney-general pointing out that the government's sympathies offer little comfort to first home buyers who had lost their homes as a result of an unscrupulous developer.

This year the Attorney-General finally gave us the assurance that the issue would be looked at, and here we are with the bill before the House to amend the Land Sales Act to ensure that property developers can only use a sunset clause to terminate off-the-plan contracts for land through written consent of the buyer, under an order of the Supreme Court or in another way prescribed by the legislation. It mimics the New South Wales legislation, just like the member for Theodore asked, and we are very pleased to see this in the bill. This is the reason the LNP will be supporting this aspect of the bill and the reason we will not be opposing the bill on the third reading.

**Government members** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Lister): Order, members! The member is not taking interjections.

**Mrs GERBER:** Thank you for your protection, Mr Deputy Speaker. I want it on the record that the LNP will be voting against the proposal in the bill to allow the termination of community titles schemes because we value property rights in Queensland. This clause proposes to allow individual lot owners—a unit owner—to be forced to sell their unit if 75 per cent of the owners in that unit complex or body corporate scheme agree to sell because it is unviable. Many residents in my community are strongly opposed to this part of the bill. They have a very real fear that this will force them out of their communities. Concerningly, even the Department of Justice and Attorney-General admitted they have not measured the reach of these changes. When questioned, the department could not provide information on how many schemes might be impacted. They said—

I think it is fair to say we have not done any formal modelling on how many schemes this could potentially impact.

I can talk about the people it will potentially impact. Julie from Bilinga wrote to me saying that she has owned her beachfront unit for 30 years and developers are circling. The other unit owners rent their units out to long-term tenants at an affordable rental rate. Because of the age of the unit block and the maintenance required, Julie is very worried that she will be forced to sell because the other unit owners/investors want to sell. Julie said—

There is no way of replacing what we have and the whole family is devastated that we may well lose it after so long.

Further, she believes the long-term tenants will be kicked out of their affordable rentals and that any new development will be completely unaffordable. Julie states that the assertion that redevelopment will help the housing crisis is false and the assertion that lot owners will be financially better off is spurious because it does not take into account all of the costs associated with selling and, if they are forced to sell, they would not be able to afford to buy back in their community with similar amenity or the outlook that their unit has. Ross and Beverley have lived in their Tugun unit for 20 years. They wrote to me, stating—

It is my basic HUMAN RIGHT to be able to live in the home that I own. Within 24 hours of this announcement, we had a FLYER in our letterbox from a developer.

George Galea, a self-funded retiree, lives in an older unit on the Bilinga beachfront. Five of the six unit owners in his body corporate want to sell. George states—

My fear is the five owners will use the 75% legislation to force me to sell.

He further states—

Why are unit owners being treated unequally to house owners.

Would the government dare sell a house from underneath an owner if they considered it too uneconomical to keep?

The LNP will be opposing this part of the bill because we respect property rights. We are in a housing crisis and this part of the bill will lead to people being kicked out of their units and their communities. Let us not forget that allowing for the termination of uneconomic titles schemes is one of the items that came out of the Premier's signature 2022 Housing Summit—the housing summit that the Premier was dragged to, kicking and screaming, because of the *Courier-Mail's* media campaign and the housing summit from which basically every single policy was a failure that delivered nothing but false hope.

Unit owners are right to question whether or not this 75 per cent rule will achieve its purpose. They are right to consider this to be another rushed change from an under pressure government that needs an announcement. This will not alleviate the housing crisis and it may, in fact, do more harm than good.

**Mr KELLY:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The member for Toowoomba North is holding the book that Speakers have made rulings about. I draw your attention to that, Mr Deputy Speaker, and ask you to rule in relation to it.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I did not observe that myself. I issue a general warning that the use of props and the brandishing of political material will not be tolerated, particularly when in camera shot. Member for Logan, your interjections and commentary have not gone unnoticed. If you do not desist, I will warn you formally.

**Mrs GERBER:** While we are talking about this, let us look at the explanatory notes that talk about identifying 'solutions to the immediate housing challenges being experienced in Queensland'. Let us talk about some of those housing challenges that Queenslanders are facing. Queenslanders are worried—

**Ms PEASE:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. You have actually just made a ruling and on three occasions since you made that ruling the member for Currumbin has purposefully used a prop and is casting aspersions on your decision. I ask that she be removed from the chamber.

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

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Lister): I will hear the opinion of the Acting Manager of Opposition Business.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** The member on her feet has simply stood up and read from a document. There is nothing wrong with that. We have seen the Treasurer do that on many occasions, as have many others.

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

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I do not think I need to take any more points of order on this particular matter.

**Mr KELLY:** My point of order is about what the Acting Manager of Opposition Business just said.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I am satisfied that the member for Currumbin was not brandishing it as a prop; she was reading from it. My understanding is that the Speaker has said that to read from a document is not of itself in breach of the ruling that we do not use props. I reiterate to the House generally my comment about brandishing props, particularly when in camera shot. You can take your seat, member for Greenslopes.

**Mr KELLY:** I do have a point of order.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** There is no point of order, member for Lytton. Member for Greenslopes, what is your point of order?

**Mr KELLY:** In hearing the member for Nanango, who is the Acting Manager of Opposition Business, without any point of order, it seems like we are allowing a debate to occur in relation to that point of order rather than—

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Greenslopes, please take your seat and I will take some advice. I have made my ruling clear. Everybody has had their say. If anybody disagrees with the ruling then they are at liberty to dissent through the normal processes.



**Mrs GERBER:** I was pointing out that the explanatory notes talk about identifying 'solutions to the immediate challenges being experienced' by Queenslanders in relation to housing. On that issue, I want to talk about the priorities and some of the difficulties that Queenslanders are facing in relation to the housing crisis. Queenslanders are worried about how their families will keep a roof over their heads during this housing crisis.

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

**An opposition member** interjected.

**Mrs D'ATH:** You do not know what my point of order is.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Leader of the House, you will not use this opportunity to make commentary with the microphone.

**Mrs D'ATH:** My point of order is not in relation to whether the member is reading from the document. My point of order is that the member is not being relevant. She cannot use words from the explanatory notes so broadly that it allows her to now go back to an LNP document as justification that somehow she is speaking to the bill. It is not relevant and I ask that she be brought back to the bill.

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

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Is this in relation to the same matter?

**Mr MANDER:** Yes.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I will take some advice, member for Everton.

**Honourable members** interjected.


**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Members, while I am taking advice there will be silence. Before I continue with the points of order, member for Logan and member for Currumbin, you were quarrelling. I warn you both under the standing orders. Member for Everton?

**Mr MANDER:** My point of order relates to the comments of the Leader of the House. This initiative has come from the Queensland Housing Summit. This is about housing and accommodation.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Everton, I do not require any further assistance. Member for Currumbin, the point of order was regarding relevance. I ask you to be mindful of the long title of the bill and contain your contribution to that.

**Mrs GERBER:** I am happy to come back to the bill and I am happy to inform the House how what I am saying is relevant to this bill. This bill enacts a 75 per cent rule under the premise that it is going to address the housing crisis being experienced across the board, particularly by young Queenslanders. It is a housing crisis that has been contributed to by the state Labor government in relation to some of the failed policies that came out of its Housing Summit. Let us not forget that the Housing Summit is the same summit that this 75 per cent rule has come out of.

Everything I am saying in relation to the right priorities for Queensland is relevant to this bill. This bill is trying to fix the housing crisis, yet there are elements of it that will simply make it worse. There are elements of it that my community absolutely disagree with and there are elements of it that my community truly fear will result in them being evicted from their communities because they will not be able to afford to buy back into where they live, with the same amenity and the same outlook. I implore this state government to fix the housing crisis.

 **Mr HUNT** (Caloundra—ALP) (5.11 pm): I rise to make a significantly quieter contribution to the debate on the Body Corporate and Community Management and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023. I take this opportunity to thank my fellow committee members: committee chair Peter Russo, member for Toohey; Jonty Bush, member for Cooper; the incontestable Sandy Bolton, member for Noosa; Laura Gerber, member for Currumbin; and Jon Krause, member for Scenic Rim. I also thank Mel McMahan, member for Macalister, for attending one of the hearings when I was unable to do so. No report would be possible without the hard work of our secretariat staff, so I thank them for their continued efforts on our behalf.

Housing is a priority for this government and, contrary to the tawdry and largely irrelevant commentary from the LNP, housing availability is a problem evident in every state in Australia and, indeed, almost every jurisdiction in the western world. The LNP might support measures that aid in the provision of housing but, then again, the LNP supporting anything these days is just fleeting and illusory—much like their commitment to treaty. They can support the bill on a Sunday and do a complete

180 by the middle of the week, so who would know where LNP members stand on anything? Their contribution to housing on the Sunshine Coast during their last term is still quite astonishing to recollect with zero—yes, zero—commencements in 2013-14.

On 21 August 2023 the Hon. Yvette D’Ath MP, Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence, introduced the Body Corporate and Community Management and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023 into the Queensland parliament. The bill was referred to the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee that day. Without repeating all of them verbatim, nine recommendations were made. Recommendation 2 speaks to an education campaign with the CTL Working Group to provide guidance and resources, in particular information on dispute resolution processes available for lot owners in community titles schemes. Recommendation 3 recommends—

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The issue of comments regarding a member leaving the chamber has been ruled upon many times by many Speakers in this House. The member for Currumbin is being consistently taunted by a member opposite because she is leaving the chamber. I ask that you rule in that regard.

**Mr POWER:** Mr Deputy Speaker—

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Lister): I did not hear that myself. Member for Logan, it would assist the House—

**Mrs Frecklington:** It wasn’t Logan.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Who made commentary on the departure of the member from the chamber?

**Ms Grace:** Is this a classroom? She can’t take offence on behalf of someone else.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** It is not a question of offence; it is a question of the convention that the departure or lack of presence of someone in the chamber is not—

**Ms Pease** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Lytton, I am not engaging in a discussion with you.

**Ms Pease** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Lytton!

**Mrs GERBER:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I take personal offence at the comments of the member for Lytton and I ask her to withdraw.

**Ms PEASE:** I withdraw.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Lytton, I warn you under the standing orders for quarrelling with the Speaker.

**Ms PEASE:** My apologies. I was just trying to tell you that it was me. Sorry.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Okay. Member for Caloundra, please continue.

**Mr HUNT:** Recommendation 3 is that the Queensland government review proposed section 167. Recommendation 4 is that the Queensland government, in collaboration with the CTL Working Group, review the interaction between the Residential Tenancies and Rooming Association Act 2008 and the Body Corporate and Community Management Act 1997. Recommendation 5 is that the Queensland government, in collaboration with the CTL Working Group, consider providing additional guidance and resources to bodies corporate regarding their powers to tow vehicles that are parked in contravention of a by-law. Recommendation 6 is that the Queensland government consider amending the relevant sections of the five module regulations made under the Body Corporate and Community Management Act. Recommendation 7 is that the Queensland government review within 24 months of the implementation of the bill the exercise of sunset clauses, giving consideration to current housing pressures. Recommendation 8 speaks to conducting a review within 24 months of the commencement of the bill to determine and address any unintended consequences that may arise from the proposed amendments. Recommendation 9 asks that the Queensland government review the interaction between the Body Corporate and Community Management Act and the minimum housing standards as prescribed by the Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation Act 2008.

Some of the policy objectives of the bill include delivery of a key action of the 2022 Queensland Housing Summit by reforming the BCCM Act to allow for termination of uneconomic community titles schemes to facilitate renewal and redevelopment; and to modernise and improve the operation of the

BCCM Act in relation to by-laws and other governance issues including administration and procedural matters while at the same time strengthening buyer protections under the Land Sales Act by limiting when sunset clauses can be used to terminate off-the-plan contracts for the sale of land.

The explanatory notes state that the community titles sector is a significant and increasingly important provider of housing, accommodation and investment options for Queensland. Currently a community titles scheme can only be terminated by a resolution without dissent of the body corporate, supported by an agreement between all registered proprietors and lessees under the registerable or short leases about termination issues, or an order of the District Court. Stakeholders have raised concerns that there can be adverse consequences for lot owners where a body corporate is facing substantial costs to maintain, report or rectify buildings and a small number of owners do not agree to terminate the scheme.

In response to the key actions of the Housing Summit, the bill proposes to create a mechanism whereby a community titles scheme can be terminated for economic reasons. Economic reasons include when the scheme is not economically viable, in the case of a scheme of commercial lots, or when it is not economically viable for the body corporate to carry out the repairs and maintenance required to keep the property in good condition. However necessary it might be, the termination of community titles is not something that should be taken lightly or rushed, which is why the input of appropriately qualified persons like structural engineers are required. The process involves a number of strict timelines to ensure all parties are aware of any changes and to allow consultative mechanisms to be enacted.

The Property Council sees this very important clause as a key measure in removing barriers to the redevelopment of older apartment buildings and delivering increased housing supply in locations well serviced by infrastructure. The Property Council also sees these changes as a key measure in removing barriers to redevelopment of older apartment buildings and delivering increased housing supply in locations well serviced. In fairness, not all submitters were entirely approving of the changes. The Unit Owners Association of Queensland stated that a better solution to housing shortages would be strong enforcement of planning regulations to stop residential buildings being used for short-term accommodation.

With regard to provisions around smoking, the bill proposes to amend the BCCM Act to allow bodies corporate to make a by-law that prohibits smoking on a community titles scheme, common property, body corporate assets or a lot's outdoor area. We are all aware that second-hand smoking, or passive smoking, is when someone breathes in tobacco smoke from another person. Queensland Health states that passive smoking is a proven health hazard, with more than 600 medical papers linking passive smoking to disease. It should come as no surprise to anyone that, in its review of Queensland property law, QUT's Commercial and Property Law Research Centre recommended that bodies corporate be authorised to adopt a by-law without dissent that prohibits smoking in the common property or a lot's outdoor areas, such as balcony or courtyard. All submitters were broadly supportive of the changes, but some sought clarity around definitions and location.

Interestingly, Strata Solve sought to extend the meaning of 'smoke' to capture smoke from barbecues, wood fires and wood smokers. However, the department was very clear in its response, noting that the bill's intent is to address the health effects of second-hand smoke from smoking products and limit its focus to smoking products as defined under the Tobacco and Other Smoking Products Act.


There are more pets in this country than there are people, so it is right that provisions be made for them when planning housing and accommodation. The bill seeks to clarify and increase awareness of body corporate owners and occupiers on their rights and obligations regarding pets by amending the BCCM Act to: prohibit by-laws that ban occupiers from having animals on a lot or common property; and prohibit by-laws that restrict the number, type and size of animals that an occupier may have on a lot or common property. A balance is vital on this question, and a committee comment in the report is worth repeating here. It states—

The committee is satisfied there is balance between the rights of the person who wants to keep or bring an animal onto body corporate premises, and other owners or occupiers. The prohibition of a blanket refusal against pets must be balanced with restrictions that aim to protect the rights of others in the scheme. The committee notes that ultimately, the rights of pet owners are increased by this measure, rather than decreased, in line with community attitudes in Australia to pet ownership.

**An honourable member:** Woof, Woof!

**Mr HUNT:** I will take the interjection from the member, who I believe was 'woofing'.

Unlike the LNP, whose principles these days are as hollow as the support they give to First Nations people, this government is committed to leaving no stone unturned in relation to housing for Queensland. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Ms BOLTON** (Noosa—Ind) (5.22 pm): With the continuing growth of community title apartment and unit living in Queensland, the effective management of these buildings requires body corporate laws that are regularly updated to ensure they are relevant to today's needs. The Body Corporate and Community Management and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023 introduces reforms to these body corporate laws, mainly amendments to the process for the termination of body corporate schemes utilised when buildings reach their use-by date or are determined as such.

The first body corporate legislation was introduced in 1961. Since then we have seen an explosion of body corporate buildings, most commonly apartment blocks. It is now 60 years later, and as these buildings age there is a need to manage them as they reach end of life when an analysis shows that it makes more economic sense to redevelop, in many cases, rather than continue to make more and more expensive repairs, which many owners cannot afford. Currently, the only practical way to do this is for owners to agree to do so without dissent, which can allow a single lot owner or a small group to hold out, effectively giving them a veto power.

The practical issue at the centre of this is that with bodies corporate the property is collectively owned by all of the apartment owners who may have different interests, financial capabilities and alternative options available. Some owners may be investors evaluating their options using an Excel spreadsheet; for others, it has been their only home for the past 30 years and there are limited options in their neighbourhood for them to move to. Any method for terminating a body corporate must recognise this.


The proposal put forward in this bill is that the body corporate can vote for an analysis as to whether the termination makes economic sense. If it does, then 75 per cent of the body corporate can vote to terminate the body corporate and sell off the buildings for redevelopment. How effective this mechanism will be is not clear for two reasons: first, as I raised in my statement of reservation, many residents and property owner groups representing unit owners were not supportive of the termination provisions. One submitter stated that the plan is to force the eviction of mainly elderly and not-so-rich residents who have lived in these cheaper abodes. Another said that the present housing landscape already presents difficulties in finding suitable accommodation, and this would be exacerbated by such a move. Secondly, we do not have any modelling or analysis as to how this scheme would impact on the market. As was pointed out in another statement of reservation, when questioned the department could not say how many schemes could be impacted. They said, 'I think it is fair to say that we have not done any formal modelling on how many schemes this could potentially impact.'

We know there are potential problems with the model as presented, with reports of failings in the New South Wales scheme when duelling developers use the scheme to stymie opposing bids for properties. The government has said this reform would address the current housing crisis yet, as the Main Beach Association stated, there is at least a five-year period between a developer's acquisition of a site and the completion of construction, assuming that a DA is approved quickly, so the law may instead diminish housing supply in the interim years. Given that we do not have a full understanding of what the termination provisions will realistically achieve for housing diversity, the review time frames recommended in the committee's report should have been shortened from the two years proposed.

The other major body corporate changes in the bill are by-law powers to ban second-hand smoke in common properties and private balconies and courtyards; restrictions on the pets residents can keep; and clarifying the existing powers of bodies corporate to tow illegally parked cars. By-laws are by their nature complex, and often bodies corporate will have limited skills and capabilities to deal with them. In its submission, Strata Solve argued that considerable time and resources will need to be devoted to education and information. The committee report recommended that further education be provided in relation to by-laws on towing cars; however, this should be undertaken for all of the by-law changes to ensure they are effectively introduced and understood.

Another concern I raised in my statement of reservation was that, as noted by the Unit Owners Association of Queensland, there is an insufficient representation of unit owner groups on the Community Titles Legislation Working Group and the current numbers on the group should be extended to accommodate that. As members would have seen, the committee's report made a number of recommendations on a number of issues that are going to be referred to them for further consideration.

Also in my statement of reservation I noted the short time frames given to the committee, as reflected by both feedback from submitters and the volume of late submissions. With a number of issues my office has raised still to be resolved regarding bodies corporate, we look forward to these being addressed in the next tranche of amendments, and we have been reassured they will be. Thank you to our chair, the member for Toohey, and fellow members of the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee for their work; our secretariat, who are incredibly hard working; the Department of Justice and Attorney-General; and all stakeholders and witnesses who gave their time to make submissions and appear at hearings.

 **Ms BUSH** (Cooper—ALP) (5.27 pm): I also rise to make a contribution to the Body Corporate and Community Management and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. The bill proposes to amend various acts to: create a framework that allows for the termination of uneconomic community titles schemes; gives adjudicators appointed by the Office of the Commissioner for Body Corporate and Community Management the power to approve alternate insurance arrangements; modernise and improve the provisions around body corporate governance and administration; and strengthen buyer protections by limiting sellers' use of sunset clauses for off-the-plan contracts for the sale of land.

This bill advances a number of objectives, including: delivering a key action of the 2022 Queensland Housing Summit by reforming the BCCM Act to allow for the termination of uneconomic community titles schemes to facilitate renewal and redevelopment; and delivering a 2020 election commitment to implement amendments to the BCCM Act to allow an adjudicator the power to approve alternative insurance arrangements and make supporting arrangements to complement this change.

The bill was considered by the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee and our committee made nine recommendations, which principally were to address areas of interest and concern for submitters. I would like to speak to some of those in my contribution. Recommendation 2 was that the Queensland government develop an education campaign with the Community Titles Legislation Working Group to provide guidance and resources to organisations and individuals to support the proposed reforms. This was really in relation to the termination of community titles schemes and this occupied a substantive part of our committee's consideration. Currently, a community titles scheme can only be terminated by: a resolution without dissent of the body corporate, supported by an agreement between all registered proprietors and lessees under registrable or short leases, about termination issues; or an order of the District Court. The bill proposes to amend the BCCM Act to establish a new process for the termination of community titles schemes in circumstances where there are economic reasons to support that termination.

In October last year, the Palaszczuk government hosted the Queensland Housing Summit, which I attended. One of the key actions from that was to reform the body corporate legislation to allow for terminating uneconomical community titles schemes to help facilitate that renewal and redevelopment. In response to this key action, the bill proposes to create a mechanism where a community titles scheme can be terminated for economic reasons, including when the scheme is not economically viable—in the case of a scheme of commercial lots—or when it is not economically viable for the body corporate to carry out the repairs and the maintenance required to keep the property in good condition. Most stakeholders broadly supported the proposed framework for the termination of community titles schemes that were not economically viable. The Property Council see it as 'a key measure in removing barriers to the redevelopment of older apartment buildings and delivering increased housing supply in locations well-served by infrastructure'.

Certainly some of the resident and property owner groups, especially those representing unit owners, were not supportive of those provisions, raising the issue of how you balance the views and wishes of one individual against the collective. The department's response to submissions noted that the intended purpose of the bill is to unlock well-located, well-served sites for redevelopment and boost housing supply, but to add some safeguards by limiting the bill's economic termination provisions. They stated—

Exposing lot owners arbitrarily to the threat of forced sale by private entities merely due to, for example, a rezoning to higher density of the site for their scheme, is not the intent of the reforms. That is not a risk to which owners of free-standing homes are subjected, and Government has not decided to apply that risk to owners of lots in community titles schemes.

Most committee members believed that the right balance was struck between the interests of lot owners who wish to sell and those who do not, including the need for thorough evidence to support a dissolution of a scheme and an accessible dispute resolution process. The committee is satisfied that the proposed process considers the rights and liberties of lot owners, specified lessees, contractors and others. The committee did recommend that the Queensland government develop an education

campaign in collaboration with the CTL Working Group to provide guidance and resources to stakeholders to help address the unease that some stakeholders felt, including information on the dispute resolution process available for lot owners.

The bill proposes to amend the BCCM Act to prohibit by-laws that ban residents from having animals or by-laws that restrict the number, type or size of animals that a resident can have. Australia interestingly has one of the highest levels of pet ownership in the world. The explanatory notes state that there is no explicit guidance on how bodies corporate may regulate animals in a community titles scheme; however, decisions by tribunals and courts have established that it is unreasonable for by-laws to prohibit pets or to restrict the size, type or quantity of pets.

Despite these decisions and guidance material published by governments, legal firms and body corporate firms, there is evidence that some bodies corporate continue to have invalid by-laws that prohibit or restrict pet ownership. The bill seeks to clarify and increase awareness of bodies corporate owners and occupiers on their rights and obligations regarding pets. It will amend the BCCM Act to prohibit by-laws that ban residents from having animals on a lot or the common property and to prohibit by-laws that restrict the number, type or size of animals that a resident may have on a lot or the common property.


Overall, stakeholders were supportive of those provisions. I think it is safe to say that the committee were also supportive of the bill's intentions. However, we did note the feedback from the REIQ and Strata Solve about ensuring there is legislative alignment between the BCCM Act and the Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation Act, which our government also recently amended to better balance the rights and interests of renters who wish to have a pet with them in their rental property. Accordingly, our committee made recommendation 4—that the Queensland government in collaboration with the CTL Working Group review the interaction between the Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation Act and the Body Corporate and Community Management Act regarding time frames for requests to keep pets from a lot owner or a tenant.

Finally, the bill includes reform around the use of sunset clauses and proposes to prohibit sunset clauses from automatically terminating an off-the-plan contract for the sale of land. The bill proposes that sunset clauses can only be used to terminate a contract with the buyer's consent, through a court order or through regulation.

This is an issue that I have spoken about previously here in this House. A number of residents in my electorate who had purchased homes through one developer were concerned that sunset clauses were being used by the seller to terminate off-the-plan sale contracts. Residents had become aware that this practice had been used by the same seller in another location and that once the contracts were terminated the seller could then relist and sell the same property for a higher price—essentially removing the property from the purchaser and making it difficult to enter back into the market. Stakeholder feedback on this clause was quite mixed, with those representing industry particularly against the reform. This reform goes to correcting the power imbalance that exists between developers and purchasers, and the committee supports its inclusion in the bill.

The committee was pleased to note that the department had been conducting an awareness campaign for off-the-plan property buyers, including encouraging buyers to seek legal advice and alerting them to potential risks associated with off-the-plan land sales contracts. I know that many, if not most, property developers operate lawfully and fulfil an important need to deliver additional housing. However, there are some who have, in my view, done the wrong thing and those actions have caused great uncertainty and psychological distress to families and it brings the profession into disrepute. I am pleased to see that this reform is being progressed.

We all know that Queenslanders are facing some real housing challenges right now. This is one of the clearest priorities of our government. I am pleased that in this sitting week alone we have debated two bills that deal with housing and getting people and keeping people in their homes—first, the Property Law Bill, which we dealt with yesterday, which deals with fulsome seller disclosures so that homeowners have greater transparency around those transactions, and then today's body corporate legislation that helps to redevelop older, unviable housing so we can build the additional homes we need and the modern homes that we need for modern Queensland. This is the work of Labor governments. I would like to thank the minister for bringing this reform into the House. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr KRAUSE** (Scenic Rim—LNP) (5.36 pm): Firstly, I want to speak about the sunset clause provisions being reformed in this bill. I wholeheartedly say that we support these changes in the bill. I greatly commend the member for Theodore, Mr Boothman, for his tireless work advocating for this

change over a long period of time after he saw the distress being caused to families in his electorate. They were having the rug pulled out from underneath them by developers exercising the 18-month termination clause and then having the audacity to actually try to sell the same block back to the same people. That would be an extremely stressful scenario for any family or couple to go through, not to mention the financial stress it would cause.

Thank you, member for Theodore. You really are the battlers' champion in this place for the people of Theodore and the people of the Gold Coast. We all are the battlers' champions in the LNP. We always stand up for people who are trying to have a go to make a better life for themselves, to build a house, to buy a block of land. We stand up for people who have aspirations and who are battling to make their lives better—not like members opposite who are constantly putting blockages in the way to stop people from making their lives better. We stand up for the battlers. The member for Theodore's work here is exemplary.

These reforms do not change some things when it comes to the reasons why those termination clauses may have been enacted, and this is something I wish the committee had more time to go into—that is, the delays in getting lots sealed and settled and out into the hands of owners. When you sign a contract, 18 months seems like a long time, but that 18-month period is being exceeded more and more. What is the reason for that? Why are developers having such delays leading to termination? It is a bigger question than what is in the bill. It is at the nub of the problem when it comes to getting lots onto the market, which of course is a key issue when it comes to solving the housing crisis here in Queensland. Thank you, member for Theodore, for bringing this forward.

I want to turn now to the other issue which many members have spoken about, and that is the 75 per cent rule for the termination of a community titles scheme.

**Mr Stevens:** Shameful.

**Mr KRAUSE:** I will take that interjection from the member for Mermaid Beach. It is shameful because the old maxim that a man's home is his castle is being whittled away by this reform. We will oppose this. We will oppose this because it will have dire consequences for that property right that people expect to have when they buy a home, even a home in a community titles scheme. People buy a unit understanding that if they do not want to move, they will not have to move. This bill whittles away that right. The fictional solicitor in the movie *The Castle* was a fellow called Dennis Denuto. He was famously made—

**Mr Russo** interjected.

**Mr KRAUSE:** I will take the interjection from the member for Toohey—the tin-eared member for Toohey we might call him these days. The member for Nanango coined that phrase today. Dennis Denuto spoke in that movie about the vibe in the Constitution and how the Constitution's vibe was about protecting people's rights to their castle. However, this bill's vibe when it comes to the 75 per cent termination rule is all wrong. Dennis Denuto would have a field day talking about this. The vibe is all wrong. I will tell you why it is wrong. Unlike the New South Wales provisions on termination of community titles schemes, which the government referred to, where a person has to go to court to get approval to terminate a CTS if not everyone agrees to it, in Queensland, after this bill passes, a unit owner will have to go to court to prevent a CTS being abolished.

**Mr Stevens:** Little old ladies and pensioners.

**Mr KRAUSE:** I will take that interjection from the member for Mermaid Beach. I know he is very passionate about it. We might have scenarios where pensioners and little old ladies, as the member for Mermaid Beach says—his words, not mine—maybe even little old men, may have to go to court to prevent a CTS being wound up, terminated. That is not right. Why should the unit owner have to go to court to defend their right to their home? Why should it not be incumbent on the people who want to buy it to do that and to go through that process? The vibe is all wrong.

I will tell you what else is wrong about it. I know members opposite like to talk a lot about privatisation and they like to throw all sorts of accusations around about the LNP and what we previously did and what we might do in the future when it comes to privatisation—

**Ms King:** Why?

**Mr KRAUSE:** I will take that interjection from the member for Pumicestone: why? That is a very good question, member for Pumicestone, because when it comes to selling assets and privatisation, there is only one party in this parliament that has done it, and that is the Labor Party. Privatisation was the Labor Party. They sold Queensland Motorways. They sold Forestry Plantations Queensland—

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

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms Bush): Thank you, members, I will take some advice in silence. Member for Greenslopes, the member has really only just gone off topic. I am certain the member will come back. There is no point of order, but I will encourage the member for Scenic Rim to stick to the title of the bill.


**Mr KRAUSE:** As I was saying, the members opposite like to throw all sorts of innuendo around privatisation when it comes to the LNP. This bill is about the privatisation of compulsory acquisition powers. Before this bill comes into effect, the only party in this state that can compulsorily acquire land is the state, but when this bill becomes law, it will be possible for private entities, for companies, for individuals, to compulsorily acquire land. It is a privatisation of a compulsory acquisition power. It is unprecedented that especially the Labor Party, which claims to represent the battlers, would be giving this sort of power into the hands of the private sector. That is another reason why the vibe of these provisions is all wrong. There is a very long process that needs to be gone through before—

**Government members** interjected.

**Mr KRAUSE:** I see that everyone over there is excited. That is wonderful. We must have got their attention, just like the member for Currumbin got their attention earlier on today because she was speaking a truth that no-one opposite wanted to hear. She was speaking about the impact that this bill will have on her residents and unit owners. We heard from George Galea and the impact he fears it will have on him in terms of the five unit owners in his block who want to sell, yet he does not want to sell. One of the reasons he does not want to sell—and it is a very valid reason—is because he fears—in fact, I think he knows—that if he has to sell his unit, he will not be able to buy another unit in that neighbourhood. He may not be able to buy a unit anywhere near where he is living at the moment, even though he has been living in that neighbourhood for many years. If there was a guarantee in this bill that every minority owner would be bought out and would be able to re-buy into that neighbourhood, the same sort of unit, affording the same sort of lifestyle, then perhaps—perhaps—we would be able to support it. However, there is no such guarantee and that is why it cannot be supported. People should not be forced by private entities, operating under the authority of this law, to lose their homes and to be bought out under the privatisation of compulsory acquisition powers in this bill. The vibe is all wrong.

There is even doubt cast about whether this will make a real dent into the housing crisis that has been developing under the watch of this Labor government. It will certainly benefit developers. I am not surprised that the developer lobby, almost without exception, has supported these provisions because it is of huge benefit to them. Again, the irony is that the Labor Party is bringing in laws that are very friendly to the development lobby, although I have always said that they are a party for big business and big unions. They are certainly backing their mates here in the development lobby.

In *The Castle*, Dennis Denuto spoke about the vibe, and Darryl Kerrigan would say, 'Tell him he's dreamin'.' Tell them they are dreaming if they think this is going to fix the problems that have developed and tell them they are dreaming if they think this is the Australian way to go about dealing with these serious issues when it comes to CTSSs. The issues that will be faced by minority unit owners are very dire indeed, and that is why we will be opposing these provisions wholeheartedly.

 **Mr KELLY** (Greenslopes—ALP) (5.47 pm): In the last sitting week in this very chamber, we had one of the great mysteries of parliament revealed in this House and that was the Condamine-Maiwar alliance that was revealed by the member for Mirani. It had flown under the radar for a very long time and suddenly we found out that the member for Condamine and the member for Maiwar have been conspiring together. Tonight in this debate we have seen who is really in charge of the LNP, and that is the Mermaid Beach-Theodore push. They are in charge of the LNP, because when you read the statement of reservation, while there are certainly some things that have been raised in the debate this evening, the LNP at no point have indicated they would not be supporting this bill. They have walked in here this evening and certainly backflipped on their position in relation to this. I can only put that down to the unseen power of the member for Mermaid Beach, backed up by the member for Theodore.

The member for Scenic Rim claims that the LNP are the battlers' champions. Earlier this year, the LNP walked in here and voted on a bill that would have made a big difference to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and I think you could ask any person who is an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person whether they feel supported by the LNP because they have backflipped on that. Even a vote in this House, if they voted on something that supposedly made them the battlers' champion, you could not trust. You could not trust the LNP in relation to this. They might come in here and posture and say they are concerned about the elderly woman living in a unit in Mermaid Beach, but the reality is they will backflip on this at the drop of a hat. They will backflip, mark my words.



Ironically, when I first started to read through the notes to this bill I shared those concerns because I have a significant number of older unit complexes in my electorate and I know many people who are in the situation that the LNP have been describing here tonight. What did I do about that? I went and had engagements with the former attorney-general and the current Attorney-General and their staff. I was very pleased that I had those engagements because I was able to give great comfort to the people in my electorate who have raised concerns with me about this matter and the process that is being put in place to protect their interests. We have to balance that against the interests of people being allowed to live in unsafe conditions. That is what the LNP would be proposing if they somehow blocked this.

This is about taking buildings that are no longer economically viable—and often that is because they are unsafe—and making them safe. It is so typical of the lazy LNP to come in here and crow on about a housing crisis. The government comes in here and starts putting up bills that lead to renewal and further investment in housing and what do they do? They block it. They do not come in here and put up an alternative policy position. They just come in and say they will block it. There is no alternative policy position.

The shadow minister used nearly all of her speaking time and at no point during that very extensive speech—and I did listen to all of it—did she lay out an alternative policy. She just said, 'We're going to do something in the future,' and we all know that we cannot trust anything that those opposite say they are going to do in the future. Even if they vote on it in this House, even if they take the solid oath of this parliament and vote on it in this House, they will backflip on it. Nothing that they say has any credibility in this chamber. Even if the members opposite did put up an alternative policy or proposal, who could trust it? It is not worth the glossy paper it is written on. The right-wing priorities document has probably devoted no words to this at all. It is not worth it at all.


I will be monitoring this situation because I have a lot of people in my electorate who live in these older units, so it is of deep concern. It is also of deep concern when we see people living in units the viability and safety of which we would have to question. I think this is a good step forward.

There are a couple of other matters that I do want to cover off as well. We heard the impassioned speech given by the member for Currumbin outlining the amazing contribution of the member for Theodore. It was such a great speech—and he is clearly a champion of this issue—that no doubt it will be turned into a six-part Netflix documentary. Once I finish watching the documentary on Nelson Mandela or Archbishop Romero or Rosa Parks I will flip straight over to the documentary about the member for Theodore.

I do agree that this bill is doing very important work in relation to sunset clauses. I have not heard the member for Theodore talk about this before. I am not saying he has not, but I have not heard that during my time in this chamber. However, I have heard this issue raised over and over again in the community by many people. It is an issue that is long overdue for addressing and I do congratulate the Attorney-General on moving in this direction.

Finally, the last thing I want to comment on in relation to this bill is something that I am extremely passionate about and that is the impacts of smoking in multi-unit dwelling complexes. A lot of people have contacted my office and me over the years about this issue. As a nurse, I can tell honourable members that second-hand smoke is absolutely deadly. It is absolutely devastating to have children exposed to second-hand smoke. I can tell honourable members that while there are a lot of elderly folks living in units in my community, we also have really significant numbers of families living in unit complexes. We have a lot of kids in these unit complexes. I am absolutely pleased to support these provisions.

I was concerned to make sure that these provisions applied to vaping as well as other smoking products. I am really pleased to say that through engaging, again with the Attorney-General's office, I was able to confirm that things like vapes and, as we are seeing more commonly in my community, the communal hookah smoking apparatus will all be captured by this. I think this is a really important step forward. Giving bodies corporate the power to make their complexes safe for residents in this way is a very important step forward. With those few words, I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr BOOTHMAN** (Theodore—LNP) (5.54 pm): I rise to talk to the Body Corporate and Community Management and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023, something that is very dear to my heart. This bill was introduced on 24 August 2023 by the Attorney-General and it amends various acts. Ensuring constituents' rights are protected when they buy property off the plan is terribly important.

Back in 2022 we started receiving a lot of complaints from residents. They were contacting my office about developers enacting sunset clauses for financial gain. I can tell honourable members that those couples and families went through hell. They were told they could buy their property back but at an inflated price. Let's think for a moment that our family members or our children—for me it would be in the future—are put in the same position. It is not just about the cost of buying the property at a higher price; it is also about the amount of money people have spent on landscape designers and having the house architecturally designed. A lot of the properties in my region are on steep land and so houses need to be custom designed and these people have put money forward to do this. Yes, they would get their deposit back, but they do not get back that money they have spent. It has caused absolute heartache to so many residents. Other members in this chamber also took up the chalice to fight for what is right.

I want to give a big shout-out to one of the local media reporters on the Gold Coast who works for the *Gold Coast Bulletin*, Keith Woods. He worked tirelessly on this issue to try to get a good outcome for these affected families. It was not just people on the Gold Coast who were affected; it was all over. A great number of families were directly affected by this. I want members to understand that this is not a laughing matter. These are people's lives that were turned upside down.


I wholeheartedly appreciated when the Attorney-General finally agreed to hold a review into this matter because this practice had to stop. Other jurisdictions such as New South Wales brought in legislation back in 2015. This legislation has been tested in court and proven to actually work. It serves the interests of both parties—not just the buyer but also the developer, because there needs to be protection for both sides of this argument. Back in 2018 the New South Wales Supreme Court—Justice Drake I believe it was—ruled in favour of buyers to protect them from having their land sold out from underneath them to another buyer. We should have also acted on this issue far sooner than we have with this legislation.

The Property Law Bill was introduced into this House earlier than the body corporate bill. We could have acted sooner on this and put these provisions into that bill. Last week my office was contacted by another resident who has just fallen victim to this. The heartache it caused those people was extraordinary.

Debate, on motion of Mr Boothman, adjourned.

## ADJOURNMENT

### Burnett Electorate, Speed Camera

 **Mr BENNETT** (Burnett—LNP) (6.00 pm): I raise in the House tonight an issue that is confronting a lot of Queenslanders, and particularly residents around the town of Bororen. A question without notice was asked this morning about speed cameras that are plaguing the state. At the outset, I say that I do not condone speeding. These people have been caught doing more than the speed limit that has been set, but we have to talk about what is fair and reasonable. The compliance standards that the police have applied for decades are not applied in these circumstances.

I will tell the House about some of the real-life occurrences. There is the issue of 80 kilometre an hour zones being taken out and having '60 ahead' signs. That implies that people should be reducing their speed. I agree with that, but we have not had an education program so people have a chance to change their driving behaviour.

In Bororen where this speed camera was located I challenge that this is actually a blackspot. It was done for no other reason than to raise revenue. This issue is serious. There were thousands of fines incurred and it took a month to get the first infringement notices to people. As a result, some people have racked up, through illegal behaviour, I get that, many fines, but in this state we have to be fair and reasonable. It is coming up to Christmas and this is going to decimate people's capacity to even pay the fines let alone deal with it.


The other issue people in Queensland need to be aware of is that if they are in a commercial vehicle these fines can be astronomical. Ergon workers, railway workers and truckies who got fined because of this camera are now at real risk of not being able to pay their fine and losing their jobs as well. I understand that they can apply for a licence for three months or they can get a one-point licence through the prosecution process. Again, I come back to what is fair and reasonable.

This has not just happened in Bororen; it has happened in Torrens Creek. We know the member for Hill has had the same issue in his electorate. The member for Callide has hundreds of people in Biloela who have contacted him about this. The cameras are only there for a couple of weeks, but they are doing extreme damage. I think it is only fair that there should have been an education program and someone to work with these people.

I had a meeting in Bororen about a month ago and people turned up clutching thousands of dollars worth of fines that they have to pay. We should have done an education program. We should apply a standard that is reasonable. We should apply the same compliance standards as the police.

As time goes on, we should rethink how we are going to deal with the fatal five. I think seeing 80-year-old people lose their licences and having to pay thousands of dollars coming into Christmas is anything but reasonable. I call on the minister who is in the House to reflect on what this should look like going forward. This is a state where we should provide compassion and empathy while we are ensuring road safety. This is not the way to do it.

### Aspley Electorate, Events

 **Mr MELLISH** (Aspley—ALP) (6.03 pm): I rise to speak about some of the milestones and achievements that have occurred in my part of the north side over the last month. The Geebung RSL celebrated its 100th anniversary on 13 October by hosting a celebratory dinner with club executives, members and veterans. I had the honour and privilege of speaking with and drawing inspiration from locals who have done so much for our community and country. It is hard to imagine that what is now in the heart of Geebung was just a wooden World War I memorial hall, affectionately known as the 'Hole in the Wall' for many years. The fact that local community members lent a hand to assist with the construction of the hall back in 1923 shows that for over a century the community has rallied behind and has endeared the Geebung RSL to their hearts. I look forward to seeing what the next century holds for our great community hub. Thanks to president Harry Boxsell, a northside stalwart and local legend, and CEO Greg Hurley for a fantastic evening.

Last Friday night I had the pleasure of attending Aspley State High School for their annual A Factor student talent competition, with this year's theme being 'Festival of Fears'. I would like to congratulate the winners for all five categories. The overall winner was Wasted Potential. The group winner was Sons of Hades. The senior winner was Mae & Brielle. The junior winner was Double A's. The rising star award went to Molly Power. They were outstanding acts. There were outstanding bands. The students loved it. They embrace the A Factor model. They get into it. I am sure I will see them headlining venues in the Valley in coming years.

I also give a massive thank you to Aspley Devils Rugby League Football Club for having me along to their annual president's dinner awards last Saturday. It was amazing to hear of the efforts over the year of the very dedicated volunteers, whether they be coaches, managers or those in a variety of other roles at the club, and also long-term and new club supporters and sponsors being recognised. It was great to hear from Scott Prince, the Broncos NRLW coach, and, most importantly to me, Wests Tigers legend.


**Government members** interjected.

**Mr MELLISH:** He did play for some other teams, but the West Tigers premiership is the most important one, he said.

There were so many worthy award winners. Thanks to club president Steve and the team for having us along. It was a great night. I will always support this community powerhouse, and I look forward to seeing what the 2024 season will bring to the club.

I am also looking forward to this Sunday, the inaugural Geebung Street Party, hosted on Collings Street outside the Geebung RSL. It is going to be an amazing day of live, local entertainment, food trucks, market stalls and a wide range of activities from 10 am to 3 pm. I am proud to be supporting this event, along with Anika Wells, federal MP, and Councillor Jared Cassidy. The Geebung RSL are supporting it and helping make this fantastic event possible. There will be some great bands—some of the students that I saw last week at A Factor—some great stalls and great community involvement. I look forward to a great day out. I hope to see you all there.

### Currumbin Electorate, Bushfires

 **Mrs GERBER** (Currumbin—LNP) (6.06 pm): Since Friday last week, a very large bushfire has been burning in Tallebudgera Valley near Ryans Road. Some 278 hectares has been burnt already and fire crews have been engaged every day alongside our dedicated rural fire brigades. Volunteers

and firefighters from the Tallebudgera Valley, the Currumbin Valley, Mudgeeraba and Bonogin have all been working alongside the Queensland Fire and Emergency Services around the clock to ensure that Currumbin residents are protected from that fire—their property, their animals and their homes.


Yesterday I visited the heroes at Tallebudgera Valley Rural Fire Brigade, delivered some supplies on behalf of our community and attended the community meeting. I am very pleased to report that after battling the blaze every day, things have finally improved. The fire is now under control. I have just been informed that the rain has come. The situation will continue to be monitored over the next 24 hours, but the incident control centre can now be dismantled.

On behalf of our community, I personally thank all of the incident controllers, including Tallebudgera Valley officers Ben Naday, first officer; Joshua Hughes, second officer; John Irwin, third officer; Jackson Baker, seventh officer; Michael Laird, eighth officer; Mudgeeraba first officer Brad Huack; and area director south coast, Cory Bock. Glen Richards assisted extensively in the incident management team and his help was much appreciated. I thank all the brigades from the Gold Coast rural firefighting group, including Mudgeeraba, Currumbin Valley and Bonogin Valley, but, most of all, led by the Tallebudgera Valley Rural Fire Brigade. I thank the dedicated volunteer support members who came in every day to help feed the crews. I thank the staff from the south coast area office. There were some small businesses that stepped in to help. PowerClear tree lopping service and Campbell Brook allowed the community to borrow vital equipment necessary to clear tracks and helped with the bulldozer line. One of the fire trucks got a flat tyre while it was fighting the fire and Bridgestone Currumbin fixed that tyre for free.

Certainly, and not least, I want to thank all of the members of our community, including the wonderful Talley Valley Farmers, who banded together to check on the neighbours to ensure their properties were secure and to deliver food and supplies to the crews that were out there fighting the fires every day. The community response truly was overwhelming and I feel so grateful and privileged to be representing such a fantastic community.

I also want to acknowledge that with the activity in Tallebudgera Valley now coming to an end our fearless rural firefighters are now heading out to the devastating fires ripping through Tara. I am advised that that terrible fire has already destroyed 11 hectares of bushland and, tragically, one life has been lost. I stand with our rural firefighters and I thank them sincerely for their efforts. Our hearts go out to the affected communities and we stand in solidarity with all Queenslanders affected by bushfires.

### Miller Electorate

 **Hon. MC BAILEY** (Miller—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads and Minister for Digital Services) (6.09 pm): I want to report to the House on quite a wide range of very good initiatives happening in my electorate of Miller. For instance, the Fairfield station accessibility upgrade is very close to opening now. The lifts are underway. This is part of the Cross River Rail project, although it was an election commitment of the government as well, and this adds to Yeronga as being fully accessible. I want to thank the communities around those stations. They have been very patient as we have made these stations accessible in a live rail environment, something that we always need to be careful of to protect our workers, but people are seeing these upgrades continue. We are seeing a lot of progress on the Dutton Park station accessibility upgrade and the Rocklea accessibility upgrade in the electorate of Toohey nearby. We will also be doing Moorooka. We have already closed Yeerongpilly station and started work on a full accessibility upgrade.

This is about making the public transport network accessible for people with all kinds of mobility issues, whether people might have a disability, a senior citizen who cannot get around so well or a parent with a pram. Making public transport accessible is very important. While the new underground Cross River Rail tunnel will be fantastic taking people to the Gabba and the heart of the CBD at Albert Street for the first time, you have to get people onto the system, and that is what we are doing on the south side of Brisbane. The Ekka station, which is not near my electorate, is going very well and will be a full-time station as well.

The security fence at Yeronga State School is up and running. Yeronga State School has seen some big changes with six new classrooms and a huge admin block where we converted the dental hospital. We have set it up for the future now. With so much parkland on its perimeter it has had a lot of issues over time, so that security fencing has been very welcomed by the P&C. We will also see the opening of the Yeronga Community Centre in the next month or two on the mixed-use precinct site of the old TAFE college that used to be at Yeronga next to the high school. The Yeronga Community Centre will have a permanent home. It does fantastic outreach work for the vulnerable members of our

community. That is going to be a very significant event on the south side. Some of the scaffolding is already disappearing from the community centre that has been built this year. We are seeing the bitumen down there in the mixed-use precinct, so we will see housing going in there as well as an aged-care facility. We could have sold that site off for the biggest profit, but we chose to have a good outcome for the community. I think that is the right thing for Yeronga and Annerley, which borders it.

Last week I went to St Sebastian's fete. I want to thank all of the parents there for a fantastic fundraising event and everyone had a fantastic level of fun. We are also seeing the accessibility upgrade nearly done now at Sherwood State School, so a lot is happening in the Miller electorate. There is a lot more than that, but I thought I would get a report in before the House adjourned today.

### Second M1, Delays

**Mr O'CONNOR** (Bonney—LNP) (6.12 pm): It is almost six years since I was elected to this place and in that time we have heard the state government make a lot of promises about the second M1, and more than half a decade later we are still years away from driving on just the completed first stage of the road. I have lost count of how many times I have raised the issue of congestion in this parliament—it is something that so many of the people I represent go through at all times of the day every single day—and of how many questions I have asked in parliament to try to get some basic information about this project for the people I represent. Right now we are living with the worst of both worlds. We both do not have this vital project to relieve congestion to provide us with another local road to drive on instead of a National Highway but we—

**Mr BAILEY:** Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. This is the project that was blocked by the opposition—

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms Bush): That is not a point of order, member for Miller.

**Mr O'CONNOR:** Just sticking with the facts, we both do not have this project to relieve congestion and do not have any detail about what this road will look like. The people in Arundel Springs, everyone on the western fringe of Parkwood and the residents of the Surrounds part of Helensvale want to know what this road will look like in their area. They especially want to know whether the sound barriers will be adequate and whether everything possible is being done to mitigate the impacts of this project. For the residents of the Surrounds in particular, they want to know what local access they will have to the light and heavy rail stations and to the Westfield shops. They want to know when Buckler Drive will be duplicated and how the people who have made a home closest to the road on Citron Crescent and in the new town houses will be protected.

It has been more than half a decade and we still have no details. This has been pushed back and pushed back by the transport minister and his department. Most recently we were told the details for the stage 1 central construction package would be available by the end of this year. Last month I asked about this in question on notice No. 1126 and we found out that the design has still not been completed. We did find out that the brand new bridge at Sage Street will have to be ripped up and lengthened to actually fit the Coomera Connector in—a ridiculous situation—

**Mr BAILEY:** Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The member is alleging something that is not factual. That is a decision that has not been made—

**Mrs GERBER:** Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order.

**Mr BAILEY:**—and he should be honest with the House.


**Mrs GERBER:** Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I will just deal with the first point of order. Member for Currumbin, I will ask that you take a seat. Member for Miller, there is a process for dealing with that. I think that is a frivolous point of order and you will be warned if it occurs again. Member for Currumbin?

**Mrs GERBER:** Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker. You have dealt with my point of order.

**Mr O'CONNOR:** It is in the minister's own question on notice. It will have to be ripped up and lengthened to fit in with the Coomera Connector which means the transport department has not been talking to the council or the developer. Time is running out and we still have no details. I call on the minister to stick to his commitment and have these details released by the end of the year. We must know what this road will look like and we need pop-up consultations with residents to have local feedback. Under Labor the second M1 is going to be fewer lanes than we were promised, it is going to have a lower speed limit and it is well over budget and long overdue. The Gold Coast deserves much better.

### Riverway Drive, Update

 **Mr HARPER** (Thuringowa—ALP) (6.16 pm): What a great segue for what I want to talk about in North Queensland—my favourite road, Riverway Drive.

**Honourable members:** No!

**Mr HARPER:** Yes, I am going to provide an update to the House. As members know, I very proudly delivered stage 1. I thank the minister in the House for \$44 million that has seen around \$50 million worth of private investment into that area, and it is fantastic. With regard to stage 2, we had an election commitment in 2020 and I will get on and deliver that with the support of the Labor government and the minister.


Everyone knows that the main water pipeline that is under Riverway Drive cracked in 2021 and the Townsville City Council is going about replicating that on the other side of the river away from urban infrastructure. It has pushed the project back, but I am very keen to provide an update to the House today because just last Friday I was with the Townsville City Council mayor on the site of the water pipeline duplication. Eight kilometres of the nine-kilometre pipe have been laid by CivilPlus which is supporting over 130 jobs, and it is connecting it from the Ross River Dam down to the Douglas Water Treatment Plant. That will mean that we will be able to get those big yellow trucks on to Riverway Drive once the water pipe is commissioned and start the duplication for this important piece of road infrastructure in Townsville. I know that community cabinet is up there on Sunday and I say this to all of those ministers who will be there: I will give them a free tour of Riverway Drive. Yes, I will take them in my own car if they like. It is a great piece of infrastructure that has supported hundreds and hundreds of jobs and I cannot wait to get on with stage 2.

Those early works will continue until that water pipe is commissioned, but I have been briefed by the local regional director of TMR that a contract has been signed with Ergon. The people of Thuringowa will see Ergon starting to move some of the utility poles out of the way on Riverway Drive stage 2 to get on with construction. That will happen before Christmas and it is an exciting sign that we are delivering that road in Thuringowa. Following that will be more utilities moved with Telstra and I am informed that tenders will be called for the commencement of the Riverway Drive duplication stage 2 before the water pipeline is commissioned. That will remove any delays. We will get on with it because when I make a commitment in Thuringowa—like I have done with police, ambulance stations, school halls, you name it—

**An opposition member:** Youth crime?

**Mr HARPER:** I have backed in our police. I will deliver Riverway Drive stage 2 and I will proudly do that for the good people of Thuringowa.


### Hill Electorate, Speed Camera

 **Mr KNUTH** (Hill—KAP) (6.19 pm): It is evident there is a problem with the unmanned trailer speed camera units being rolled out by TMR. One of these devices was installed in my electorate on the Atherton Malanda Road just outside Ozcare. My office has been bombarded with over 280 individual complaints, with over 478 fines issued during a 13-day period in September. This is purely a revenue-raising exercise with hundreds of thousands of dollars ripped out of a small community. One of these is a 70-year-old who is an OAM. He has never had a speeding fine in his life and drives every day to visit his wife in Ozcare. He now has multiple fines, may lose his licence and will not be able to regularly visit his sick wife. Another single mum and nurse, who works on a 24-hour roster and travels 43 kilometres to work at the emergency department, has received seven fines and is very fearful of losing her licence, her job, her house and is suffering from anxiety and depression because of this. Another single mum with three kids who works two jobs has been sent seven fines totalling \$3,000. Just today we were notified about another person who has multiple fines totalling \$10,000. We have hundreds of these similar stories.

In small regional areas we do not have the luxury of public transport running at frequent schedules so our vehicles are the only means of transport. There is no justification in placing these devices in small rural areas that do not have a high accident rate as a result of speeding. When I questioned the calibration of the speed camera the department issued the typical standard statement that the device was functioning correctly. However, this is not good enough. I have never seen this before where the majority is adamant they were not speeding. The sheer volume of the numbers of the multiple fines being reported raise some serious questions about this camera device. I call on the

minister to provide hard evidence that the camera was tested for accuracy immediately before, during and at the end of its deployment. I also call for detail on what specific speed-related crashes have occurred in this particular 60-kilometre zone in the past five years, who deployed the camera and what are their qualifications? Finally, I ask the department to provide evidence that where this trailer camera was positioned was in accordance with the Queensland government policy guidelines.

### Mount Ommaney Electorate, Events


 **Ms PUGH** (Mount Ommaney—ALP) (6.22 pm): I rise tonight incredibly excited to let the House know about some fantastic events my community has hosted in the recent weeks. I will start with the fantastic Sri Lankan festival that is hosted in the heart of my community at the beautiful Rocks Riverside Park. The festival has been held there now for a number of years and it really does get bigger and bigger every single year. This year we featured some Sri Lankan weather as well as some Sri Lankan culture. It was incredibly hot. The food, the entertainment and the cultural performances were absolutely second to none. I was pleased to see, in addition to members of the Sri Lankan diaspora, that we also had a lot of people in my community coming through. It is great to see the community informing themselves and taking an interest in this beautiful community. I thank the 'Jays' on the organising committee—I call them the 'Jays'. They did an amazing job. It is no wonder this event gets bigger and better every year.

'Noise, different, unusual' is a great way to describe the trivia night held by the Jamboree Heights State School P&C. Thank goodness the police did not need to be called this year for any noise complaints. It was a fabulous night nonetheless. The Jamboree Heights Hall was packed out for a fantastic trivia night. My tablemates and I dressed as Kath and Kim. I went as Kath. I had a great wig. I did not want to wear it tonight as it would be seen as a prop.

**Mr Lister:** 'Look at moi!', 'look at moi!'

**Ms PUGH:** Indeed, member for Southern Downs, 'look at moi!' In the time I have left I want to tell the House about a fantastic event we had on Sunday this week just gone and the reason I am wearing this yellow blazer tonight. I met with the wonderful Amy Gomes, who is a fantastic ambulance officer. She wanted to organise a concert to fundraise to get a local community group an AED. I put my thinking hat on and a few days later I texted my St Cat's soccer club about their upcoming Gambling Community Benefit Fund grant. They said, 'We want to apply for an AED', and I said, 'You've got to talk to Amy.' Amy organised Greg Page from the Heart of the Nation charity—of course, we all know him as the Yellow Wiggle. Members may recall that Greg had a health incident live on stage. He was saved by an AED. He has invested a lot of time and resources into getting community AEDs that are publicly accessible because we know that defibrillators save lives. The event took place on Sunday and I am thrilled to give the House and the community an update. The funds raised at the Heart of the Nation event raised enough for probably three defibrillators that will be located throughout the community. I would love to thank our sponsors because their donations were absolutely critically important: Helen Saba Real Estate, Metro Middle Park and Triple Platinum Rush Gorillas did an amazing job. Thank you.

### Theodore Electorate, Roads

 **Mr BOOTHMAN** (Theodore—LNP) (6.25 pm): I rise tonight to talk about a road project that is almost underway in the electorate of Theodore and that is the upgrade to Tamborine Oxenford Road and Michigan Drive. The Department of Main Roads is planning to signalise this intersection. Residents are concerned about the noise of heavy vehicles using this road, especially when the vehicles have to stop at the traffic lights and then accelerate up the hill to the top of the ridge. This will create an enormous amount of noise for those houses beside the intersection. In a question on notice I asked the minister about this and the response from the minister was—

I am advised the minor safety improvement works proposed for the Tamborine-Oxenford Road and Michigan Drive intersection will not cause any significant changes to the noise environment and, therefore, will not require a noise assessment or noise amelioration works.

This is a major thoroughfare for Tamborine Mountain. A lot of heavy vehicles use this road daily. If they are stopped at these traffic lights and are forced to start from zero and accelerate up the hill it will create an enormous amount of noise. Residents have a genuine complaint and they feel they need to be listened to. They are asking for sound barriers to be installed as part of this road upgrade. Another concern they have is the pedestrian crossing that will be included as part of the upgrade. A lot of younger people will use that, but then they will walk along the road heading towards the Coomera River where they all love to go swimming—especially in summertime—and this will potentially place people in harm's way.

Finally I would like to give a big shout-out to my rural fire brigades who have been doing a fantastic job and putting in a tireless effort. There are rural fire brigades all over the state on high alert with the dry conditions. My local brigades are regularly sending units outside of their district to help other brigades and Queenslanders in need. First officer for Goranba Rural Fire Brigade, Red, and first officer for Coomera Valley Rural Fire Brigade, Matt, are true champions. Their teams always put on the yellow uniforms and go out to fight the fires. They never hesitate. They are always there. Our community is forever in your debt.

### **Bancroft Electorate, Sporting Events**



**Mr WHITING** (Bancroft—ALP) (6.28 pm): Tonight I rise to talk about a couple of important sporting events in my area. From 2 to 4 November, the First Nations Indigenous Football Cup, presented by Queensland Indigenous Football, will be held at Kinsellas Sports Complex, North Lakes. This is a special carnival that always has a really special atmosphere. The cup involves an open Indigenous men's team competition, an open Indigenous women's team competition, a youth competition and the Reconciliation Shield match. As I said, the carnival always has a special atmosphere with a lot of positive feelings and lot of excited people playing football.

*Tabled paper:* Flyer for First Nations Indigenous Football Cup 2023 [[1779](#)].

I pay tribute to the host of the carnival, the North Lakes United Football Club. As I have spoken about before, it is a brand new club that is only a couple of years old. It was formed following the amalgamation of two existing clubs in North Lakes. The club already has 1,400 members. They have a great place to play at the Kinsella Sports Complex. I really like that complex because it was developed through a collaboration between the council and the state government to build the new clubhouse—they have just about finished the terracing at the clubhouse—the fields, the lighting and also the clubhouse on adjacent land at North Lakes State College. It is a real example of what you can achieve in terms of infrastructure when you work closely together. I pay tribute to North Lakes United Football Club for hosting that special event from 2 to 4 November.

The other special sporting event that I want to mention is the Brett Forte Memorial Day hockey match, hosted by Redcliffe Hockey Club. As we all know, Brett Forte was an officer in the Queensland Police Service who tragically lost his life in 2017 while on duty. Every year, the Redcliffe Hockey Club hosts an annual match between the Queensland Police Service and the Redcliffe Hockey Club to raise money for Police Legacy, which is a really important cause.

It is always great to see the Forte family and everyone from the Redcliffe Hockey Club at the match. I pay special tribute to Brett's brothers, Luke and Chris, who still play and coach at the Redcliffe Hockey Club. They are helping the next generation of hockey players. Once again, I thank the Redcliffe Hockey Club, the Queensland Police Service Academy and the Queensland Police Hockey Club. Redcliffe won the match 4-1. It was a really hot day, but it was great to see the kids running around. A lot of money was raised for Police Legacy through raffles and lots of prizes were given away. I love being there and I love seeing that match every year.

The House adjourned at 6.31 pm.

### **ATTENDANCE**

Andrew, Bailey, Bates, Bennett, Berkman, Bleijie, Bolton, Boothman, Boyd, Brown, Bush, Butcher, Camm, Crandon, Crawford, Crisafulli, D'Ath, 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, Lister, Lui, MacMahon, Madden, Mander, Martin, McCallum, McDonald, McMahon, McMillan, Mellish, Mickelberg, Miles, Millar, Minnikin, Molhoek, Mullen, 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