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FIRST SESSION OF THE FIFTY-SEVENTH PARLIAMENT

Wednesday, 20 March 2024

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WEDNESDAY, 20 MARCH 2024

The Legislative Assembly met at 9.30 am.

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

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

ASSENT TO BILLS

 **Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I have to report that on Monday, 18 March I presented to Her Excellency the Governor the Appropriation (Supplementary 2022-2023) Bill for royal assent and Her Excellency was pleased to subscribe her assent in the name and on behalf of His Majesty.

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

The Honourable C.W. Pitt MP

Speaker of the Legislative Assembly

Parliament House

George Street

BRISBANE QLD 4000

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

Date of Assent: 18 March 2024

A bill for an Act authorising the Treasurer to pay amounts from the consolidated fund for particular departments for the financial year starting 1 July 2022

A bill for an Act to amend the Bail Act 1980, the Criminal Code, the Domestic and Family Violence Protection Act 2012, the Domestic and Family Violence Protection Regulation 2023, the Evidence Act 1977, the Evidence Regulation 2017, the Justices Act 1886, the Penalties and Sentences Act 1992, the Recording of Evidence Regulation 2018, the Security Providers Act 1993, the Youth Justice Act 1992 and the legislation mentioned in schedule 1 for particular purposes, and to repeal the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences) Act 1978

A bill for an Act to amend the Appeal Costs Fund Act 1973, the Criminal Code Act 1899 and the Criminal Code for particular purposes

A bill for an Act to amend the Criminal Code, the Hospital and Health Boards Act 2011, the Mental Health Act 2016, the Public Health Act 2005, the Termination of Pregnancy Act 2018 and the legislation mentioned in schedule 1 for particular purposes

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

Yours sincerely


Governor

18 March 2024


Tabled paper: Letter, dated 18 March 2024, from Her Excellency the Governor to the Speaker advising of assent to certain bills on 18 March 2024 [\[404\]](#).

PRIVILEGE

Alleged Contempt of Parliament


 **Mrs FRECKLINGTON** (Nanango—LNP) (9.31 am): Mr Speaker, I rise on a matter of privilege. It has been brought to my attention that mobile phone footage was taken of me from behind without my knowledge. It was filmed at parliament in our workplace and was provided to media without my knowledge or consent and posted online. I have seen the footage and understand it to be a member of the Labor government staff. I believe the action demonstrates a contempt in line with your recent referrals. I will be writing to you and ask that this matter be referred to the Ethics Committee for investigation.

Speaker's Ruling, Alleged Deliberate Misleading of the House


 **Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, on 15 March 2024 I tabled a ruling regarding a matter of privilege relating to a complaint by the member for Toowoomba North alleging that the Minister for Transport and Main Roads and Minister for Digital Services deliberately misled the House on 15 February 2024 in statements made during debate on the Transport and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. I ruled that this matter did not warrant the further attention of the House via the Ethics Committee. I now refer to this matter so that if any member wishes to exercise their rights in respect of the matter under the standing orders they should do so immediately.

SPEAKER'S STATEMENTS

Simply Human

 **Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, this week you may have noticed Parliament House is lit in yellow, white, black and red. This is to highlight Simply Human's Stem Cell Donor Drive. Simply Human are a not-for-profit organisation doing important work raising awareness for leukaemia, bone marrow transplant and stem cell storage. Their slogan, 'Superheroes without Capes', promotes the superpower of saving lives. The Stem Cell Donor Drive aims to increase the understanding of the importance of donations, which may be the best treatment option for a cure for patients with leukaemia, lymphoma, sickle cell anaemia and many other diseases. Information has been distributed to members and I encourage you to visit simplyhuman.org.au to find out more.

School Group Tours

 **Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I wish to advise that we will be visited in the gallery this morning by students and teachers from Marist College Ashgrove in the electorate of Ferny Grove, Kallangur State School in the electorate of Murrumba and Seville Road State School in the electorate of Greenslopes.

PETITION

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

Home Hill and Ayr, Police Resources

Mr Last, from 3,562 petitioners, requesting the House to permanently increase police officer numbers stationed at both the Home Hill and Ayr stations to provide for increased patrols and support existing police officers and staff and to use private security patrols until police officer numbers are increased. [\[398\]](#) [\[399\]](#)

Petition received.

TABLED PAPERS

TABLING OF DOCUMENTS (SO 32)

REPORT BY THE CLERK

The following report was tabled by the Clerk—

[400](#) Report pursuant to Standing Order 169 (Acts to be numbered by the Clerk) and Standing Order 165 (Clerical errors or formal changes to any bill) detailing amendments to certain Bills, made by the Clerk, prior to assent by Her Excellency the Governor, viz—

Forensic Science Queensland Bill 2023

Amendments made to Bill

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

'Forensic Science Queensland Bill 2023'

Insert—

'Forensic Science Queensland Bill 2024'

Pharmacy Business Ownership Bill 2023

Amendments made to Bill

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

'Pharmacy Business Ownership Bill 2023'

Insert—

'Pharmacy Business Ownership Bill 2024'

MINISTERIAL PAPERS

The following ministerial papers were tabled by the Clerk—

Premier (Hon. Miles)—

[401](#) Public Report of Ministerial Expenses for the period 1 July 2023 to 31 December 2023


Minister for Energy and Clean Economy Jobs (Hon. de Brenni)—

[402](#) Response from the Minister for Energy and Clean Economy Jobs (Hon. de Brenni), to a paper petition (4041-24) presented by the member for Gympie, Mr Perrett, and an ePetition (4017-24) sponsored by the member for Gympie, Mr Perrett, from 41 and 975 petitioners respectively, requesting the House to upgrade and establish infrastructure to ensure a sustainable and reliable power supply in Curra and surrounds

MEMBER'S PAPER

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

Member for Burdekin (Mr Last)—

[403](#) Nonconforming petition regarding the establishment of a Medical Health Clinic in Lakeland, Cape York**MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS****Mr SPEAKER:** I call the Deputy Premier.**Opposition members** interjected.**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! Disorderly, members. I call the Deputy Premier.**Housing** **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment) (9.35 am): I am happy to talk all day, every day about the achievements of the Miles Labor government.**Mr Purdie** interjected.**Mr SPEAKER:** The member for Ninderry is warned under the standing orders.**Mr DICK:** I can assure the House that there are no budget black holes on this side of the House—fully costed plans, fully budgeted plans, every single dollar accounted for. When it comes to infrastructure, we are investing in the generational infrastructure that Queensland needs: the new Sunshine Coast direct rail line, our share fully funded, not a \$6 billion black hole over here. Along with that, we are delivering the homes that Queenslanders deserve.

Our government is committed to ensuring every Queenslander has the opportunity to find safe and secure housing. We are listening to Queenslanders. We are listening to Queenslanders to help them build secure, appropriate housing; we are listening to Queenslanders to help them keep a roof over their head; and we are listening to Queenslanders as we deliver our \$3 billion Homes for


Queenslanders plan. Homes for Queenslanders ensures every available lever is being used to create more housing supply—a fully funded, fully costed plan. When we carry our plan around Queensland, we know there are dollars inside—not a pamphlet without one single dollar, for not one new house.

As constraints on the availability of building materials and a skilled workforce ease, Queensland's housing supply chain, I am pleased to report to the House, is firing on all cylinders. Australian Bureau of Statistics data for the December quarter shows the value of construction work done in Queensland was 6.6 per cent higher than a year earlier. That figure is especially impressive when you consider that, across Australia, the value of construction fell 1.9 per cent for the same period. As the value of construction rises, so the pressure on the pipeline falls. The residential pipeline value peaked at \$13.7 billion in the March quarter. As that work has commenced, the pipeline value waiting to be commenced has come down to \$12 billion.

We have already doubled the First Home Owner Grant for new builds—again, targeting measures that increase supply across Queensland. We have introduced tax concessions for property developers to boost affordable and build-to-rent supply. Developments that feature at least 10 per cent affordable housing will be eligible for up to three separate tax and duty concessions: a 50 per cent discount on land tax for up to 20 years; an exemption from the two per cent foreign investor land tax surcharge; and an exemption from the additional foreign acquirer duty.

Queensland's story is a story of growth, transformation and opportunity. Ours is a story of a strong, resilient and diversified economy and a strong Queensland budget. We are a pro-business government building an attractive destination for investment. It is only the Miles Labor government that listens to Queenslanders, and it is only the Miles Labor government that has a plan to deliver more homes for Queenslanders.

Housing

 **Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for State Development and Infrastructure, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing) (9.38 am): We know that Queensland is the place to be. Since May 2018, our population has gone from five million to 5.56 million. That is the equivalent of almost the entire population of Tasmania relocating to Queensland. That is great news for our economy, but it brings its challenges, too, particularly in relation to housing and infrastructure. That is why the Miles government is making the single largest investment in Queensland's housing sector ever, through our \$3.1 billion Homes for Queenslanders plan. Two central pillars of that plan are to build more homes faster and boost our social housing Big Build. All levels of government have a role to play so that every Queenslanders has a safe, secure and affordable place to call home.


The factors driving the housing challenges are complex and there is not one simple solution. The Miles government is committed to using every lever at our disposal to identify solutions and implement them. Through Economic Development Queensland, my department has a major role to play in housing supply, and we are focused on increasing the delivery of more social and affordable housing across the state. Our work includes: directly delivering social and affordable housing with EDQ-led projects in Northshore Hamilton, Carseldine and Southport; encouraging developers to deliver more affordable and social housing in priority development areas; and completing initial investigations of 27 surplus government sites large enough to potentially deliver substantial numbers of social and affordable housing. I am pleased to report we are continuing to advance all suitable surplus sites to their next stages of delivery.

I was pleased to recently announce, with the housing minister, \$500,000 in funding for the development of a business case for a large-scale social and affordable housing development on government owned land at Ivory Street in Fortitude Valley. We are not stopping there. To deliver one of our key pillars, I will be introducing legislation to this House that will deliver more homes for Queenslanders faster through Economic Development Queensland.

The bill is one of the outcomes of the housing summit and will focus on several key areas: providing EDQ with a clearer mission, incorporating social and affordable housing into EDQ's main purpose; a coordinated approach to ensure livability with the introduction of place renewal areas; and aligned to Queensland's Big Build. The new legislation is expected to result in EDQ delivering an additional 1,300 dwellings over the next five years, as well as approve a further 15,000 homes in PDAs.

The state, local and Commonwealth governments all have a role to play in ensuring every Queenslanders has a place to call home. The Miles government will use every lever we have at our disposal, every tool we can, and everything in our power to make that happen. Queenslanders deserve nothing less.


Housing

 **Hon. MAJ SCANLON** (Gaven—ALP) (Minister for Housing, Local Government and Planning and Minister for Public Works) (9.42 am): The Miles government is committed to using every lever at our disposal to boost social and affordable housing. As well as expanding our public building arm, we are empowering our government developer to focus on building more homes, not profits. The Newman government gutted the powers of EDQ's predecessor, the Urban Land Development Authority, restricting affordable housing supply. We want our public developer to act in the public interest, and that is to deliver more homes for Queenslanders. We are listening to Queenslanders and today we are introducing legislation to give our public developer a clear mission: make social and affordable housing a main priority. This bill will help meet our Homes for Queenslanders target of one million new homes by 2046 and contribute to the federal government's National Housing Accord target. The best way we can make housing more affordable is simple: build more houses. That is exactly what this bill will do.

EDQ is expected to deliver an additional 1,300 dwellings over the next five years, as well as approve a further 15,000 homes in priority development areas which is over double—117 per cent—the number achievable currently. It is something that Queenslanders cannot risk under those opposite because right now Queenslanders know nothing of the opposition's plan.

The Miles government's plan is clear. The initiatives in our Homes for Queenslanders plan cover every aspect of the housing system: building more homes faster, supporting Queensland renters, helping first home owners get into the market, boosting our social housing big build and working towards ending homelessness. We will also focus on closing the gap for First Nations people to overcome inequality in the housing system. The initiatives in our plan represent combined industry-wide investment and reflect our commitment to partner with both the private sector and community organisations to deliver real results. The Miles government is listening to Queenslanders and we will not stop until every Queenslanders has safe, secure and affordable housing.

Meningococcal B; Vaccination

 **Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (Minister for Health, Mental Health and Ambulance Services and Minister for Women) (9.44 am): The Miles government is delivering Queenslanders free, high-quality health care closer to home. Whether it is backing our health staff with more resources or better facilities or finding ways to vaccinate our kids against a deadly disease, the Miles Labor government is bringing compassionate ideas and putting more money on the table.

When I became the health minister, I promised Queenslanders that I would listen to them, and that is what we as a government have done. We listened to the heartbreaking story of Blair and Jodie Fidler, who lost their daughter, Bella, to meningococcal B in 2022. I listened to Phoebe, who survived the deadly disease and who, with her mother, Katy, has been pushing for more widespread understanding and immunisation programs. Our government listened and we have acted.

Today I am proud to say that thousands and thousands of young Queenslanders are receiving a free vaccine against meningococcal B for the first time. Since we launched the meningococcal B vaccination program on 1 March, we have already administered over 17,800 doses to infants, children and teenagers and, in wonderful news for our young people, more than 60 per cent of those doses have been administered to infants under two.

I want to give a particular shout-out to our incredible general practitioners of Queensland. They have led the charge in the fight to vaccinate our kids against meningococcal B. GPs in Queensland have already administered almost 11,000 doses. I want to again take this opportunity to remind Queensland families that infants and teenagers aged 15 to 19 are eligible to receive a free meningococcal B vaccine through their GP, as well as community vaccination clinics, pharmacies and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health services.


I recently visited Browns Plains State High School with the Deputy Premier to meet some of the year 10 students receiving their vaccine. It was wonderful to see so many young people getting immunised against this very dangerous disease. Meningococcal B is a horrifying, deadly disease. It just makes sense that we vaccinate the next generation against it.

Mrs Gerber interjected.

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

Ms FENTIMAN: I am actually thanking constituents of the member for Currumbin. You would think she might listen to this statement in silence. I again want to thank advocates like Blair, Jodie, Phoebe and Katie for pushing for this change. Because of them, Queensland parents can rest easy knowing their children are immunised. This is their legacy and their win, and it is one they should be proud of.

Electricity Prices

 **Hon. MC de BRENNI** (Springwood—ALP) (Minister for Energy and Clean Economy Jobs) (9.47 am): The Miles government has a strong track record of supporting Queenslanders, whether that is through more homes, better health care, supporting Queenslanders facing natural disasters or through global events causing price rises. Yesterday the Australian Energy Regulator released their draft Default Market Offer determination. As the Deputy Premier said yesterday, the Miles government can assure Queenslanders that they will not pay even one dollar of the increase proposed in that report.

The AER report does, however, show that the Miles government Cost of Living Rebate in energy efficiency support for households and small businesses is working. I quote from the report—


Where customers receive government rebates and concessions, the effective price they pay for electricity will be lower.

The national regulator recognises the impact of our Cost of Living Rebate.

Renewable energy is working, too. At a time when every other jurisdiction in the National Electricity Market saw increases in payment difficulties and hardship indicators in households, Queenslanders saw a 39.2 per cent decrease in the number of electricity customers on payment plans. The Australian Energy Regulator's quarterly retail performance report shows that Queensland is the only place in the nation where those numbers went down. That is Labor's Cost of Living Rebate in action.

Since 2017, the Miles government has delivered from \$1,125 up to \$1,647 worth of support to households in direct electricity bill relief. We are listening to Queenslanders, and that is why we have cracked down on retailers that are charging too much. We have made it law that private power retailers must tell their customers if they could be on a better deal. It is on the front page of every bill now. We are not stopping there. The Miles government will extend cost-of-living measures to shield Queenslanders from the impacts of inflation and we will deliver for them. We will make sure that the price on Queensland power bills stays lower than any other state in the National Electricity Market, and we will make sure that it is lower than what the Australian Energy Regulator thinks it should be. Thanks to our Cost of Living Rebate, Queenslanders will not have to pay a cent more, regardless of the default market offer. The Miles Labor government has this message for Queenslanders: we are on your side.

State School Students

 **Hon. DE FARMER** (Bulimba—ALP) (Minister for Education and Minister for Youth Justice) (9.50 am): We know the cost-of-living pressures have hit Queensland families hard, which is why the Miles government has invested heavily in initiatives that boost the support available for students and their families at our Queensland state schools. Our free kindy program already saves families of four-year-olds attending kindy an average of \$4,600 a year, but even more fundamental is the need for our kids to start school with food in their bellies. We know one of the key critical success factors for learning is that children are fed when they start the school day.

In November 2023, the Queensland government announced \$2 million in funding to support 861 state schools to enhance existing or established new food programs. Of those 861 schools, 798 will receive additional funding based on the number of students and whether they are either remote or very remote. Under the initiative, \$500,000 was made available for external food providers such as charities and not-for-profit organisations to provide food services directly to schools. As the Premier announced last week, we are establishing a taskforce, including supermarkets and food poverty organisations, to look at expanding this program into delivering school lunches.


As part of our commitment to support the state's most financially disadvantaged students to access a device, the Department of Education has deployed over 42,000 electronic learning devices since 2020 at a cost of \$30 million. Depending on their eligibility, schools are able to opt into the device initiative to best support their community needs and to support families. It was wonderful to be at Bremer State High School not long ago with the member for Ipswich and principal Ross Bailey to see how that is happening in front of our very eyes.

The Queensland government provides a textbook and resource allowance to parents of every state school student in years 7 to 12. In 2024, this allowance contributes \$155 per student per annum for students in years 7 to 10 and \$337 per student per annum for students in years 11 and 12. We also offer extensive support to state school students for out-of-pocket expenses, including assistance with transport for eligible students through the School Transport Assistance Scheme and assistance for eligible students with disability through the School Transport Assistance Program.

If a family is experiencing financial hardship, the system is here to provide support. Our schools offer many payment options for parents or carers, including payment plans, or families can request a fee waiver which the school principal will consider on a case-by-case basis. We will always support our families and students. We have invested \$106.7 million in the Student Wellbeing Package and 50 state schools with secondary-aged students now provide a free GP service to students one day a week. We have a partnership with Share the Dignity through which we have provided all Queensland state school sites with the opportunity for a Dignity Vending Machine to be installed at their school so that students can access free period products on demand.

Supporting our students in schools is not just about the learning environment. Every child in a Queensland state school is supported in every way possible to make sure they can meet their full potential. This is what they deserve.


Vocational Education and Training

 **Hon. LR McCALLUM** (Bundamba—ALP) (Minister for Employment and Small Business and Minister for Training and Skills Development) (9.54 am): Queensland is booming with low unemployment, record infrastructure and a strong economic outlook. Because the Miles Labor government is listening to Queenslanders, we are delivering record cost-of-living relief as well as unprecedented infrastructure investment. For hardworking Queenslanders, this represents a once-in-a-generation opportunity because it means that right now there are many good jobs on offer in all sectors right across Queensland. But, to gain a good job you need the right qualification, and national cost-of-living pressures should not send someone backwards. That is where the Miles government's free TAFE kicks in.

Right across the state, this year alone, there are more than 10,000 Queenslanders taking up one of the 74 courses on offer for free. Last week, the members for Caloundra and Nicklin had the chance to meet two of these students. Bailey Loenneker from the Sunshine Coast and Charli Mellon from Toowoomba are both benefiting from a free air conditioning and refrigeration apprenticeship. Speaking about her free apprenticeship, 18-year-old Charlie said, 'It is been really good because she probably couldn't do it if she had to pay for it, especially being an apprentice.'

As for Bailey, his passion and training has seen him earn recognition at the national WorldSkills competition and he is now heading to France with the Aussie Skillaroos to represent our nation on the international stage. From a keen kid in his dad's workshop to the world stage, Bailey is reaching new career goals thanks to the Miles government's free TAFE. I know that every member on this side of the House will join the members for Caloundra, Nicklin and me in wishing Bailey the very best. When we invest in free TAFE we are not just investing in a pipeline of highly skilled workers for our economy, we are giving real cost-of-living relief and a bright future to tens of thousands of Queenslanders—Queenslanders just like Charli and Bailey.

Water Prices


 **Hon. GJ BUTCHER** (Gladstone—ALP) (Minister for Regional Development and Manufacturing and Minister for Water) (9.57 am): We know that the cost of living is front of mind for all Queenslanders. That is why we are firmly focused on delivering cost-of-living relief. Our state budget delivered \$8.2 billion in cost-of-living relief—the biggest cost-of-living package ever delivered by a government. On top of that, we are freezing car registration, public transport fees, outlawing rent bidding and making bonds portable. Whether you are a family, an individual or a business, this government has your back. Across our food bowl regions, we are continuing to put downward pressure on food prices thanks to the millions of dollars in irrigation price discounts and horticultural rebates in Queensland.

I was in Mareeba recently to hear firsthand from our irrigators about how our investment is delivering cost-of-living relief and more water security for our irrigators. Nearly \$1.3 billion in discounts and rebates has gone to 359 Tableland growers, driving down input costs in one of our state's most vital food bowl regions. Not only are we driving down input costs for irrigators, but we are also delivering more water for our irrigators. That's right—thanks to our investment in the Mareeba Dimbulah water

efficiency project, growers will have access to an additional 11,500 megalitres of water to grow crops and to expand irrigation in Queensland. That is the equivalent of over 4,600 Olympic sized swimming pools for our Tableland growers to use. What's not to love about that! More water equals more produce and more jobs in Queensland.

This project was so successful that it delivered 40 per cent more water for our growers than was initially anticipated. We heard from Joe Moro, the Far North Queensland Growers' president, who said, 'So many Tableland jobs depend on water and I am pleased to see more water available for more produce and more jobs in my area.' The Tablelands agriculture industry loves the additional water, and they love the horticultural rebates that this government is giving them. 'It is fantastic to know that growers have received relief when it comes to the cost of doing business,' Joe Moro said. We are focused on driving down the cost of living for Queenslanders and lowering those input costs for our irrigators and growers. Let us not forget the Leader of the Opposition's budget black hole will lead to cuts to cost-of-living support when Queenslanders can least afford it. The LNP cannot be trusted in Queensland.

Transport


 **Hon. BJ MELLISH** (Aspley—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads and Minister for Digital Services) (9.59 am): We know that Queensland families are feeling the pinch. That is why in December one of the Premier's first announcements was to freeze the cost of rego and public transport fares in 2024. This will save Queenslanders more than \$83 million, putting money back in the wallets of Queensland families each and every day. We know that every dollar counts, and this will mean more flexibility for Queenslanders to manage their household budgets. This builds on the number of concessions already on offer to Queensland transport users.

South-East Queensland public transport commuters have already saved over \$400 million in fares since the introduction of our Fairer Fares initiative in 2016. We have frozen fares for four years since 2015 including through COVID. This government offers eligible seniors and concession card holders 50 per cent off registration fees and public transport fares. More than 134,000 eligible seniors currently have a 50 per cent concession applied to their car rego and almost 500,000 seniors and pensioner go cards are registered with TransLink, providing access to half-price public transport fares right around the state. Public transport remains the cheapest way to commute and will become even more convenient as we bring more stations online as part of Cross River Rail.

The Miles government also recognises that the learner licence is a key tool for people in gaining better access to employment and education opportunities. Last week I visited Rockhampton State High School along with the RACQ and the ARTIE Foundation to deliver a new car to the school that learner drivers can use to get their 100 hours. This will be a game changer for many young people and it is great to see how our investment in road safety can change lives.

Further on learner licences, our new \$75 fee is expected to benefit over 70,000 learners each year and will assist families with cost-of-living pressures. Already more than 130,000 young Queenslanders have taken advantage of the reduced fee. We have also halved the cost to replace a licence, photo ID or industry authority card to \$35. The Miles government continues to deliver a better and fairer future for Queensland families.

Housing

 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Murrumba—ALP) (Premier) (10.02 am): As I said yesterday, our government has heard the message from Queenslanders that more needs to be done on housing, health care, community safety and, importantly, cost of living. I want to work with Queenslanders on those solutions. It is why my government has taken a new approach to community cabinets. My ministers and I are available and accessible to anyone who wants to meet with us, and the town hall provides an opportunity for locals to ask us anything they want on the issues that matter to them.


At our community cabinet in Cairns I heard from Mandy. She is a teacher aide from Kuranda. Mandy told me about her experience with rent bidding, which was putting her and others in the same position at a disadvantage. Her story is just one of many. That is why we have released the Homes for Queenslanders plan. It is our response to the current pressures and outlines our plan to build more homes faster and invest in new initiatives to increase social housing, support the vulnerable and better protect renters, crack down on real estate agents through a new code of conduct and outlaw rent bidding. Prospective renters should not be played off against each other so that landlords can turn a better profit. It is just not good enough. We heard that, so we are doing something about it.

We have already delivered changes to rental laws so renters cannot be discriminated against for having pets and to protect renters from being asked to leave a property without grounds. We have also brought in minimum housing standards, because renters were telling us that some properties were just not up to scratch. A working kitchen, a private bathroom and functioning locks are not luxuries; they are the basics.

For vulnerable Queenslanders who need a helping hand, our Homes for Queenslanders plan boosts the supports available. That is what organisations told us they needed. We listened and delivered. We are rolling out dedicated critical response teams who help find accommodation for those sleeping rough. I have seen their work firsthand at Mckillop Park in my electorate and Musgrave Park here in the city. It is life-changing. Safe and secure housing underpins everything. It boosts confidence and provides opportunity. I want all Queenslanders to have that opportunity and to aspire for more. Only my government will deliver that because we are a strong team willing to make big decisions.

NOTICES OF MOTION

Labor Party, Together Union

 **Mr BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (10.05 am): I give notice that I will move—

That this House:

- (a) notes the campaign organised by the Together union promoting ALP members and encouraging unsuspecting Queenslanders to respond to the union's online activities;
- (b) notes the debranding by ALP members of their party affiliation as part of this campaign; and
- (c) calls on the Premier and the members for Algester, Hervey Bay, Caloundra, Pumicestone, Maryborough, McConnel, Cooper, Thuringowa, Mundingburra, Redlands, Nicklin, Barron River and Cairns, members or supporters of the Together union, to renounce these tactics and support the restoration of fair electoral laws and practices.

Government members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Members to my right, we will hear the motions. The time for the debate of those motions is this afternoon, not now.


Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: I will wait for silence, members.

Mr Saunders interjected.

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

Cash, Legal Tender

 **Mr KATTER** (Traeger—KAP) (10.06 am): I give notice that I will move—


That this House:

1. notes that cash is legal tender accepted in Queensland;
2. openly supports the rights to use cash as a lawful form of payment throughout Queensland;
3. calls on the state government to take immediate steps to mandate that all state government offices, including all department service centres, and state-owned sports and recreation facilities, must accept cash as a legal method of payment; and
4. condemns any move by local or federal governments to move toward a cashless society.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Mr SPEAKER: Honourable members, question time will conclude today at 11.06 am.

Logan Hospital

 **Mr CRISAFULLI** (10.06 am): My question is to the Minister for Health. Can the minister confirm the Labor government knew about systemic issues at Logan Hospital before the death of Russell Bates?

Ms FENTIMAN: I thank the Leader of the Opposition for the question. If he does have any evidence of systemic issues, I urge him to write to me or let me know. As I said yesterday, the case of Mr Bates is under a clinical review and a root cause analysis and is before the Coroner.

Logan Hospital

Ms BATES: My question is to the Minister for Health. Today the LNP can reveal that a leaked Logan Hospital risk analysis document from 2022 shows the current risk is rated as 'very high including loss of life'. Whistleblowers have told the LNP nothing has changed since then. How is this explosive document not proof of systemic issues and the need for a part 9 investigation at Logan Hospital?

Ms FENTIMAN: I thank the member for Mudgeeraba for her question. I am very happy to look at that review. If that review is from 2022, I again remind the member for Mudgeeraba what we have been doing since then at Logan Hospital to ease the pressures. I absolutely understand that the Logan Hospital is under immense pressure. I do not come into this place and say anything other than it is one of the busiest hospitals in our system.

On this side of the House we have made huge investments in the Logan Hospital. I think not a week goes by when the Deputy Premier and Treasurer and I are not cutting a ribbon and opening a new ward at the Logan Hospital along with the member for Logan and the member for Macalister. When stage 2 is complete there will be hundreds more beds at Logan Hospital—a billion dollars in infrastructure. I am sure that report from 2022 will tell us that, because of the rapid growth in Logan, we need to invest in the infrastructure. Do honourable members know what we have done? We have undertaken the biggest build in Queensland Health's history. Logan Hospital is the shining example of that—a huge expansion.

As I said yesterday, I honestly have so many constituents who come and see me who say that they are just so proud of the huge investment we are making at Logan Hospital, and it is not just the buildings and it is not just the beds: it is more nurses, it is more midwives and it is more doctors at that hospital. It is more allied health staff; it is more operational staff—the wardies, the chefs. I meet with them regularly. Yes, it is a busy hospital, but I can tell members that we know that and that is why we are acting. We have the biggest investment in Logan Hospital's infrastructure in its history. The Deputy Premier and I recently opened a new medical ward and we met some of the first patients in the ward who told me that they were just so thrilled with the care they were getting from the hardworking nurses and doctors at the hospital, and that ward was actually an idea from the doctors and nurses at Logan Hospital. So you tell me: who is in charge of the Logan Hospital? Who is in charge of the huge innovation that we are seeing at that hospital? It is the doctors and the nurses. We are delivering for them and we are delivering for local families in Logan and we will not stop investing in that very busy hospital to make sure that Logan residents get quality health care closer to home.

Miles Labor Government

Mr KING: My question is to the Premier. Can the Premier advise the House how the Miles Labor government is listening and supporting Queenslanders, and is the Premier aware of any risky alternatives?

Mr MILES: I thank the member for Kurwongbah for his question. He knows that our government is listening and delivering for Queenslanders right across the state, including in the Moreton Bay region which he and I and many others in this House represent. We heard from them that they wanted to see more and better healthcare facilities, and that is what we are investing in. The massive expansion at Caboolture Hospital is now open and operating. The massive expansion at Redcliffe Hospital—we have done a lot there already—is under construction right now, and of course our satellite hospital is taking pressure off both of those EDs. The Kallangur Satellite Hospital has seen 6,927 patients—patients who could have otherwise ended up at those busy emergency departments.

It strikes me that governing is about priorities and making strong decisions on the basis of those priorities. I can tell the House that our priority is building more hospitals for Queenslanders, not new stadiums in the inner city. Meanwhile, those opposite cannot decide what their priorities are. Do they support the new stadium—\$3.4 billion—or do they support health care or cost of living? They will not tell us what their priorities are. They are keeping them a secret from Queenslanders. The Leader of the Opposition is too weak to take a position. In fact, somehow the leadership of the LNP is getting weaker over time and less decisive. In August the Leader of the Opposition said—

We need to upgrade the Gabba. Whether we have an Olympics or not, that venue isn't befitting a magnificent city.

That is pretty decisive. The member for Kawana said—

We clearly support upgrades to facilities in Queensland. We support upgrades to the Gabba facilities.

Now those opposite say they never supported that project. Of all the people to be too weak to stand up to, Graham Quirk? Seriously, is Graham Quirk so intimidating that those opposite cannot stand up to him? If there is a former lord mayor those opposite should listen to, they should read the memo that Campbell Newman has sent the LNP and David Crisafulli. Campbell Newman said—

You can't outsource decisions on stadiums to experts. For example, if the experts recommend a stadium in the inner city, you'd better say no.

By the way, if those opposite want to be in government, it is time to show real leadership and tell us what they would do in government.

Logan Hospital

Ms CAMM: My question is to the Minister for Health. The leaked Logan Hospital risk analysis document says that at least three possible heart attacks were missed and 'further analysis is likely to confirm that the majority of harm and clinical incidents are unreported, even when significant harm or delays are caused'. Can the minister explain how the majority of harm and clinical incidents possibly going unreported at Logan Hospital is not a systemic issue?

Ms FENTIMAN: I thank the member for Whitsunday for her question. As I said, I am very happy to look at this report from 2022, but these reports are done by health services to ensure that where they are under pressure they can identify these issues and work with government to resource the hospital so that these incidents do not happen again. That is exactly why you do a risk analysis report.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Members to my left.

Ms FENTIMAN: In the two years since 2022, the investment at that hospital to ensure it has more frontline staff and more infrastructure and state-of-the-art technology has been huge. Those opposite obviously raised a case in this House yesterday and I say to the Leader of the Opposition and those opposite: let us wait for the doctors and the nurses external to Logan Hospital to do that clinical review and if there is any evidence of systemic issues we will absolutely look at that. However, let us let the doctors and the nurses who run the hospital—who those opposite want to 'put in charge'—do their work. They work hard every single day caring for Queenslanders, and we on this side of the House back them. We absolutely back our frontline staff. Something else that we know that is published regularly and is online about the Logan Hospital is the issues that people in Logan face with primary care that drives a lot of the pressures to the Logan Hospital. Do members know what we on this side of the House are doing? We are building satellite hospitals, including one that will be opened very soon in Eight Mile Plains. My constituents and the families of Logan will tell you that it is hard to find a GP appointment and it is very hard in Logan to find one that bulk-bills.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Member for Nanango and member for Chatsworth, there has been more meandering commentary than Roy and HG from the two of you this morning. You are both warned under the standing orders.

Ms FENTIMAN: It is also why the federal government has launched an urgent care clinic in Browns Plains, and that is already driving down the less urgent presentations at the Logan Hospital. Our investment in satellite hospitals along with the federal government's investment in urgent care clinics and all of our investment in the staff and the infrastructure at Logan Hospital are all to prevent any of those clinical incidents from happening, because we on this side of the House absolutely invest in our frontline staff to make sure that Queenslanders and families get access to free, quality health care close to home. I say this to those opposite: let us let the clinicians—the doctors and nurses—do their job. I am absolutely prepared to make sure that if there are any recommendations I will make them public. If there does need to be a further investigation, I will absolutely do it.

Mr SPEAKER: Before calling the next questioner, I remind the House that we are starting to see some unparliamentary language creeping in to what is seen to be regular usage. The term 'weak' can be applied in some circumstances but not directed at another member, so I remind members to ensure that they are keeping with our procedures and protocols in parliament. That term is unparliamentary. There are numerous previous rulings and I ask that you keep that in consideration.

Miles Labor Government; Health System

Mr SULLIVAN: My question is of the Minister for Health, Mental Health and Ambulance Services and Minister for Women. Can the minister please advise how the Miles Labor government is listening to Queenslanders and investing in the health and wellbeing of future generations, and is the minister aware of any risky alternative approaches?

Ms FENTIMAN: I thank the member for Stafford for his question. The Miles Labor government is listening to Queenslanders and delivering on the things that matter like free, quality health care closer to home. That is what we are delivering on this side of the House. We know Queenslanders want access to more primary care and urgent care clinics which is why our Satellite Hospitals Program is so fantastic. We know Queenslanders want more frontline staff in their hospitals and state-of-the-art equipment, and that is exactly what we are delivering.

Queenslanders also want to see the next generation—their kids, their grandkids—being healthier, and that is what is so wonderful about our 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games because they will inspire the next generations to take up sport, to get active and to stay healthy. We all know that in the long term that will take pressure off our hospital system, which is what is so great about having the 2032 Olympics here in Brisbane. The Miles government will absolutely support the next generations every step of the way and deliver the Olympics and the projects we need, because that is what strong leaders do. Strong leaders listen and they act.

That is in stark contrast to the Leader of the Opposition, who has shifted his position over and over again and will not take a position on anything. I will say this in his defence: he may not be much of a leader but it turns out that he is certainly a runner. Watch out, Usain Bolt, because we might have a new contender for the 100-metre sprint! The Leader of the Opposition is coming for you, Usain, and all it takes is a few tough questions and a TV camera in his face. The Leader of the Opposition is faster than the member for Mudgeeraba putting on her fake scrubs. He is faster than the member for Kawana putting on his three-piece suit to relax by the beach at the weekend.

When the media finally cornered the Leader of the Opposition yesterday you could see the fear in his eyes. Several times he tried to leave the interview and run down that corridor. Do members know why he was afraid to tell Queenslanders what his plans are? It is because he is scared to put a position on the record. When will he tell us his plans, not just for the Olympics but for the healthcare system as well? As usual, Queenslanders are never going to know what the opposition leader actually thinks. They are never going to know his policies or his plans because he is too busy running away.

Logan Hospital

Mr LANGBROEK: My question is to the Minister for Health. The leaked Logan Hospital risk analysis document says that, due to extreme workloads, burnout and fatigue, many incidents with issues in clinical processes and patient deterioration are likely unreported. Can the minister investigate how many more cases like that of Russell Bates might have gone unreported at Logan Hospital or, as a senior minister told parliament yesterday, do 'these things just happen'?

Ms FENTIMAN: I thank the member for Surfers Paradise for the question. As he would know, all SAC 1 incidents are reported and, of course, we also report sentinel issues federally, and that is reported on federally. I say again to the opposition, who keep claiming that there are systemic issues in relation to Mr Bates's case: can we please let the doctors and nurses do their job and investigate it? If there are any systemic issues we will absolutely do a further investigation.

Since 2022 a lot has changed at the Logan Hospital. There has been huge investment and a huge injection of frontline staff. I want to acknowledge that, coming out of COVID, our frontline staff are absolutely burnt out. I travel to every Queensland hospital and meet with staff, particularly as we are working on a brand new workforce plan, and I have heard how tough it was during COVID. Not only did the staff not get a break; they did not get holidays with family and they did not get to do professional training. Our frontline staff worked incredibly hard to save lives. Everywhere I go I thank them for their efforts and acknowledge that they worked incredibly hard, and a number of them are still burnt out. That is why we have a global workforce shortage coming out of the global pandemic. I want to reassure Queenslanders that since 2022 the Logan Hospital has received a huge injection of funds for staff and infrastructure, because we support the growing community of Logan.

Miles Labor Government

Mr MARTIN: My question is of the Deputy Premier and Treasurer. Can the Deputy Premier outline how the Miles government is listening to Queenslanders and delivering the services they need, including in my electorate of Stretton, and is the Deputy Premier aware of any risky alternative approaches?

Mr DICK: I thank the member for Stretton for his question. As the member for Stretton knows, the Miles government is delivering our properly planned and fully funded Big Build, which is the biggest infrastructure program in Queensland history. Our plan is helping all Queenslanders, including the people of Stretton, by removing the level crossing and rebuilding a brand new 21st century station at Kuraby which I know the member for Stretton has championed. It also means delivering our full share of the Direct Sunshine Coast Rail Line. The alternative, which I am asked about, is the LNP's \$6.6 billion Maroochydore black hole.

What a week it has been for the soft Leader of the Opposition—cowering in his office, hiding from the media, not wanting to take a position on Olympic venues, scurrying around the parliamentary precinct and running away from the TV cameras until he was caught out by Channel 9 and Tim Arvier, who demolished the LNP leader's claim that he never supported the Gabba. That claim was absolutely demolished by Channel 9 and Tim Arvier. The Leader of the Opposition clearly wants to build Victoria Park—it is so obvious; if he did not, he would have ruled it out the next day, as we did—just as he supported the Gabba, but the Leader of the Opposition is too feeble to admit it. My message to the Leader of the Opposition is clear: stop listening to the media elites, stop listening to the property developers and start listening to Queenslanders. Why can the LNP leader not understand that the Olympics is not about shiny stadiums and it is not about a big party?

Mr Janetzki interjected.

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

Mr DICK: It is about delivering generational infrastructure, which is exactly what our government is doing. Why can the Leader of the Opposition not understand it? I do not know what is wrong with him—well, I do. It is because he is too soft and feeble to admit his plans. That is the reality. The reality for Queenslanders is that that will result in cuts.

When you have a \$6 billion Maroochydore black hole, when you are going to give \$2 billion to landlords for a solar scheme, when you have \$3.4 billion to pour into a Victoria Park vanity project and when you are going to put billions into supporting New South Wales GST plans, that leaves one thing: the Leader of the Opposition's unfunded and uncosted plans for Queensland are a ticking fiscal time bomb. That is the reality and every Queenslander knows it. It is the old LNP playbook: cut revenue, cut debt, blow up expenditure and create a budget black hole that can only be filled by cuts—cuts that are paid for by Queenslanders with their jobs and cuts that are paid for by Queenslanders losing services and the generational infrastructure that they deserve.

Olympic and Paralympic Games

Mr BLEIJIE: My question is to the Premier. Last night the media revealed that the government sought advice about cancelling the Olympic and Paralympic Games and then the Premier denied it. Today, the media has said that it went to cabinet two days ago. If cabinet considered cancelling the games, as reported in the media, why did the Premier deny it last night?

Mr Dick interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you, Deputy Premier. You have just had your say.

Mr Crisafulli interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: That goes for you as well, Leader of the Opposition.

Mr MILES: I thank the member for Kawana for his question. I can confirm that the government sought advice about cancelling the games from Mullins Lawyers in 2012. In 2012 the Newman government sought advice about how to cancel the Commonwealth Games. The only time a government has sought formal legal advice on cancelling the games was when they tried to cancel the Commonwealth Games.

I can tell the House that this government is absolutely committed to delivering the best Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games ever, but we will do it under the new norms. We will do it with a focus on delivering the transport infrastructure that our growing region needs. We will not do it—

Mr BLEIJIE: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. You do not need to show me documents. I know who is misleading this House.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Dial it back. We are not going to have argumentative points of order raised. We do not need commentary from the sidelines, either. What is your point of order?

Mr BLEIJIE: It is under standing order 118(b), relevance. I asked about the media reporting that this issue went to cabinet two days ago, the Premier's denial last night and media reports today saying that it did.

Mr SPEAKER: This is not an opportunity to restate the question.

Mr BLEIJIE: I have asked the Premier to tell the truth today.

Mr SPEAKER: I will remind members that points of order must be related to standing orders, which you have correctly identified, but it is not an opportunity to then make another statement. I would also say that from what I heard—at least in the first half of the question before I could hear almost nothing—the Premier was being relevant to the question asked.

Mr MILES: I say again for the benefit of the—

Mr Mickelberg interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Buderim, I have just called the House to order. I have just given clear instructions. You are warned under the standing orders. Silence is not an opportunity to fill that silence with interjections.

Mr MILES: I say again for the benefit of the member for Kawana: the only government that I am aware of that has ever sought formal legal advice about cancelling a games was those opposite when they sought to cancel the Commonwealth Games. I say again: on this—

Mr POWELL: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order on relevance, 118(b). The question was about this government not one from 10 years ago.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Glass House, I have just ruled for the member for Kawana on exactly the same point. I have been listening and I will intervene and make the Premier be relevant if I believe he is being relevant. He is being responsive to the question asked.

Mr O'Connor interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Bonney, you can make sure you are using members' correct titles. You are warned under the standing orders. Premier, you have one minute and 16 seconds remaining.

Mr MILES: Thank you, Mr Speaker. We on this side of the House are unwavering in our commitment to deliver a great games, but a games that delivers the legacy our region and our state needs. That is about transport. It is about using our existing venues so we can invest in housing, in cost-of-living relief and in health care. If members want to talk about transport legacy, those opposite tried to cancel Cross River Rail twice. It would be built right now with federal government funding if it were not for the short-sightedness of those opposite who do not care about that intergenerational legacy of public transport. We will use the opportunity of the games to deliver faster rail to the Gold Coast, deliver Sunshine Coast heavy rail and invest in transport services right across this region—

Mr Watts interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Toowoomba North.

Mr MILES:—because that is what the games are about—

Mr Watts interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Toowoomba North.

Mr MILES:—not the \$3.4 billion stadium the Leader of the Opposition wants to build, but a transport legacy for the region.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Toowoomba North, I asked you twice and tried to caution you. You are warned under the standing orders.

Housing; Infrastructure

Ms LUI: My question is of the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Planning and Minister for Public Works. Can the minister update the House on how the Miles Labor government is listening to Queenslanders and supporting the housing and infrastructure they need, and is the minister aware of any alternative risky approaches?

Ms SCANLON: I thank the member for Cook for the question. I know she is a powerful advocate for her community in some of the most remote parts of Queensland. Of course, we know that to deliver the housing our state needs we need to deliver the infrastructure to unlock supply. We have a number of funds in Queensland dedicated to building essential infrastructure such as roads, water supply and utilities—all of which will deliver more homes for Queenslanders. We are also partnering with local governments to deliver infrastructure. In fact, since 2016 \$800 million has gone to councils through Works for Queensland and a further \$300 million will be rolled out from this year. That is dedicated funding for regional communities to help them with the infrastructure we know they need. In fact, councils like Quilpie are literally using our funding to build housing for key workers. Our Homes for Queenslanders plan has a dedicated fund available for councils to help them with planning, advice and resources. We on this side of the House are very proud to have boosted funding for Indigenous councils.

We all know that the Leader of the Opposition loves a sound bite. If slogans build houses, we would all be laughing. We hear him talk a lot about infrastructure partnerships. We are literally doing that, but the reality is that all of those partnerships are at risk if the LNP are elected to government in October. As always, the Leader of the Opposition is dodgy on detail. In the absence of any policy, all we have to judge him on is what he did last time. When he was the local government minister in this state, he cut \$60 million from the Local Government Grants and Subsidies Program. What about when they cut the Transport Infrastructure Development Scheme by 37 per cent? We cannot have houses if we do not have roads to get to them.

We know the LNP are not interested in remote Indigenous housing. That was obvious when the Leader of the Opposition personally and brutally cut funding from remote councils. I read from an article at the time that stated—

Funding cuts threaten Indigenous independence in Queensland.

The article goes on to say—

The reason is to increase self-sufficiency and decrease Aboriginal dependency on handouts, according to local government minister David Crisafulli.

That is the Leader of the Opposition's record—cuts to infrastructure and cuts to housing. We are listening here in Queensland and delivering more homes for Queenslanders. The only risk to homes to Queenslanders is if the LNP are elected in October.

Olympic and Paralympic Games

Mr MANDER: My question is to the Premier. Did the government discuss cancelling the games in cabinet on Monday?

Mr MILES: I thank the member for Everton for the question. I know it has been a while, but the member for Everton might recall that we do not discuss what is discussed in cabinet, and I do not intend to do so here today either. It is important for the functioning of government that those meetings—

Ms Bates interjected.

Mr Bleijie interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Pause the clock. Premier, please resume your seat. Member for Mudgeeraba and member for Kawana, you both have had a red-hot go today. You are warned under the standing orders.

Mr MILES: It is a key tenet of functioning government that those discussions are confidential. I will not be confirming or denying any particular discussion. I can tell the member very clearly that the Queensland government resolved at our meeting on Monday to put on the best Olympic and Paralympic Games ever, but to do it without building the new \$3.4 billion stadium. Queenslanders can be absolutely clear about our decision. Queenslanders can be absolutely clear about our priorities. Queenslanders can be absolutely clear about what we will invest their valuable funds on.

Dr Rowan interjected.

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

Mr MILES: What they have no clarity on whatsoever is the position of the LNP. They are too scared to stand up to Graham Quirk so they will not even tell Queenslanders what their position is. We are absolutely committed to delivering a great games that delivers a great legacy. That is a legacy on things like transport infrastructure. We do not need more multibillion dollar inner-city stadiums—more new stadiums. We can use the stadiums that we have right now. We can use our existing stadiums plus the arena to put on a fantastic games. Meanwhile, we are the ones delivering the vital transport

links between those venues—Cross River Rail, a new Roma Street station near where the arena will be and near where Suncorp Stadium will host the opening and closing ceremonies under our plan, and a new station at the Gabba. When we bid for the 2032 games, cricket was not an Olympic sport; in 2032 it probably will be. We can use a globally recognised iconic cricket stadium with a brand new train station and a metro bus interchange right next door. Our plan will deliver the best games while also allowing us to focus on our priorities which are not new stadiums.

Olympic and Paralympic Games

Mr HUNT: My question is of the Minister for State Development and Infrastructure. Can the minister advise the House on how the Miles Labor government is listening to Queenslanders and investing in Olympic infrastructure, and is the minister aware of any risky alternatives?

Ms GRACE: I thank the member for Caloundra for his question. One thing is clear: we are building that infrastructure on the Sunshine Coast. It is coming. Isn't it amazing? We hear so much whingeing and whining from those opposite. They cannot even get up and welcome the venues that will be delivered on the Sunshine Coast. There is not one word from members opposite.

Let me remind members of the upgrades that will be coming their way and the way of the members for Caloundra and Nicklin: the Sunshine Coast Indoor Sports Centre, the Sunshine Coast Stadium upgrades within the Kawana Sports Precinct and the Sunshine Coast Mountain Bike Centre at Parklands near Nambour. Maybe the member for Kawana should spend a little bit more time telling his constituents about the fantastic facilities he is getting in his area rather than looking up the menus of restaurants in Sydney. That is what they do. They do not read the report. They do not make their position clear. They spend their time looking up menus of restaurants in Sydney. Then they come in here and speculate about what someone may or may not have ordered.

I tell members what the Queensland people have not ordered: a lack of ideas from those opposite! They have none whatsoever. We are very proud that half of the venues will be outside of Brisbane. There are so many areas. In Cairns there will be a major upgrade to Barlow Park. We are going to deliver these infrastructure and venue upgrades within our funding scope. That is what we have guaranteed and that is what we will do. We are not going to whinge and whine about every little thing that happens. It is a constant theme from an opposition bereft of ideas, bereft of taking a stand. The Leader of the Opposition is unable to articulate any position whatsoever.

We came out strong. We are going to plough ahead and we are going to deliver the most fantastic Olympic Games under the new norm and within the funding envelope. We are not going to answer a question the way the Leader of the Opposition did on 18 March when he was asked, 'Are you going to build the Gabba?' and he said, 'You bet.'

Mr Miles: You bet!

Ms GRACE: Yes, 'You bet.' It was not 'you bet' yesterday. We saw him running in his Olympic style away from the media: 'Don't ask me questions where I actually have to put a position,' unlike us on this side of the House. We got the report. We analysed the report. We took a position. We are going to deliver the best games ever!

Olympic and Paralympic Games

Mr CRISAFULLI: My question is to the Premier. First, demolishing the Gabba was the best bang for buck. Then it was not and needed to be reviewed.

Ms Fentiman interjected.

Ms Grace interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Minister for Health, you are warned under the standing orders. Member for McConnel, you are warned under the standing orders. I have asked for silence during questions before, members. Please start your question again.

Mr CRISAFULLI: My question is to the Premier. First, demolishing the Gabba was the best bang for buck. Then it was not and needed to be reviewed. Behind that review another announcement was being developed. Now there are revelations that plans were made to cancel the games altogether. Will the Premier immediately set up a truly independent infrastructure delivery authority to properly plan generational infrastructure and salvage Queensland's reputation on the world stage?

Mr MILES: When it comes to setting up an independent games delivery authority, I can tell the Leader of the Opposition: you bet! If you want to look at who has had more positions on these things—the member did, in his question, suggest my position had changed. Yesterday the Leader of the

Opposition said that he had never supported the Gabba—never supported the Gabba. On 21 July he said the Gabba was an ‘iconic project’ and there should have been more money in the forwards. On 22 July he said, ‘We talk about the Gabba redevelopment. What a great opportunity that is.’ Then on 12 August he said, ‘To get to the Gabba though we need to upgrade the Gabba.’ Then on 18 March 2023, ‘You bet.’

I have focused on the Leader of the Opposition, but there is one quote here from the member for Chatsworth that really needs to be read out: ‘The LNP made it very clear we need a world-class stadium for the Olympics and we just know one thing: we will absolutely, if there is an LNP government in 19 months time, we will deliver a world-class stadium that Queenslanders can be proud of.’ That appears to be their plan—a new \$3.4 billion-plus stadium at Victoria Park. On 29 September the Leader of the Opposition said, ‘We will have a world-class Gabba.’ Then yesterday he said, ‘We never supported the Gabba’—never, ever supported the Gabba.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order, members!

Mr MILES: At least previously he was strong and decisive. Now we are back to weak and indecisive. He does not even have a position.

The question is about the independent games delivery authority and whether we will do it immediately. Yes, we will, but we will not hand them the budget. We will not ask them what the budget for the games should be. We will set the budget. We will set the maximum envelope, and it will be the delivery authority’s job to deliver within that.

The opposition’s proposal is that the delivery authority should choose whether or not to build Victoria Park and then the government will have to wear that budgetary outcome. That will mean more cuts. That will mean less money for other things.

Mr Crisafulli interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order, Leader of the Opposition!

Mr MILES: As Campbell Newman said, you cannot outsource those kinds of decisions—

Mr Crandon interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Coomera!

Mr MILES:—to an independent delivery authority. Governments are elected to make decisions. If you want to govern, you better learn how!

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Callide and member for Coomera, you are both warned under the standing orders. Member for Capalaba and the Leader of the Opposition, for the quarrelling across the chamber you are both warned under the standing orders.

Police Resources

Mrs McMAHON: My question is of the Deputy Premier and Treasurer. Can the Deputy Premier outline to the House how the Miles Labor government is listening to Queenslanders and ensuring that Queenslanders have the best possible Police Service, and is the Deputy Premier aware of any risky alternative approaches?

Mr DICK: I thank the member for Macalister for her question. I also thank her for her service to our state in her distinguished career in the Queensland Police Service. I recognise that today, as I recognise all members of parliament who have served in the Queensland Police Service during their previous career.

When Queenslanders experience crime and criminal behaviour, they do not deserve cheap slogans or slick politics. What they want is blue uniforms—police officers on the ground in their community. Our government could not be more proud of our investment in the big blue line in Queensland—the big blue front line that we invest in to support our frontline police officers.

Our commitment to deliver 2,025 police personnel by the year 2025 remains unmatched by any political party when it comes to delivering greater community safety in Queensland. I am asked for alternatives by the member for Macalister. The LNP’s commitment was to deliver 1,000 fewer police. The LNP are always fast with slick slogans, but they can never deliver what Queenslanders really need when it comes to safer communities.

When it comes to the next election, we know what the Leader of the Opposition has. He does not have a policy; he has a massive budget black hole. There will be \$9 billion in progressive coal royalties cut; the direct Sunshine Coast rail—the \$6.6 billion Maroochydoore black hole; and \$2 billion in cash handouts to landlords.

Queensland's police officers and Queenslanders who support those police should be very concerned by those unfunded, uncosted commitments. They should be concerned because the Leader of the Opposition could become the premier of Queensland. That is the reality. We are the underdogs. The LNP could lead this state. The Leader of the Opposition would come to government with unfunded and uncosted promises. What happens when the LNP comes to government with unfunded and uncosted promises? We have seen it before. Police numbers get cut.

The LNP leader would cut police numbers so he has more money to spend on the red carpet, to look after the media elites and the rich and the famous at his vanity project at Victoria Park. If they were not going to build Victoria Park and spend \$3.4 billion—and whatever else it would cost—then they would have ruled it out, but they have not because they support that project. That is the contrast—a big, shiny new stadium at Victoria Park.

What did they do last time? When the Leader of the Opposition was a senior minister in the Newman government, he sacked 110 senior commissioned officers and 212 non-commissioned officers. That is the choice: a government that is delivering the generational infrastructure—the greatest value Olympic and Paralympic Games in history—and an LNP that will have a massive budget black hole that will result in cuts to Queensland jobs, cuts to Queensland services and cuts to the generational infrastructure that Queenslanders deserve.

Glencore

Mr KATTER: My question is to the Premier. Glencore is allowed to shut down the Mount Isa copper mine without committing to their substantial clean-up obligations. Glencore is poised to dump their industrial waste into the pristine Great Artesian Basin. Can the Premier explain why your government is giving this morally questionable multinational commodity trading company a general hall pass in Queensland?

Speaker's Ruling, Question out of Order

Mr SPEAKER: Member, I am going to rule that question out of order because it was directed at the Premier. You said 'your government', as I heard the question. I have tried to make this clear. Members who have been here for some time know the arrangements.

Electricity Prices

Mr SKELTON: My question is of the Minister for Energy and Clean Economy Jobs. Can the minister outline how the Miles Labor government is listening to Queenslanders and supporting my local community of Nicklin, including through energy rebates, and is the minister aware of any risky alternative approaches?

Mr de BRENNI: I thank the member for Nicklin for his question. We know that the member for Nicklin is delivering for his community. We can tell because we see him delivering new and better schools. We see new buildings, halls and playgrounds at places like Yandina State School and a centre for excellence at Burnside State High School. Through you, Mr Speaker, I congratulate the member for Nicklin. We are seeing road upgrades to the Bruce Highway. He is delivering upgrades to Kiamba and Petrie Creek Road, and through you, Mr Speaker, we congratulate the member for Nicklin. We are seeing the Nambour General Hospital redevelopment, and we acknowledge that the member for Nicklin is listening to his community.

He is also delivering nation-leading cost-of-living rebates through energy bills to every single household in the community he represents, and that is delivering them the lowest power bills anywhere in the nation. He is doing it with the support of Premier Steven Miles. He is listening to all of the residents of Nicklin, and this government is listening to all Queenslanders. The Premier has committed that his first budget as Premier will be a record cost-of-living support budget for Nicklin and all of Queensland. We hear the people of Nicklin say they want good roads, they want good schools, they want good hospitals and they want help with the cost of living, and the Miles government and the member for Nicklin can do both.

We can do both, but the LNP cannot deliver both. They cannot deliver both without progressive royalties, and that is the risk to the people of Nicklin from the LNP. They will have to cut. They will have to cut schools and hospitals and roads or they will have to cut cost-of-living support. That will be the choice faced by the people of Nicklin because there will be a massive black hole in the LNP budget. The LNP has form. It was Channel 9 that revealed the LNP's first act when they were in office. The article says they were going to axe a program that can save families up to \$480 a year on their power bills. Can you imagine the first act of an LNP government being to take an axe to a program saving families \$480? The LNP has a big budget problem. The Leader of the Opposition will not come clean. That is what is so insipid about those opposite. They are too feeble to say what they will cut. They cannot deliver cost-of-living relief without cutting services. It is time the Leader of the Opposition was up-front with the people of Nicklin and all Queenslanders. What choice will he make? What will he cut: cost-of-living support, infrastructure or services?

Olympic and Paralympic Games

Ms SIMPSON: My question is to the Premier. Can the Premier confirm that he is more focused on the 'hunger games' in Labor's cabinet than the Olympic and Paralympic Games for Queensland?

Mr MILES: I thank the member for Maroochydore for her question. The answer to the question is no. I am focused on listening to Queenslanders. I am focused on delivering what they tell me they want. They do not tell me they want a \$3.4 billion stadium in the inner city. They tell me they want their government focused on delivering health care, new facilities and more doctors, nurses and ambos. They tell me they want their government to deliver absolutely every cent they possibly can back into their household budgets through cost-of-living relief, and that is what we will do. They tell me they want more police in their communities preventing crime, intervening early and arresting offenders, and that is our priority. They tell me they want us to deliver more housing and to take care of those in housing crisis, and that is what we will do. That is my focus; that is my priority.

While those opposite may want to defend investing another billion dollars to get a new stadium here in the inner city, I will use that money to deliver on the priorities that Queenslanders have told me they want, and I will make no apologies for that. I will be clear and decisive about it. There will be no doubt whatsoever that we are listening to Queenslanders, we are delivering for them and we are focused on their priorities. Those opposite cannot even take a position. They cannot even tell Queenslanders what their position is. Do they think we should take another billion dollars to build a shiny new stadium, or will they support our plan to deliver the games as originally intended, using the venues that we already have in place wherever possible, and building a new arena which will be a fantastic addition to our city?

The real legacy will be the investments we have made and will keep making into transport infrastructure, because that was the great promise of the games under the new norms. The great promise of the games under the new norms was that we could deliver it using our existing venues and spend our money on transport infrastructure, and that is what we on this side of the House have decided to do.

Education

Ms PUGH: My question is for the Minister for Education. Can the minister outline to the House how the Miles Labor government is listening to Queenslanders and ensuring our young Queenslanders have the best possible education, and is the minister aware of any risky alternative approaches?

Ms FARMER: I thank the member for her question. What a great advocate she is for her local schools. I know how excited she was to announce the new \$28 million STEM lab and admin block at Corinda State High School. Schools all over Queensland are getting new and upgraded facilities like those in the member's electorate because we know how important those sorts of facilities are to create a new, positive learning environment. It is our kids' futures we are talking about, and that is why we have invested \$11.8 billion into those sorts of facilities since we were re-elected in 2015, including 27 new schools so far and our program to make sure we are planning for future population growth. Our nearly half a billion dollar Cooler Cleaner Schools Program saw every classroom, library and staffroom air-conditioned, and we know how excited the member for McConnel was about that. It was announced and done within two years.

When opposition members were elected in 2020 they said kids were going to get air conditioning in 2028. That means that if you were a kid in year 5 at the time you would have graduated from primary school and secondary school before you saw an air conditioner in any of the schools. That is their vision for Queensland schools.

What we are facing now is the very real possibility that the LNP could actually get to government and the Leader of the Opposition could be the premier, so we have to look really seriously at what they might do in education. We know that for them, when it comes to balancing the budget, schools are in the firing line. When they were in government they closed six schools—Fortitude Valley State School, Old Yarranlea State School, Toowoomba South State School, Charlton State School, Stuart State School and Nyanda State High School—and they had a hit list of another 50 schools that they were going to cut. We have no word from the opposition leader now on what he would do to fix the budget black hole that he would create.

We know that he is going to support the big, shiny, new \$3.5 billion stadium and we know that he does not support progressive coal royalties, so what would he cut? Do you know what the risk is, Mr Speaker? Schools are just a line item on the budget. You can see them going through the list: 'Will we cut widgets? Yes. Will we cut chairs? Yes. Will we cut trucks? Yes. Will we cut schools across Queensland? Yes.' They simply do not care. What is he going to say to schools in Everton? What is he going to say in Currumbin? What is he going to say in Lockyer?

Mr Mander interjected.

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

Ms FARMER: What is he going to say to the schools in Logan and Mackay? We need him to come clean and say whether he is committed to our kids' future.

Olympic and Paralympic Games

Mr POWELL: My question is to the Minister for State Development and Infrastructure. The Premier has said that the government did not receive any formal legal advice to cancel the games. Did the government receive any non-formal advice to cancel the games?

Ms GRACE: Formal. Non-formal. Whingeing. Whining. Yes. No. You bet. You bet not. Yes, we will. No, we won't. No, we can't. Now I run. Now I walk. It is embarrassing what you hear from those opposite. The answer to the question is no.

We came out with a position. We have come out with a strong position to deliver the best games in 2032, and we did it under the new norm. We have done it under the funding envelope, which is 50:50 from the federal government and the state government. We have also done it with the IOC, which we need to liaise with. We need to talk further with the Commonwealth government in relation to the fantastic arena that we will be building on the site in Roma Street. We will be upgrading Suncorp Stadium. We will be upgrading QSAC, and what a legacy—a legacy that was not left after Rio, London and Tokyo. It will be left here in Queensland.

We hear athletes say that for once a track is not going to be ripped out of a stadium after the games. It will remain as a legacy for all of those 782,000-plus visits to that site. Suncorp Stadium will be a shiny stadium that Queenslanders will love and enjoy. The Gabba will get the work that it requires as well, as an iconic venue for cricket and AFL in this state. That is what this side of the House will do. We will also deliver the minor venues, with 50 per cent of them outside of Brisbane. We will deliver them and we are getting on with the job.

They keep talking about an independent delivery authority, and we have said time and time again that there will be a bill before this House very soon and we will have it in place by mid this year. That is what we stand for on this side of the House. We are not going to play cheap, wishy-washy politics with an important event. We want to make sure we get it right. When it comes to delivering on those venues, I say to the Leader of the Opposition that we are going to deliver an Olympic and Paralympic Games that we will be proud of. The venues for the Paralympics will be done in line with a budget, with the IOC and with the federal government. You bet.

Regional Queensland, Mine Rehabilitation

Mr SAUNDERS: My question is of the Premier. Can the Premier advise how his government is supporting regional communities and the environment in mine clean-up obligations, and is he aware of any alternative measures?

Mr MILES: I thank the member for Maryborough for his question. It also gives me a chance to address the interest that the member for Traeger expressed. There are a lot of things that we disagree with the Katter party on, but one thing we agree on is that Glencore should absolutely do the right thing by the workforce in Mount Isa. We are 100 per cent behind those workers and the town of Mount Isa.

We share the disappointment of the member for Traeger in their decision to close the copper mine. Our primary concern is for the 1,200 workers who could be affected by that decision in 2025. I also note the impact it could have on the town and the wider region.

While we cannot force Glencore to keep the mine open, we can invest in those workers and in other opportunities in the region. We know that copper is just one of the many critical minerals in the North West Minerals Province, and we want to see those resources turned into jobs and investment for Queenslanders, and that is what we will support. We have \$30 million on the table to support that. We have a detailed plan to see critical minerals extracted and processed here. We have the CopperString project, which is all about connecting Townsville to those renewable resources, to the critical minerals in the north-west, and we will continue to invest in those.

With regard to the member for Traeger's interest in the environmental obligations of Glencore in Mount Isa, I can assure him that we have some of the toughest environmental laws in the world and we will ensure every single obligation is met. If he sees any evidence that they are not meeting them, then the environment minister and the resources minister will get their agencies immediately to take action.

With regard to Glencore's proposal to capture carbon emissions in the Great Artesian Basin, they have applied for an approval to do that—as is their right—and it will go through the appropriate processes, which are very rigorous. Of course, we are concerned about the potential impact of that project on the water in the basin. It is an incredibly valuable resource for our state, and any possible impact on that or our farmers must be avoided. I am very concerned about that. I am very concerned about that project.

Ms Leahy interjected.


Mr SPEAKER: Member for Warrego!

Ms Leahy interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Warrego, you are warned under the standing orders. You need to heed my cautions. The period for question time has expired.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Further Answer to Question, Logan Hospital

 **Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (Minister for Health, Mental Health and Ambulance Services and Minister for Women) (11.07 am): In relation to questions today asked by the opposition relating to Logan Hospital, I can confirm and am advised that this internal entry was part of a normal ongoing process of measuring and mitigating potential risk at Queensland hospitals. It is a standard process to ensure our hospitals are as safe as possible. For the benefit of the House, I think it is important to clarify a few points.

This risk entry was first identified not in 2022 but in early 2016. Once again, the Leader of the Opposition and the LNP are being slippery with the truth. The entry was first entered in March 2016—not too long after the brutal sackings of frontline staff from the LNP Newman government, including 299 nurses who lost their jobs at Logan Hospital. The LNP today are now referencing updates to this internal risk entry from early 2022—at the height of Queensland battling the COVID-19 pandemic and floods across Logan. This is the smoking gun that the LNP are spinning to Queenslanders—that our hospitals were under pressure at the time of the pandemic. I can also confirm that since 2022 the risk has been downgraded. This is because of the hard work of our clinicians and the investments made by the Labor government. I am going to say that again: it is because of the hard work of our clinicians and the investment of this Labor government to address issues identified in this entry.


Yes, there are pressures on our hospital system, including Logan Hospital. As I have said time and time again, we have record presentations to our emergency departments. Two of the biggest contributing factors to these pressures, as noted by staff, are the skyrocketing demand and the lack of access to primary care. Since this internal entry in the Logan Hospital system in early 2022, we have put on additional nurses in waiting rooms to provide more care for incoming presentations; we have put on ED flow commanders and a medical commander role, an idea that came straight from our hardworking doctors and nurses; and we are bringing online hundreds more hospital beds. Our \$1 billion expansion of Logan Hospital is bringing online 318 new beds at the Logan Hospital. We have also refurbished the maternity service with state-of-the-art maternity suites. We are delivering new

operating theatres, new endoscopy suites, a new cardiac catheter lab and a new pharmacy. Since 2022, Metro South has hired over 920 additional frontline doctors, nurses, midwives and allied health professionals. That is what investing in our health system looks like.

Once again, the LNP, and in particular the Leader of the Opposition, have proven themselves to be slippery with the truth and short on detail. This is entirely misleading, Mr Speaker, and I will be writing to you about this matter.

SPEAKER'S STATEMENT


Motions of Dissent from Speaker's Rulings

 **Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, since 1860, Speakers have made rulings from the chair which form precedents to be followed into the future. These rulings are often interpretations of the standing orders or sessional orders, but on occasions rulings may deal with novel situations or matters not covered by any source of procedure.

A member may dissent from a ruling of the Speaker. Not every Westminster style parliament allows dissent from a Speaker's ruling. The rationale for dissent is to enable a member who feels aggrieved by a procedural decision an avenue of appeal to a higher authority—the Assembly itself. A dissent motion is in effect an appeal to the Assembly about the decision of the Speaker on a matter of procedure. By way of guidance for members, debate on a motion must be relevant to the decision of the Speaker.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Message from Governor

 **Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for State Development and Infrastructure, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing) (11.11 am): I present a message from Her Excellency the Governor.

Mr SPEAKER: The message from Her Excellency recommends the Economic Development and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. The contents of the message will be incorporated in the *Record of Proceedings*. I now table the message for the information of members.

MESSAGE

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL 2024

Constitution of Queensland 2001, section 68

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


A Bill for an Act to amend the Economic Development Act 2012, the Planning Act 2016 and the Public Sector Act 2022 for particular purposes

GOVERNOR

Date: 20 March 2024

Tabled paper: Message, dated 20 March 2024, from Her Excellency the Governor recommending the Economic Development and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024 [\[405\]](#).

Introduction

 **Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for State Development and Infrastructure, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing) (11.12 am): I present a bill for an act to amend the Economic Development Act 2012, the Planning Act 2016 and the Public Sector Act 2022 for particular purposes. I table the bill, the explanatory notes and a statement of compatibility with human rights. I nominate the Housing, Big Build and Manufacturing Committee to consider the bill.

Tabled paper: Economic Development and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024 [\[406\]](#).

Tabled paper: Economic Development and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024, explanatory notes [\[407\]](#).

Tabled paper: Economic Development and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024, statement of compatibility with human rights [\[408\]](#).

Queensland is growing. It was May 2018 when Queensland's population hit five million. Today, according to the Queensland Government Statistician, our population stands at 5.56 million people. This growth is just shy of relocating the entire population of Tasmania into Queensland, most of them in south-eastern Queensland, over a six-year period.

Without a doubt, people are moving to Queensland because it is the place to be due to the economic success and job opportunities this government is delivering. We have restored frontline services cut by the previous LNP government. We protected Queensland from the worst aspects of COVID, both from a health and economic perspective. Our economy has grown year on year, and we have had record low unemployment and continue to record strong interstate migration into our great state.

However, that success also brings its challenges, and one of those challenges is the pressure placed on housing supply. While there have never been so many people in Queensland in good jobs with low unemployment rates, at the same time we see pressures on housing supply and rental increases due in part to recent unprecedented interest rate rises at a national level and, sadly, some people sleeping rough. By 2046, we need around a million new homes to house our growing population.

Through our Homes for Queenslanders policy, the Miles government has made it clear that every Queenslanders should have a safe, secure and affordable place to call home. All levels of government—federal, state and local—have a role to play in achieving that objective, but so, too, does the private sector, community housing providers and financial services and real estate providers. The factors driving the housing challenges are complex and there is no simple solution to resolving those challenges.

The Miles government is committed to using every lever at our disposal to identify solutions and implement them, and this includes all government agencies. This bill is about the Miles government pulling one of those levers, building on the role of Economic Development Queensland—EDQ—the Queensland government's land use planning and property development agency, and putting it to even better use to deliver more homes for Queenslanders faster.

One of the actions of the historic housing summit was to expand the remit of EDQ, to drive the delivery of social, affordable and diverse housing in the context of urban renewal and precincts, and we are driving this initiative with EDQ-led projects in Northshore Hamilton, Carseldine and Southport. EDQ has been charged with leading actions to increase the supply of social and affordable housing. It is all part of our Homes for Queenslanders plan. Stakeholders from planning, the development industry, professional services, community housing and public agency partners have worked with us on exploring ways to do things differently to get more homes built faster.

This bill will: increase the supply of quality, social and affordable housing where it is needed across the state; build capacity of government and the housing sector to deliver tailored social and affordable housing outcomes in a flexible manner; leverage government intervention to maximise industry capability, alternative delivery models and funding sources; deliver within accelerated time scales; and require developers to deliver on social and affordable targets that are supportive of a broader statewide strategy.

To achieve this, this bill focuses on four key areas: housing supply, affordability and diversity; the introduction of a place renewal framework; EDQ's corporate structure; and operational refinements to existing functions and powers. The bill is focused on outcomes that will enable EDQ to deliver more homes faster in a way that also delivers thriving communities with jobs, services and everyday facilities close to home. This bill directly supports two of the key pillars of the Miles government's Homes for Queenslanders policy—to build more homes faster and to boost our social housing big build.

EDQ has achieved much, from land sales that translated into major private sector investment and the creation of thousands of jobs for Queenslanders to helping industry by master planning communities and streamlining approvals processes. Northshore Hamilton, for example, is Queensland's largest waterfront urban renewal development where over 3,000 homes have already been delivered. EDQ has been pivotal in working towards building a sustainable, connected precinct that will ultimately house more than 25,000 people in 14,000 homes.

PDA's are parcels of land within Queensland identified for development to deliver significant benefits to the community. Northshore is one of 35 priority development areas that have been declared across the state to unlock land supply. Caloundra South PDA on the Sunshine Coast is another. EDQ has been instrumental in supporting development of this new greenfield community and has already approved over 20,000 lots for homes, with 7,000 already delivered, and a further 13,000 either approved for development or under construction. This development has proved especially popular for first home

buyers and workers in essential services with half of the lots sold in 2023 purchased by these groups. In just the first half of 2023-24, almost 2,400 residential lots and over 1,900 apartment dwellings were approved for development in priority development areas. This is on top of the more than 2,700 residential lots and 750 apartment dwellings that were approved in 2022-23. As well as enabling housing development, these streamlined approvals will facilitate \$736 million of private sector investment and support 2,380 jobs.

EDQ is supporting hundreds of new homes in urban renewal precincts like Songbird Oxley, Parkside Yeronga and Carseldine Village, which has delivered 100 per cent net zero energy emission terrace homes, and in greenfield precincts like Greater Flagstone, Ripley Valley and Yarrabilba to name a few. They are co-investing with councils, developers and utility providers in critical infrastructure like water and roads to unlock residential lots, like at Oonoonba in the Far North and Yarrabilba in the south.

We are finding places for businesses to grow and creating new jobs for Queenslanders—for example, from the delivery by EDQ of more industrial land at the Sunshine Coast and Coolum eco industrial parks, and business innovation parks like the EDQ-led Gold Coast Health and Knowledge Precinct, Lumina. In Bowen Hills great outcomes have been achieved, including the delivery of more homes and businesses and the redevelopment of the RNA Showgrounds. There are parts of the Bowen Hills PDA where greater coordination would create more homes and places that the community can enjoy. This bill will help to do that. This bill will support EDQ to deliver an additional 1,300 dwellings over the next five years as well as approve a further 15,000 homes in priority development areas—effectively doubling the amount currently forecast.

The bill also enables EDQ to play a more meaningful role in the provision of social and affordable housing. Queensland's growth means that we need to ensure there is enough housing, and the right housing, for everyone. The bill includes amendments to the main purpose of the act to specifically include the provision of diverse housing, including social housing and affordable housing. This amendment is not only important from a practical perspective but also sends an important signal. It reinforces the role that EDQ plays in driving new housing supply across the state.

The bill will enable the Minister for Economic Development Queensland to enter directly into agreements with third parties, like community housing providers, to deliver social and affordable housing projects. This will make it easier for EDQ to lead the delivery, in partnership with the housing portfolio, of new social housing projects like the proposed new West Tower development at Southport. This supportive housing project will provide a home to hundreds of vulnerable Queenslanders, with access to onsite health and employment services.

These new powers will complement the powers of the Department of Housing, Local Government, Planning and Public Works by providing additional capacity across government to respond to the housing challenge. EDQ already sets targets for social and affordable housing within PDAs. The bill will improve the government's ability to plan the location and require delivery of these targets, while giving EDQ and industry more flexibility for how these obligations are conditioned and met to ensure the right type of housing is delivered when and where it is needed. The bill also acknowledges the role of EDQ in delivering commercial and industrial land to market which will help ensure we are building jobs as well as homes for Queenslanders.

Our next focus area for these amendments is called place renewal areas. It is a chance to bring more coordinated renewal sooner to some of Queensland's greatest development opportunities. In some of our PDAs there are multiple parties developing complex infrastructure and development projects where a more coordinated and collaborative approach will deliver a better outcome faster, in particular where there are multiple landowners and fragmented ownership. For example, the Bowen Hills priority development area is a key inner-urban site that has significant government and private sector investment. It includes major precincts like the RNA and is a transport hub, thanks to the Bowen Hills Railway Station and the new Cross River Rail Exhibition station. But there are areas within Bowen Hills where multiple development and infrastructure projects are proposed that are not progressing, for different reasons, and that would benefit from stronger coordination between government and the private sector.

This bill enables the Minister for Economic Development Queensland to declare a place renewal area within a priority development area. This will give the minister broad coordination powers to drive better outcomes. This is about finding new ways to work across industry and government to respond to challenges and seize opportunities and is another example of EDQ demonstrating innovation. The

framework will set out the vision, purpose and outcomes of the precinct and will be prepared in a collaborative way with government, community and industry stakeholders to deliver increased value and a better place-based outcome for the precinct. In addition, the bill allows the Minister for Economic Development Queensland to acquire land in a place renewal area where there is a barrier to progressing critical development and all other options have been exhausted.

Our final focus area is improving EDQ's corporate structure, accountability and governance and improving the effective and efficient function of EDQ. For example, the bill includes expanding the minister's existing directions power to include distributor-retailers and providing EDQ with similar land acquisition powers for the delivery of critical infrastructure within PDAs that are provided to other similar planning authorities like local governments and the Coordinator-General.

The bill will also require distributor-retailers and local governments to inform the Minister for Economic Development Queensland of certain infrastructure charges they have collected within a PDA and, in some cases, provide those charges to the minister so they can ensure those funds are spent on infrastructure within the area they are collected. Amendments are also included in the bill to provide flexibility around planning instruments. This includes, for example, if there has been a significant weather event within a priority development area, the ability for a temporary planning instrument to be put in place quickly to assist.

Regarding EDQ's structure, it will continue to be accountable to the Minister for Economic Development Queensland but it will no longer sit within a government department. This will create a more agile and responsive organisation that can scale up to respond to key government priorities as required and allow for approvals and processes to be further streamlined. A chief executive officer will be appointed and a new EDQ employing office will be established. EDQ staff will become employees of the employing office and all remaining and future staff will be employed under the Public Sector Act 2022, with all their rights and entitlements under it retained.

A new eight-member skill-based board accountable to the MEDQ will be appointed. The board will include two government board members—the chief executive of the minister's department and the Under Treasurer—but for the first time the board will also include external experts including an independent chair. The MEDQ's regulatory functions, such as approving development applications or declaring new PDAs, will remain with the minister, but for development projects and day-to-day operations this will give EDQ greater direct access to development industry expertise for strategic leadership.

Delivering more diverse and affordable housing in an accelerated time frame is vital for our state, is in line with our Homes for Queenslanders plan and is in direct response to the Housing Summit. EDQ will be given the powers and abilities to deliver the outcomes needed for Queensland. By implementing the changes in this bill, EDQ will be better placed to fast-track sustainable and affordable places that people can call home. I commend the bill to the House.

First Reading

Hon. G GRACE (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for State Development and Infrastructure, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing) (11.29 am): I move—

That the bill be now read a first time.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

Referral to Housing, Big Build and Manufacturing Committee

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Lister): In accordance with standing order 131, the bill is now referred to the Housing, Big Build and Manufacturing Committee.


Before I call the Clerk to read the next order of the day, I remind members in the House of members who have been warned. This might take some time. They are the members for Ninderry, Currumbin, Maryborough, Chatsworth, Nanango, Toowoomba South, Buderim, Bonney, Toowoomba North, Mudgeeraba, Kawana, Moggill, McConnel, Waterford, Capalaba, Broadwater, Callide, Coomera, Everton and Warrego.

CASINO CONTROL AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Resumed from 19 March (see p. 712), on motion of Mrs D'Ath—

That the bill be now read a second time.


 **Mr ANDREW** (Mirani—PHON) (11.30 am), continuing: Nowhere does the bill acknowledge that gambling is, in fact, a fun and relaxing activity for many people. It is not my cup of tea, but many people feel otherwise, and this government is certainly no stranger to its economic benefits. Last year the Queensland government raked in a whopping \$1.9 billion in gambling taxes. Addiction is an extremely serious issue, but it is certainly not limited to gambling. Millions of Australians show signs of alcohol dependency and there is no doubt that alcoholism ruins lives and families just as much as—if not more than—gambling. How long will it be before we hear calls for legally imposed limits on alcohol? That is another question.

Over-regulation almost always proves counterproductive to society at large. This gambling bill is running against the backdrop of the toughest restrictions on our civil liberties and individual rights in our state's history. We should be trying to identify ways to become a freer society, not a more paternalistic one. Practical solutions, not the blunt tools of technocratic overreach should be made the focus of the government policies and programs. As the Queensland government continues to move towards digital service delivery, we should be careful about using real problems to justify the introduction of a mandatory and automated payment system which invariably comes with strings attached.

As the bill's mandatory carded play regulations are rolled out, we will see casinos all over the country collecting more and more data on their patrons, which is exactly what this type of technology was made for: building databases. All over the country the government has everyone building these databases to store as much highly sensitive and personal information as they can lay their hands on. There is absolutely no reason to put someone in a database like this. People are put in a database because they are a criminal.

If people agree to a company's mandatory card system when visiting a casino, it should be limited to a specific use. Agreeing to participate in the company's mandatory card system should absolutely be limited to a specific use. Consent is for a single use. It is not transferrable to other companies, agencies or jurisdictions. This is a human right and civil liberties issue of massive importance. What happens to the information after it has been uploaded and shared with all these shadowy third parties and unnamed stakeholder partners? The public are not being told, but they have a right to know. What safeguards and limitations are being put in place for all these data-sharing arrangements? None—nothing that I could actually see.

As I said earlier today, it is time we started thinking more critically about the issue of rushing to these new technologies without properly assessing their codes and costs and the society-wide impacts.

 **Ms BUSH** (Cooper—ALP) (11.33 am): I rise also to make a contribution to the casino control bill. Before I get to the substance of the bill I am inclined to comment on the contributions made by those opposite in yesterday's session. We can see already where they are going with the criticism and the complaints that the bill has taken too long and it has not gone far enough. Does anyone in this House seriously think that this bill would be before this House if those opposite were in power?

They did not introduce one piece of legislation when they were in power relating to casino regulation—sorry, I will correct the record. They did introduce one piece of legislation relating to casino regulation. They introduced the Liquor and Gaming (Red Tape Reduction) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill, which according to the explanatory notes was about reducing the regulatory burden on the liquor and gaming industry. If anybody thinks that they would be moving on this in the way that we are, they would be incorrect.

Those opposite are saying that it has taken too long for this bill to come before this House. What they are not saying is which bills they would have pushed back in order to bring this one bill forward. Would they have pushed back our nation-leading coercive control bill, leaving Queensland women less safe? Would they have pushed back our midwife-to-baby ratio legislation? We know how they feel about nurses and midwives. The shadow minister for health came in here and referred to regional nurses as 'duds'. We know that when they were in government they sacked over 4,000 healthcare workers and they have not ruled out doing that again. Maybe it was that piece of legislation they would have pushed back to introduce this piece of legislation.

Actually, I know what it would have been. I think it would have been our legislation that we introduced into this House and debated to provide women in the regions greater control over their reproductive rights. We know how the Leader of the Opposition feels about that. Those opposite voted against giving women the choice to access early and safe termination of pregnancy. The Leader of the Opposition has not ruled out winding back the laws on safe termination of pregnancy in Queensland if he were to become Premier in October, which absolutely terrifies me.

Mr WEIR: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order under standing order 118(b). There is nothing I have heard so far that is relevant to the bill that is being debated at the moment.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Lister): I have to agree with the member for Condamine. You have strayed quite a long way from the substance of the bill. I would invite you to return to the long title, member for Cooper.

Ms BUSH: It is about priorities and which piece of legislation we would be debating if we were not debating this bill. I am terrified for all women in Queensland about what those opposite would do if they were to get into power in October. All women in Queensland ought to be terrified, too. Those opposite who made their contribution yesterday, which I am directly responding to now in my contribution, said that this bill did not go far enough. Let's not forget they never did anything to address casino regulation when they were in power, so do we really think that the Leader of the Opposition would have a position on this?

Mr WEIR: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order, again under 118(b), relevance to the bill.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Cooper, you have continued to stray away from the substance of the bill. I understand you are responding to remarks made earlier in the debate, but it is important that you do remain relevant. I would invite you to return to relevance.

Ms BUSH: I will address that. The point I will make is that we would not be debating this bill in this House under those opposite. It is only a Labor government that is willing and able to take on gambling reform in Queensland.

Gambling is a major public policy issue in Australia. It affects individuals, families and communities with estimates that Australians lose \$25 billion each year in gambling losses. Australia has the unenviable reputation of representing the largest per capita losses in the world. I want to jump straight in here and acknowledge Tim Costello, the former CEO of World Vision Australia and chief advocate for the Alliance for Gambling Reform, who made submissions to the committee which I am sure we would all agree were incredibly helpful. I will quote something he said in the public hearing that illustrated the very serious nature of Australia's relationship with gambling. He said—

... the American blind spot of guns is perplexing to us. The rest of the world looks at us and cannot believe the level of gambling losses. It is our blind spot ... I use the guns analogy because what happened here was effectively like the guns analogy. You have a second amendment, which is that every American has the right to a ball and musket rifle. That second amendment ... became semiautomatics and the right to carry them. What happened with pokies is that they went from coin operated and pulling a lever, where they did ... hardly any damage at all. Once they were digital they became like the semiautomatic rifle and regulation just did not keep up with the freedom to play.

The amendments contained in this bill are aimed at minimising the destructive impact of problem gambling and criminal influences inside casinos and I am proud to support them. The bill will facilitate the implementation of recommendations 1 to 11 within the Gotterson review, including introducing mandatory carded play; implementing cashless gambling for transactions over \$1,000; mandatory and binding precommitment, including play and break limits; providing for the collection of mandatory carded play data and making this data available to inform research and casino supervision; and establishing a compulsory code of conduct for the sector. Gotterson's recommendation that the Casino Control Act be amended to reflect these requirements, which are consistent with enhanced integrity, probity and harm minimisation as well as increased public confidence, is enabling us to introduce some really important reforms today in Queensland.

Arguably, the most important aspect of the bill provides a framework for carded play, cash limits and precommitment, play and break limits. This framework is in the form of a regulation that may prescribe a range of matters. The key features around full, mandatory and binding precommitment that includes play and break limits will have a significant impact on reducing gambling harm. We heard during the public hearings about the need to create friction in the passage of play for those gambling, and 'friction' was explained to us as a level of restriction that makes it difficult to be harmed. In terms of carded play we heard you can add friction and reduce harm caused to others by adding these additional steps, so making it harder for people to gamble easily, to lose big and to exceed limits and lose quickly.


This creates opportunities for gamblers to pause and consider, 'What's my limit, what can I afford to lose and what's the impact on my relationships and my life?' These steps create friction in the process and enable players to make really different choices.

The bill provides that a regulation may prescribe a maximum limit on the number of cash transactions that a person may carry out in a prescribed casino within a 24-hour period. Currently the Casino Control Act does not require the collection of player data, and we heard that that is a real issue. Accordingly, the Gotterson review recommended that player cards collect data on things like the time that players participate, their spending, times of play, wins and losses. The review further recommended that data collected should be used for the purposes of research and to inform casino staffing levels and the proper supervision of casino activities. The bill will make those amendments. This was supported by the Alliance, which noted that the evidence often lacking in gambling research is due to independent researchers and governments not being able to access a deidentified gambler's data. It strongly supported the provision of deidentified data from the card system being made available.

Finally, the bill seeks to remove stigmatising language like 'problem gambler' from the act. This was again supported by the Alliance, which shared with the committee—

Gambling ... causes everything from increased domestic violence, financial distress, mental health problems, anxiety, depression—everything through to suicide. We know there is significant harm from suicide related to gambling ... All of those things are better served if we are approaching this from a public health perspective that accepts it is a harmful product, we should be mindful of the language we use around this, and it is not about blaming the individual. It is about acknowledging that Australia, as the country with the biggest losses in the world by a mile compared to the next country, is obviously experiencing a normalisation of gambling that does cause a great deal of harm as well.

The work to reform gambling and to improve our national picture on this is far from over, but we are taking another important step in the right direction through this bill. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr JANETZKI** (Toowoomba South—LNP) (11.43 am): I was not intending to speak on the Casino Control and Other Legislation Amendment Bill, but after listening to the contributions of those opposite yesterday and again today from the member for Cooper, who just spent 4½ minutes talking about this bill but on somewhat of a completely different subject matter, I decided I wanted to speak. Those on the opposite side of the House have left out a significant part of the history of why we are standing here today debating this bill. I am going to come in particular to the member for Redcliffe, the Attorney-General, but what I wanted to put before the House again—and we heard it well articulated yesterday by the shadow Attorney-General and the shadow youth justice minister—is why we are here debating this bill.

This is the second tranche of legislation. The first bill was passed in 2022. What we saw then again was, as is so common with this government, 27 pages of amendments dropped into the House about half an hour before the debate on the second reading beginning, so we had a traditional approach by the Labor government. However, the House needs to be reminded of what it took for the government to reach that stage, because the government was dragged kicking and screaming to undertake a review of this important area of regulatory oversight in the very first place. Before it was dragged kicking and screaming to undertake a review and commission the Gotterson review—we saw it through other jurisdictions in Australia with Bergin, Finkelstein, Bell and Owen, all the eminent QCs undertaking reviews of Star's activities throughout the nation—this government turned a blind eye to all of it for too long.

Before I come to the particulars of what is in the bill and what the Labor government has done in relation to it, it is worth recalling first the seriousness of the behaviour that Star was engaging in in terms of what was actually happening under the unwatchful eye of the Attorney-General and the OLGR for all those years here in Queensland and around the nation. What was Star doing? It was bringing in illegal Chinese junket operators and their clients and Star casinos were providing customers with China UnionPay facilities. That worked around Chinese regulations and facilitated the gambling of \$900 million across the nation which was all noted—deceptively noted—as hotel fees or hotel expenses. That is the seriousness of the behaviour that was across the nation and in Queensland under the eye of the Attorney-General, the member for Redcliffe, and the regulatory regime of the OLGR.

When the government was finally dragged kicking and screaming to undertake the Gotterson review, we then saw that the Gotterson review was severely curtailed in its terms of reference—severely curtailed—and the terms of reference were significantly pulled back from what we had seen in other jurisdictions around the nation. It is worth remembering what the Gotterson review could not review, and that included the investigation of the role of the regulator, what the regulator knew, what it did not

know, what it should have done and what it should not have done. The review had no power to compel statements from those who might have something relevant to say to that review and it had no ability to protect whistleblowers in that review process. That review process was undertaken and we had the first tranche of legislation in 2022, and here we have the second tranche of legislation which seeks to enact recommendations 1 to 11 of the Gotterson review.

My question for all of this time has been: what was the Attorney-General doing? What was the OLGR doing? The Gotterson review could not invest the regulatory oversight and the regulatory environment, but it is a fundamental regulatory oversight responsibility of the state government. The review went nowhere near the regulatory oversight review that was necessary, so what was the Attorney-General doing? I point to paragraph 560 of the Gotterson review in particular. His Honour did not go into the regulatory review but noted the tension in particular between those that seek to regulate it and the gaming revenues that come from it. In particular, at paragraph 560 he noted—

... there is a real risk of Governments experiencing a tension between the duty to regulate casinos strictly and the revenue they derive from casinos ...

There is a clear tension. His Honour noted it and the review, unfortunately, was not given the broadest terms of reference that it could have had to investigate those matters. What in particular was the Attorney-General doing? We know one thing for sure: thankfully, because of the reporting of the *Australian*, there were a whole bunch of different issues that had been raised by the reporting of Michael McKenna and Sarah Elks in the *Australian* as to the conduct of the Labor government and the tension between the regulatory oversight and in fact personal interests.

The attorney-general of the time received a personal fundraiser from an entity that she was regulating. Who can forget the gathering of former Labor attorneys-general for a fundraiser? It was a great debate. It was personally paid for by staff and donated to the personal fundraising abilities of the member for Redcliffe. That is the kind of tension that—

Mrs D'ATH: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to two points of order. One is on relevance and the second is that I take personal offence at what the member is saying. The member is well aware that it has been investigated—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Lister): This is not an opportunity to prosecute an argument. Take your seat.

Mrs D'ATH: I will be writing to the Speaker.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Toowoomba South, firstly, the member has taken personal offence. Will you withdraw?

Mr JANETZKI: I withdraw.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: On the matter of relevance, am I to understand that you are speaking about the Gotterson review—

Mr JANETZKI: Yes.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:—and the bill is concerned with the implementation of the—

Honourable members interjected.

Mr Smith interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Member for Bundaberg, are you on a warning at the moment? You are now. I will not tolerate levity and noise during a ruling. Member for Toowoomba South, can you assure us that you will be returning to the long title of the bill? If you are referring to the Gotterson review then I will allow that, provided you do not stray too far.

Mr JANETZKI: Yes, Deputy Speaker. This bill is entirely about the regulation of casinos so I would have thought that the activities of the attorney-general of the day were directly relevant to the regulation of casinos in this state. His Honour said—

Mrs D'ATH: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The member is now misleading parliament.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Toowoomba South, please resume your seat.

Mrs D'ATH: This is a matter of privilege suddenly arising. I was not the attorney-general at the time and the member is well aware of that. I will be writing to the Speaker.


Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Attorney-General, I have just ruled that you are not to prosecute an argument during a point of order. That is the second time. I am going to warn you under the standing orders.

Mr JANETZKI: The conduct of any attorney-general, particularly the member for Redcliffe at the time that she was attorney-general, is directly relevant to the regulation, but I will move on. What else was happening at the time in relation to how this important area of legislative oversight was being regulated? We know that during that period Anacta was appointed. I go to the Coaldrake review and Peter Coaldrake's findings where he talked about the conflict that was obvious between lobbyists who were acting for clients seeking to influence government and then actually running election campaigns for the government of the day. There was a clear—

Mr de BRENNI: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The standing orders are quite clear. Standing order 234 relates to imputations and improper motives. Notwithstanding that, I cannot see how the member for Toowoomba South's trip down memory lane is at all relevant to the debate. I ask you to rule in relation to standing order 236 and bring him back to the matters of substance contained in the bill. He did say earlier that he would get to that at some stage. He has one minute and 54 seconds left and we would like to see that happen.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Leader of the House. I note that members have the capacity to rise and seek a withdrawal if there is an imputation that they object to. I do not believe that the member has strayed from normal practice. However, you have been sailing a bit close to the wind, member for Toowoomba South. Please make sure that you remain relevant. In fact, we have now reached the expiry of the time for this stage of the debate so I ask you to resume your seat.

Under the provisions of the business program agreed to by the House, the time limit for this stage of the bill has expired. I call the Attorney-General to reply to the second reading debate.

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence) (11.53 am), in reply: I acknowledge and thank all honourable members for their contributions during the debate of the Casino Control and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023. Not all of them are honourable. The bill introduces amendments to implement the remaining 11 recommendations of the *External review of the Queensland operations of the Star Entertainment Group Limited*, conducted by the Hon. Robert Gotterson AO, KC. These amendments are aimed at minimising gambling harm and reducing the risk of money laundering and criminal influence in Queensland casinos, as well as increasing the accountability of those who have the privilege of holding a casino licence in this state. The bill also includes a number of other amendments to enhance the casino regulatory framework and ensure it remains fit for purpose.

I will now address some of the matters raised by honourable members during the debate. Opposition members have questioned this government's commitment to gambling harm minimisation. That is somewhat ironic given that it was the Palaszczuk government that re-established the Queensland Household Gambling Survey, which was axed by those opposite when they were in government. That survey provides the government with data to gain an accurate picture of gambling activity in this state and inform harm minimisation strategies.

I would add that the topic of this debate is a bill that provides for reforms such as mandatory carded play and mandatory precommitment at all Queensland casinos. These are, it must be said, significant reforms. In fact, it is no exaggeration to say that the reforms presented in this bill are among the most significant steps taken to reduce gambling harm in any jurisdiction in this country in the history of gambling regulation. These reforms sit amongst some of the decisions of previous Labor governments in this space, such as to ban pre 10 am gaming in the suburbs.

The bill presents a flexible approach to the implementation of the reforms. Reforms of this nature require not only legislative development but also technical and procedural development. There are a range of considerations that must be taken into account and that is why a regulation-based approach is not only necessary but optimal. The regulation-based approach will not only allow the reforms to more fluidly adapt to changes in gaming technology that may become available in the future but will also allow the reforms to be implemented as soon as practical.

For example, the bill is drafted in such a way that the application of mandatory carded play and related reforms, such as mandatory precommitment, to gaming machines need not await the greater technical and procedural work required to apply those reforms to other casino activities. The proposed legislation is flexible enough to apply those reforms to chip purchases and redemptions should application to table games be unduly delayed. The proposed legislation is also flexible enough to allow these reforms to be applied to different casinos at different times.

As the Department of Justice and Attorney-General noted in its responses to the then Legal Affairs and Safety Committee, it is expected that the Star casinos will be very well advanced in the development of the necessary technology and procedures, and the government will be seeking to implement the reforms to the Star casino gaming machines as soon as possible, thus applying the reforms to almost 80 per cent of casino gaming machine activity in the first instance. Smaller regional casinos may require longer to implement the reforms. It is those casinos for which the department suggested the absolute latest implementation date of December 2025, in line with the default dates that applied to the implementation of similar reforms in some other jurisdictions, and this is evident from a plain reading of the committee's transcript.

The opposition has again raised issues in relation to the Gotterson review, many of which the former attorney-general has already responded to during the debate of a previous bill in this House. Firstly, I will reiterate that this government was not slow to act on the issues raised by the media reports into the Star. In fact, the government proactively introduced a first tranche of legislative amendments into parliament, via the Casino Control and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022, in response to casino integrity failures that were identified through inquiries conducted in other jurisdictions.

The 2022 bill represented a pre-emptive examination of the Casino Control Act 1982 to identify how the act could address those failures if similar allegations were substantiated in Queensland. The 2022 bill, which was subsequently passed, provided the regulator with greater visibility over casino operations through enhanced information gathering powers and through obligations on the casino operator to self-report breaches and actively cooperate with the regulator. While the 2022 bill was before the House, the government commissioned the Hon. Robert Gotterson AO, KC to conduct an external review of the Star's Queensland casino operations in response to allegations raised specifically in relation to the Star.

The Gotterson review was informed in part by evidence gathered by the Office of Liquor and Gaming Regulation as part of the regulator's own investigation into the Star. Mr Gotterson acknowledged this investigation at paragraph 122 of his report and stated that the material 'afforded a useful basis from which to inquire into the issues identified as being of particular interest and better to understand them'. It is understood that the Star's acceptance of OLGR's findings substantially truncated the length and complexity of the Gotterson review.

As they did in the debate over the 2022 bill, those opposite suggested Mr Gotterson had limited powers and lacked, for example, the power to take sworn testimony and protect witnesses. As the previous attorney-general advised in 2022, Mr Gotterson in fact had all the power of a commission of inquiry. He not only had that but also used the power to protect witnesses when he issued three non-publication orders, pursuant to section 16 of the Commissions of Inquiry Act 1950, to ensure that the identities of witnesses A, B and C and persons 1 to 5 were not disclosed. Mr Gotterson's powers were such that he was able to compel witnesses to produce statements and appear before his review, and he used these powers on three Star personnel.

This bill further enhances those inquiry powers, including to ensure they are used on a periodic basis in respect of all Queensland casino licences at least once every five years. The bill also ensures these periodic reviews may examine directly the suitability of each casino entity for a licence to be associated or connected with the management and operation of a hotel-casino complex or casino.

Further, the member for Clayfield again referred to the extent of Mr Gotterson's terms of reference and his ability to examine the regulator. Mr Gotterson did not request an extension to his terms of reference, even when asked to do so by the member for Clayfield. He did, however, examine the form of the regulator and scrutiny by it of casino operations in his report. Mr Gotterson considered that with the additional powers conferred upon the regulator by the bill introduced by the previous attorney-general in 2022, coupled with his recommendations as implemented through this bill, the existing structure of the regulator will be adequate to the task. He found no sufficient justification to change fundamentally the structure of the regulator in Queensland.

Mr Gotterson acknowledged that the powers and resources of a regulator are critical to its effectiveness. This government has now provided for significant enhancements to the regulator's powers through two casino bills to ensure it remains appropriately empowered to fulfil its functions. I remind those opposite that, when they say the bill was delayed, it came out of committee in February. We are now in mid-March and we are debating this bill. I would not call that a delay.

The casino supervision levy as proposed in this bill will ensure the regulator is not only suitably empowered but also appropriately resourced to provide enhanced casino regulation without any additional cost to the taxpayer.

The member for Clayfield also raised the issue of influence over government decisions relating to casinos. We just heard the member for Toowoomba South say the same thing. As the member for Clayfield is aware, Mr Gotterson states in his report that there is no suggestion that regulatory decisions related to casinos were ones in which the minister or government of the day had improperly intervened. Obviously, this is an important point of the Gotterson review which those opposite have failed to address when they like to keep quoting that review.

This government moved, in fact, to introduce legislation that would remove the operation of regulatory restrictions and compensation clauses to ensure the state legislature is not fettered in its ability to impose controls on casinos. It then used legislation it had introduced to fine Star \$100 million and appoint a special manager to oversee casino operations while also suspending the casino licence for 90 days subject to progress towards a remediation plan.

I also find it interesting that the member for Clayfield is concerned about the influence of the gambling industry on government decisions when the member himself listed one night's accommodation, among other things, at Jupiter's hotel and casino, now Star Gold Coast. I might add that this was while the Newman government had commenced talks over a second casino in Brisbane's CBD—another thing they failed to talk about in their contributions.

The current bill also increases the penalties for approximately 60 specific breaches of the Casino Control Act to the extent that Queensland will have the toughest penalties for casino entities of any jurisdiction in Australia. These reforms speak for themselves. This government is tough on those who would abuse the privilege of a casino licence. Anyone seeking to influence this government towards a gentler approach to casino disciplinary action has failed significantly.

The member for Clayfield also again referred to a lack of disclosure about casino investigations, as he did in 2022. As the previous attorney-general advised this House during debate of the Casino Control and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022—

OLGR has on a number of occasions released information under the current act, including information about the number of investigations, resulting actions and a summary of the nature of those investigations.

Like the previous attorney-general, I, too, am happy to let the public know the outcomes of suitability investigations and other investigations once they are completed. The Office of Liquor and Gaming Regulation, like any regulator, does not release information about ongoing investigations as this may be prejudicial to the outcome of any prosecution or suitability determination that arises from the investigation.

Those opposite are also concerned that too little is being spent on gambling harm minimisation programs. They will be pleased to know that the supervision levy provided for in this bill will be used to fund not only the regulation and oversight of casinos but also programs aimed at minimising the harm from gambling in Queensland. This use of the supervision levy goes beyond Mr Gotterson's recommendation. It will ensure casinos, as the primary beneficiaries of virtually all forms of legalised gambling in Queensland, contribute to harm minimisation across the board. Gambling harm minimisation programs can therefore be enhanced, again without considerable additional cost to the taxpayer.

As is noted in the detailed response to the Queensland Audit Office report on minimising gambling harm, the Department of Justice and Attorney-General is also well progressed in a range of harm minimisation initiatives. Some actions will be subject to government consideration and funding, but other actions that contribute to desired harm minimisation outcomes continue in the meantime.

The member for Mirani is of the view that the details of the mandatory code of conduct should be in primary legislation rather than in subordinate legislation. The bill provides that a code of conduct may be about safer gambling, the appropriate conduct of casino operations and the implementation of appropriate practices, systems and procedures relating to governance, accountability and integrity. It is important that the code keep pace with community expectations and is responsive to changes in the industry, including new technologies and research into gambling harm. It is easier for the code to be amended as and when the need arises if it is prescribed in subordinate legislation.

The member for Mirani raised concerns about the impact that mandatory carded play will have on privacy, given a person's carded play data will be collected. Identity linked player cards are essential for a number of reasons: firstly, to mitigate the risks of money laundering and terrorism financing; secondly, to prevent under-age gambling; thirdly, to facilitate mandatory precommitment; fourthly, to

ensure players abide by the daily cash limits; and, fifthly, to assist with the exclusion of people with gambling problems. Although the bill requires identifiable and non-identifiable player card information to be provided to the chief executive, only non-identifiable information may be shared with a third party for the purpose of research into gambling harm. Identifiable player card information received by the chief executive is protected under the existing provisions of the Casino Control Act, which prohibits the disclosure of confidential information. Only some limited exceptions apply. For example, confidential information may be disclosed if permitted by law.

It should also be noted that the bill allows for a regulation to be made about the collection of information when issuing or using player cards and the use, storage, transfer or disclosure of player card information. The government intends to undertake consultation on the regulations to support the introduction of mandatory carded play and precommitment. The consultation will address any additional protections that should be prescribed to ensure the safety and security of players' personal information. These are, as I have already said, significant reforms which speak for themselves about this government's commitment to gambling harm minimisation.

I once again thank members of the House for their contributions during debate of the Casino Control and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. 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 122, as read, agreed to.

Third Reading

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence) (12.08 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. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence) (12.09 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.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Before I call the minister, I remind members of the House of those members who are on a warning. They are the members for Ninderry, Currumbin, Maryborough, Chatsworth, Nanango, Toowoomba South, Buderim, Bonney, Toowoomba North, Mudgeeraba, Kawana, Moggill, McConnel, Waterford, Capalaba, Broadwater, Callide, Coomera, Everton, Warrego, Bundaberg and Redcliffe. Did I miss anybody?

WORK HEALTH AND SAFETY AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Resumed from 30 November 2023 (see p. 3912).

Second Reading

 **Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for State Development and Infrastructure, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing) (12.10 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a second time.

The Miles government is fundamentally committed to protecting the health and safety of Queensland workers. Every single worker deserves to be safe at work and then go home safe to their families. Workers sell their labour, not their health. I am immensely proud to be part of a government

that has consistently led the nation in strengthening work health and safety laws. I am pleased that this bill ensures Queensland continues to lead the way in the critically important area of work health and safety.

The bill implements legislative recommendations from the independent *Review of the Work Health and Safety Act 2011: final report* as well as the national *Review of the model work health and safety laws: final report* conducted by Ms Marie Boland. Before turning to the contents of the bill, I would like to extend my sincere thanks to the independent reviewers: Mr Craig Allen, former deputy director-general of the Office of Industrial Relations; Mr Charles Massy, a barrister specialising in industrial relations and employment law; and Ms Deirdre Swan, former deputy president of the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission. I again acknowledge the careful consideration the reviewers gave to stakeholder views and express my thanks for their thorough examination of the issues raised.

I would also like to thank the members of both the former Education, Employment and Training Committee for its consideration of the bill and the new Education, Employment, Training and Skills Committee, which tabled its report on the bill on 23 February 2024. Finally, I extend my sincere thanks to those who made submissions to the committee and those who appeared as witnesses as part of the committee's inquiry. I am very pleased that registered unions and employer groups could find common ground on measures to protect the health and safety of Queensland workers.

The committee made five recommendations, with the first being that the bill be passed. The committee made a further four recommendations relating to administrative actions the Office of Industrial Relations can take to assist with implementing the bill. I agree with the committee's recommendations. I table the government's response to the committee's report.

Tabled paper: Education, Employment, Training and Skills Committee: Report No. 2, 57th Parliament—Work Health and Safety and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023, government response [\[409\]](#).

I am proud that this government was the first state in Australia to introduce industrial manslaughter provisions into work health and safety laws. On 17 October 2023, acting on recommendation 31 of the Work Health and Safety Act review, I requested the independent Work Health and Safety Prosecutor to undertake a review of the scope and application of Queensland's industrial manslaughter provisions.

I received the findings of this review in February 2024—just last month. The review included consultation with registered industrial organisations, affected persons, other consultative bodies and the legal profession. I thank the prosecutor, Simon Nicholson, for his diligent efforts in conducting this review. The review made three recommendations on Queensland's industrial manslaughter provisions. The Work Health and Safety Prosecutor recommended that the industrial manslaughter provisions be amended to:

- expressly include a bystander whose death is caused by the negligent conduct of a person conducting a business or undertaking;
- clarify that multiple parties in a contractual chain can be held accountable; and
- allow an alternative verdict to be found if industrial manslaughter could not be satisfied beyond a reasonable doubt.

The government is currently considering these recommendations.

As a result of this review, I will move amendments during consideration in detail to remove clauses in the bill which had proposed to extend the category 1 offence to include the fault element of negligence in both the Work Health and Safety Act and the Safety in Recreational Water Activities Act. Removal of these clauses from the bill allows the government to take a comprehensive and holistic approach to its consideration of the Work Health and Safety Prosecutor's recommendations. For clarity, the government intends to progress the extension of the category 1 offence, but we want to ensure they are progressed consistently with any changes to industrial manslaughter laws arising from the prosecutor's review.

As a proud former union official, I know firsthand the critical role health and safety representatives play in effectively representing workers and improving safety in the workplace. In performing this critical role, health and safety representatives need to be well trained and well supported. Work health and safety representatives accessing appropriate training tools and information is central to the four committee recommendations directed to the Office of Industrial Relations.

In summary, the committee recommended that the Office of Industrial Relations:

- develop guidance and resource materials to assist health and safety representatives, particularly in relation to exercising their powers;

- consider how industry-specific knowledge can be incorporated in health and safety representative training, particularly for high-risk industries such as construction, transport, manufacturing and health;
- consult with registered employer or employee organisations as part of its review of health and safety representative training; and
- consider undertaking an awareness campaign to ensure relevant organisations and workers are aware of the changes in the bill.

I welcome these practical recommendations from the committee.

I will now expand on two important features of the bill related to the training of health and safety representatives. First, the bill implements a recommendation from the Boland review to allow workers to choose their preferred health and safety representative training course. The Boland review found the choice of the health and safety training was often an area of contention which could hinder or delay access to this crucial work.

The changes in the bill will allow health and safety representatives to undertake the required training without delay and includes a streamlined resolution process where there is no agreement on the training course. I am pleased to note this also implements a government election commitment.

Second, the bill removes a financial disincentive experienced by many workers attending health and safety training, as the reviewers found many workers did not receive equivalent wages while undertaking those vital courses. The bill clarifies that health and safety representatives will be fully compensated for attending training, as if they had been at work. Importantly, for part-time workers, this means payment for any additional hours required to attending the training. Well-trained health and safety representatives benefit workers, the person conducting a business and the wider community.

These two provisions will not only reduce disputation around the areas of choice of trainer and the remuneration paid for periods of training but just as importantly create a smoother pathway to access training in the first place. For health and safety representatives to be effective, they need to be fully informed of health and safety issues in their workplace. The bill ensures health and safety representatives are empowered to obtain relevant health and safety information directly from the person conducting a business or undertaking and from the regulator.

The bill also ensures health and safety representatives are aware of and can accompany both inspectors and entry permit holders at the work site. These changes are vital in ensuring health and safety representatives are completely integrated into the identification and resolution of safety issues in the workplace and can fully perform their crucial role as covered in the act.

The Work Health and Safety Act currently empowers a health and safety representative to direct a worker to cease unsafe work where there is a reasonable concern that the health and safety of a worker is at serious risk from immediate or imminent exposure to a hazard. The bill clarifies the exercise of this power, requiring a written direction to cease work to be issued directly to the person conducting the business or undertaking. The written notice will provide clarity on the serious risk identified and support resolution of the issue, as well as provide assurance that the direction given has satisfied the required preconditions, therefore making it a lawful direction. Importantly, health and safety representatives retain the power to issue a cease work direction to a worker where the immediate exposure to risk is so serious that prior consultation or a written notice is not reasonable.

In recognising the great value of health and safety representatives in improving safety in the workplace, the reviewers recommended a range of measures to promote and encourage the take-up of these roles. The bill strengthens and promotes the role of health and safety representatives through:

- the requirement for employers to notify their workers that they can request the election of a health and safety representative; details of the role, powers and functions of health and safety representatives; and the process and time frames for electing them;
- prohibiting employers from intentionally hindering, preventing or discouraging workers from making a request about facilitating the election of, or discouraging the election of, a health and safety representative; and
- setting out new processes and time frames for work group negotiations, including an obligation on employers to negotiate with workers in the formation of work groups and the development of a streamlined dispute resolution process.

No-one should be punished directly or indirectly for raising health and safety concerns that impact themselves or others. In fact, workers should be encouraged to do just that. The bill provides greater protections to Queensland workers who raise their voice to make their workplace safer by introducing a new circumstance in which discriminatory conduct matters can be brought under the act to align more closely with the Industrial Relations Act. The amendment to the definition of 'discriminatory conduct'

captures situations in which a worker is treated less favourably than other workers; for example, on the basis that the worker has been, or seeks to be, involved in health and safety issues in the workplace. The government firmly believes that workers have a right to raise health and safety issues in the workplace and not fear reprisal for doing so. I am pleased the bill provides these safeguards.

The reviewers recognised the crucial role that not only health and safety representatives but also entry permit holders play in workplace safety. The bill clarifies the powers of entry permit holders to ensure that, like health and safety representatives, they are appropriately equipped and empowered to perform their role. These changes are intended to minimise disputation by making it clear what entry permit holders can do when exercising their rights at a workplace. The bill clarifies that entry permit holders may enter a workplace to exercise their statutory right to investigate a suspected contravention of the act prior to giving notice and that any formal defect or irregularity does not invalidate the notice. It has never been the intention that minor administrative errors should frustrate workers' rights. Sensible outcomes should prevail. Further, the bill clarifies that while an entry permit holder remains at the workplace they are not required to give an additional 24 hours notice to view relevant documents or consult workers related to the suspected contravention.

The bill also clarifies that an entry permit holder is permitted to remain at a workplace for the time necessary to complete the exercise of their statutory powers subject to the limitation that such rights can only be exercised during the usual working hours at the workplace. This change ensures consistency with amendments made to the trespass offence in the Summary Offences Act.

The reviewers identified a need for clarification with respect to entry permit holders and requests for them to comply with a work health and safety requirement. The bill clarifies that a request is not reasonable if it would unduly delay or unreasonably hinder or obstruct that permit holder from exercising a right of entry. Such an example could be requiring offsite induction at a location far from where entry is sought or excessive or unnecessary usage of exclusion zones. Again, sensible outcomes should prevail.

The reviewers recognised that for entry permit holders to be effective, like health and safety representatives they need to be fully informed of health and safety issues in their workplace. The bill ensures entry permit holders are able to receive information from improvement notices, prohibition notices or non-disturbance notices issued by an inspector under the act. The independent review of the Work Health and Safety Act found—

Registered unions, with well-established eligibility rules, have a recognised interest in regulating the performance of the way in which work is performed within their area of coverage.

The independent review also concluded—

... registered unions have a longstanding interest in WHS matters and have demonstrated expertise in those matters. That expertise is of value to both workers and PCBU's.

This bill amends a number of definitions to clarify representational rights for workers when it comes to health and safety. In particular, definitions for the terms 'union', 'suitable entity' and 'excluded entity' are included in the bill to ensure the workplace health and safety interests of workers are only represented by entities subject to regulation and registration under the Industrial Relations Act or the Fair Work (Registered Organisations) Act. These changes are consistent with amendments made to the Industrial Relations Act in 2022.

As I have said in this House previously, the primacy of registered organisations has been a central feature of industrial relations systems throughout Australia for generations. This has been consistently acknowledged and implemented through statutory representative rights, obligations and standing for registered organisations. Organisations registered under Queensland and Commonwealth industrial relations legislation are subject to consistent regulatory oversight and accountability, including: rigorous reporting requirements to ensure these organisations are transparent in their dealings; and being accountable to members and able to demonstrate good governance practices. In contrast, unregulated entities are not subject to these rigorous, transparent and accountability registration requirements. This bill reduces the risk of workers and employers being misled or confused about an entity's standing to represent them under work health and safety and industrial relations legislation. However, it should be noted that workers can still call on an expert to assist them in relation to a work health and safety issue provided they are not regarded as excluded entities. Examples include allied health practitioners such as physiotherapists and occupational therapists.

I am proud of the role registered unions and employer organisations have played in helping to keep Queensland workers safe; however, some workers still experience impediments when requesting union involvement in their workplace. The reviewers found—

... many workers who are members of registered unions are reticent to tell their employer that they are a member of a registered union, or that they have sought the registered union's intervention in the workplace.

The reviewers also noted strong evidence that 'registered unions are the most vital source of support for HSRs and that safety outcomes are closely tied to union involvement'; therefore, several of their recommendations recognise that relevant registered unions should be involved in the discussions about those issues as a party principal and not just as a mere representative. To ensure all Queensland workers can get the representation they need, even when they feel unable to identify themselves as union members to their employer, the bill provides for a relevant union to be a party principal to negotiations regarding health and safety representatives, work groups and as a party to the health and safety issue.


Lastly, the bill ensures businesses are taking safety seriously by clarifying that insurance contracts and arrangements cannot be used to pay monetary penalties under both the Work Health and Safety Act and the Safety in Recreational Water Activities Act. The effectiveness of monetary penalties as a deterrent is significantly undermined if businesses can take out insurance to cover this cost. The bill removes this by placing a prohibition on entering, providing or benefiting from an insurance contract or arrangement that purports to cover monetary penalties under the acts.

There should be no higher priority than safety at work. This bill strengthens worker protection and representation and builds on the record of the Miles government in leading the nation to keep Queensland workers safe. I once again thank the committee for its work in considering the bill and I look forward to the debate regarding these amendments. I commend the bill to the House.

Debate, on motion of Ms Grace, adjourned.

TERMINATION OF PREGNANCY (LIVE BIRTHS) AMENDMENT BILL

Introduction

 **Mr KATTER** (Traeger—KAP) (12.29 pm): I present a bill for an act to amend the Termination of Pregnancy Act 2018 to clarify particular matters relating to the provision of medical care and treatment to persons born as a result of a termination. I table the bill, the explanatory notes and a statement of compatibility with human rights. I nominate the Health, Environment and Agriculture Committee to consider the bill.

Tabled paper: Termination of Pregnancy (Live Births) Amendment Bill 2024 [\[410\]](#).

Tabled paper: Termination of Pregnancy (Live Births) Amendment Bill 2024, explanatory notes [\[411\]](#).

Tabled paper: Termination of Pregnancy (Live Births) Amendment Bill 2024, statement of compatibility with human rights [\[412\]](#).

More than 30 babies—people—are born into this world alive in Queensland each year as a result of a late-term pregnancy termination procedure: 30 babies. This bill to amend the Termination of Pregnancy Act 2018 enshrines in legislation the fundamental human right that all persons—human babies—born alive in Queensland are to be afforded proper medical care and treatment. I am surprised in this day and age that we would have to call for something like that in parliament. I would have imagined it as a given, but it has not been as has been the history of care or lack of care in Queensland until recently.

When I heard for the first time that Queensland lags behind other jurisdictions in ensuring these babies—these humans, these Queenslanders—are properly cared for and treated, I was compelled to develop this bill with the KAP. As detailed in the statement of compatibility to this bill, this bill enshrines the human rights of all babies born in Queensland. It protects: right to life; the protection from torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment; the protection of families and children; and right to health services. That is consistent with the Human Rights Act of Queensland.

Professor Joanna Howe has worked tirelessly across Australia to ensure all Australian babies born receive the care that they need—their fundamental human right. Although there is very little information about what happens to babies who are born alive following an abortion—I guess for obvious reasons—a Northern Territory coroner's report into the death of baby Jessica Jane provides some insight into what occurs.

In this case, Jessica Jane was born alive and placed on a metal kidney dish in an empty room for approximately 80 minutes until she died. She went from the safest place you could imagine—in the womb of her mother—to a metal dish in a dark room by herself and was left for 80 minutes until she died. According to nurse Williams who delivered her, Jessica Jane although premature was apparently healthy and had no apparent abnormalities and her vital signs were relatively good. Nurse Williams weighed the baby and she was 515 grams. She called the doctor who had authorised the abortion to inform him of the live birth and that the baby's APGAR scores were strong. According to the coroner, the doctor's only response was to say, 'So?' and then he abruptly hung up the phone on her. He gave no instructions to give the baby medical care and the baby was left to die where she lay. The nurse checked on Jessica Jane every 10 to 15 minutes and observed crying and movement. According to the coroner's report, after an hour her heartbeat and breathing slowed until her death at 4.05 am. Nurse Williams informed the coroner, 'I desperately wanted to do more but my hands were tied.'

In Coroner Greg Cavanagh's judgement, reference is made to another case of a baby born alive following an abortion and left to die in Sydney. Given the similarity between this case and the media reports during the same time period of a baby born alive and left to die in Westmead Hospital, it seems likely that this reference is in relation to an unnamed baby who was aborted and zipped into a medical waste bin while still breathing at Westmead Hospital following an abortion. The New South Wales Deputy State Coroner, Janet Stevenson, in that case criticised Westmead Hospital staff for failing to care for the baby, stating—

There is a serious issue which arose as to the way in which the deceased was treated after signs of life were detected. Not the least of these being the non-acceptance by medical staff that they had a duty to treat the situation in a manner different than they did ... There appears to me to have been a total abrogation of responsibility, let alone common humanity, on the part of those who should have borne the burden of dealing with the child.

We also know of a recent third case which happened in 2020, this time involving a little Queensland baby girl. Unexpectedly born at 19 weeks after an abortion, her name was Xanthe and she was left to die in an empty room in the Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital in December 2020. Her case was reported in the *Courier-Mail* last year. We have various reports and guarded information around this. Although we know the raw data that 90 babies were born alive in Queensland after an abortion in the last two years alone, baby Xanthe's story exposes the brutal reality of the short lives of these poor children.

The former health minister and now Premier assured the parliament that late-term abortion would not increase under the then new laws introducing abortion up to birth. This has proven to be horribly incorrect. In 2018, before the abortion up to birth bill passed, 152 Queensland gestationally viable babies were killed via late-term abortion. By 2021, however, the number had doubled, with 304 Queensland babies tragically killed in late-term abortions.

More late-term abortions mean more live births after a late-term abortion. In just the last two years that we have data for, 90 Queensland newborns were born alive after an abortion and did not have a legislative right to care and to be treated equally like all other newborns. In 2018 a study reported in the *Journal of Obstetrics and Gynaecology* reviewed 241 late-term abortions without feticide on babies between 20 and 24 weeks gestation and found that more than half the babies were born alive with a median time of survival of 32 minutes, with one baby surviving for over four hours, 267 minutes. Scientific evidence is very strong that these babies feel pain at that age.

The government and indeed the opposition may suggest that this bill is not required as Queensland Health put in place a guideline last year to direct that care is given. However, the way this was done in the dead of the night, without much notice given and certainly no public notice, it can be changed just as easily in the dead of the night again back the other way. For something so important, I do not think we can rely on just a procedure and a guideline that sits in Queensland Health. This needs to be legislated. I think it is very important for Queensland to see that it is legislated—that we care about the human rights of those kids.

Let us not have a deep dive into the abortion debate or the ideologies that surround it. There is no question: a baby breathing the same air that we breathe is a human life. They are out there and they deserve the same human rights. This is a human rights issue. They deserve the same human rights as you and me. Leaving them alone to die in a room by themselves or in a medical waste bin or wherever should be something that we do not even contemplate. In fact I hope that most people are sincerely disturbed and moved to hear that.

This bill enshrines in legislation the human rights of all babies born. It brings us into line with best practice in New South Wales and South Australia. It basically means we simply draw a line between the barbaric practice of leaving newborn babies to die after an abortion and we close the chapter on

this dark part of history and say 'never again'. Never again will precious babies in Queensland like little Xanthe die alone in a room by themselves. We bring this bill to parliament seeking every member's support for these objectives.

First Reading

Mr KATTER (Traeger—KAP) (12.39 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a first time.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

Referral to Health, Environment and Agriculture Committee


Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Krause): In accordance with standing order 131, the bill is now referred to the Health, Environment and Agriculture Committee.

WORK HEALTH AND SAFETY AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Resumed from p. 757, on motion of Ms Grace—

That the bill be now read a second time.

 **Mr BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (12.39 pm): There would not be a month in an election year where the honourable Minister Grace and I do not go head to head on a work health and safety bill when the minister is handing in the homework for the union movement in Queensland, not only to secure their constant endorsement by the union movement but also to let the funds roll from the union movement as we head into an election campaign in October 2024. Why can I say that with absolute confidence? We have been here before. We debate work health and safety legislation under the guise of protecting workers, but we know the real agenda by the Queensland Labor government—that is, to protect the already protected union movement, to stop people advocating for workers, to deny workers a choice, to deny teachers and nurses and other workers in Queensland a choice of who should represent them, whether it is a union or an association, because unions enjoy the monopoly.

To see this, you only have to do a quick check. I think it was a few years ago when the same minister introduced legislation before Easter to add another public holiday. She forgot to amend the Holidays Act and had to come back and fix that up, on top of the 200 amendments she had to make to the Racing Bill. All that aside—that is history—one thing you look at—and I have just done it now; I had not done it before preparing for today's speech—is the ECQ disclosure log to see when the last union donations were made to the Labor Party. Of course, it comes up that on 19—

Mr Nicholls: The pot party.

Mr BLEIJIE: We will get to that. On 19 February 2024 the AWU donated \$18,000 to the Labor Party. However, only a few days ago the AWU donated \$43,000. It is interesting that a day or two before the by-election on the weekend, when there was misrepresentation of how-to-vote cards for the Legalise Cannabis Party, the AWU, which authorised that, as was ably pointed out yesterday by our shadow Attorney-General, flicked \$43,000 to the Labor Party. I would say it is all connected. It is all connected because we have seen legislation in this place, moved by the same industrial relations minister, and either just before the legislation goes through or just after the legislation goes through donations are made by various unions to the Labor Party.

In her introductory speech and second reading speech today, the minister kept banging on about this 'independent' review. I do not know how many times she said 'independent', but it was a few times. The minister kept saying 'independent review'. To have an independent review, you have to have independent people reviewing the situation.

Mr Nicholls: Reviewers.

Mr BLEIJIE: Independent reviewers—I take the interjection from the member for Clayfield. You would have independent reviewers to conduct an independent inquiry and produce independent findings or independent recommendations. Who did this independent review for Minister Grace? The first person who did it was Deirdre Swan. The Swan name—

Mr Nicholls: Rings a bell.

Mr BLEIJIE: It does ring a bell, member for Clayfield: Deirdre Swan, former Queensland Industrial Relations Commissioner—that I have not a problem with, but here we go—and former AWU branch vice-president. So the very union that donated to the Labor Party only a few days ago conducted the review. A former AWU branch vice-president—not just a member but a vice-president—conducted this review. Of course, Deirdre’s son, Ben Swan, is currently a member and an official of the AWU. I ask members: is it all connected? Are donations from the AWU connected to Deirdre Swan, Ben Swan, the legislation before the House and donations made by the AWU only a week ago? Charles Massy, barrister—no problem with that, but here we go—former Queensland Council of Unions policy officer—

Mr Nicholls: Who did the minister work for for a while?

Mr BLEIJIE: I take the interjection. Who did the minister work for for a while? I suspect it was the Queensland Council of Unions. We have Charles Massy as the second—

Ms Grace: Oh, that’s a secret?

Mr BLEIJIE: Minister, we did not say it was a secret; we are just pointing out the obvious fact that this is not an independent review. This cannot be an independent review when two out of the three reviewers are former union officials.

When you look at the recommendations of this review you can see why it is very union-heavy. The recommendations are union flavoured. Why? Because former union officials have done the review and made the recommendations. Then there is Craig Allen, former deputy director-general, Office of Industrial Relations. Two out of three are former union officials, so it is not right for the minister to continually come in here and say that the government is continually doing independent reviews of legislation when it clearly is not.

Mr Nicholls: Linda Lavarch, remember?

Mr BLEIJIE: I take the interjection. The last industrial relations debate was based on a report done by Linda Lavarch, a former union official and former Labor attorney-general in this House. The Labor Party are very up-front with their association with the union movement. I would simply say to the minister that she should be up-front about the people doing these reviews and not call them independent when she clearly knows they are not independent.

We are debating the clauses here today, but it is important to point out the rationale behind these clauses and the debate we are having today, with the essence of this bill based on a fundamental principle of this being an independent report. I absolutely reject that. Let’s go through the elements of this piece of legislation and the achievement of the policy objectives for the Labor government. The first is to—

- strengthen and promote the role—

these are the minister’s words, not mine—

of health and safety representatives (HSRs), including clarifying powers they can exercise and functions they can perform at the workplace;

- promote consultation about WHS with workers and their representatives—

but not all representatives, I might add, just the ones the Labor Party are happy for people to have represent them—

- clarify rights that WHS entry permit holders can exercise at a workplace to assist workers in relation to suspected contraventions of the WHS Act;
- clarify which entities or persons may assist workers and act as their representatives in relation to WHS issues by:

— ensuring a relevant union—

we will get to that in a minute—a defined relevant union—

whose rules entitle it to represent the worker’s industrial interests may assist workers or act as their representatives in relation to a WHS issue; and

— excluding—

are you ready for this, Deputy Speaker?—

other entities such as: associations of employees or independent contractors; other entities that represent or are purporting to represent the industrial interests of the worker; entities that demand or receive a fee from such bodies; and individuals connected with excluded bodies.

It is interesting that they have defined 'excluded bodies'—

Excluding associations of employees or independent contractors which are not registered unions under the Fair Work (Registered Organisations) Act 2009 (Cwth) or the Industrial Relations Act 2016 (IR Act) is consistent with the 2022 amendments to the IR Act;

We all remember the 2022 amendments to the IR Act: to deny associations the ability to represent nurses and teachers, unless those nurses and teachers were affiliated with or members of particular unions that were donating to the Labor Party or had either official or unofficial connection with the Labor Party in Queensland. When you go through the donations log, some unions will say—and they have said it to me publicly—'We are not affiliated with the Queensland Labor Party,' but they are affiliated with the Queensland Council of Unions. The Queensland Council of Unions does cut cheques to the Labor Party. That is the connection with these unions that say they are not affiliated with the Labor Party. On paper they may not be, but we all know that they pay a membership fee.

I recall that during the inquiry on the previous bill I went to the committee hearing and asked Jacqueline King from the Queensland Council of Unions how much the affiliation fees are for these unions with the Queensland Council of Unions. She refused to say. In fact, they then took it on notice in the committee. I am not ordinarily a member of the committee. All I would say is: I am someone who asked those questions and the union took it on notice. Nothing was ever published. We never found out what those associated fees are. I was not on the committee. I cannot determine or know what happened in that committee and I cannot disclose it because I am not on the committee. All I can say is that I was there on the day, asking questions of the union official.

I asked Jacqueline King how much the association fees were for relevant unions to the Queensland Council of Unions. She said she would 'take it on notice'. She said at the time they would disclose it and we have never seen anything, years later, from that particular parliamentary committee, which begs the question—why? Why was it never disclosed? Why do we not know how much the affiliation fees are for the unaffiliated unions of the Labor Party and the affiliated unions of the Queensland Council of Unions? Why do not we know how much the affiliation fees are? I guess we will never know, but I wonder why. I would say the answer to that is that the unions do not want us to know. that is why we do not have—

Mr Watts: They don't want Queenslanders to know.

Mr BLEIJIE: I will take the interjection, Queenslanders absolutely should know. Another element to this legislation is to enable HSR's health and safety reps to choose their training provider. Right, let us get into the nitty-gritty of these particular issues. I talked about the associations in the previous legislation—the amendments to the Industrial Relations Act.

Essentially what this bill does is deny 2.5 million Queenslanders working accessing representation in workplace health and safety matters, unless they pay money to the ALP or unions that are affiliated with the ALP, or to the Queensland Council of Unions. Let's not beat around the bush: this is exactly what it does. This is a follow-on from the industrial relations legislation and it extends to the workplace health and safety legislation to ensure that groups like the Teachers' Professional Association of Queensland, the Nurses' Professional Association of Queensland and other red unions cannot participate in workplace health and safety matters. This is a continual attack by the Labor Party on the workers of this state. Workers of this state are choosing to join other associations because they cannot afford to join the Queensland Teachers' Union or the Queensland Nurses and Midwives' Union. Teachers and nurses are leaving these unions in droves. The reason they are leaving those unions is they want to join an association that not only backs them but also provides a more affordable service to them. That is what we have seen with the red unions and these particular associations.

I have heard Teachers' Professional Association representatives speaking on the likes of Steve Austin's program on the ABC and putting their case forward on behalf of the workers. I have often wondered, I have heard more from the Teachers' Professional Association and the Nurses' Professional Association in the general media than I have from the actual unions who have the membership at the moment and pay the money—

Mr Sullivan interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Member for Stafford, if my hearing is correct, you just interjected with some very unparliamentary language and I would ask you to draw.

Mr SULLIVAN: I do not believe it was unparliamentary, but I withdraw.

Mr BLEIJIE: As I said, I have listened to the Teachers' Professional Association and the Nurses' Professional Association putting their case forward for representing their workers. They have explained that workers are joining these associations. What we have seen is the Labor Party trying to legislate these organisations out of existence because they have been told by the Queensland Teachers' Union and the nurses' union in Queensland that they are 'bleeding members dry'. Members of those associations are leaving and they have said to the Labor Party, 'The more nurses and teachers who leave the official unions, the less money the Labor Party will get from these unions and the Queensland Council of Unions'. That is what this is about. There is no clearer case than what we saw 1½ weeks ago when \$43,000 was donated by the AWU to the Labor Party. That is exactly what is happening here. The Liberal National Party believe in the choice of workers and in the choice of nurses and teachers. In a cost-of-living crisis, if they want better and more affordable representation, then that is their choice. The Labor Party are trying to legislate competition out of existence. That is what this bill does. It is an extension of the industrial relations legislation. They are trying to legislate—

Ms Grace: Bring on the competition.

Mr BLEIJIE: I take the interjection. Bring on what? Bring on competition in the union movement. Bring on competition. Bring on cheaper fees for nurses and teachers. Okay, absolutely. We will bring it on. We will bring on the ability for a young teacher who cannot afford the high fees of the Teachers' Union to go to an association that they want true representation from—representation that does not politicise and donate to the Labor Party. That is the feedback we are hearing from teachers, from nurses and from other workers across the state. That is the feedback we are hearing.

Another amendment in this legislation is with respect to the CFMEU and entry permits. It says that if you hold an entry permit under the various federal and state legislation and you rock up to a building construction site, if your paperwork is wrong, you can still enter under the Work Health and Safety Act and the right of entry laws. It is okay now to disregard proper process and due diligence. Basically, if the CFMEU cannot get their act together and cannot fill out paperwork, the Labor Party in Queensland will say, 'That's okay, come in'. We know what happens when the CFMEU come onto these construction sites. We know what happens—

Mr Nicholls: They don't even wait for orders, they just do it anyway.

Mr BLEIJIE: I take the interjection. I note for the honourable shadow Attorney-General—as he would know best—look at the Federal Court cases at the moment. There are hundreds of thousands of dollars in fines being issued by the Federal Court against officials of the CFMEU for deliberately disregarding federal and state laws. They have no regard for laws. The irony is that we are debating a workplace health and safety law that is about workers' safety and the CFMEU are receiving additional powers to continue their bullying and intimidatory practices on work sites. Only last year, we saw the CFMEU storm the Department of Transport and Main Roads' building where they put workers at risk. I would love to see what the new Minister for Transport and Main Roads, Mr Mellish, thinks about his staff and offices being stormed by the CFMEU.

What we have continually seen from the Labor Party is pieces of legislation just before an election—'you scratch our back; we will scratch yours'. We will put legislation in here that benefits the union movements that are affiliated and donating to the Labor Party and then, the Labor Party will give them the legislation. Make no mistake: do not beat around the bush—that is what this is. That is what this debate is about. Minister Grace can come into this place and talk all she likes about workplace health and safety. No-one has the high moral ground on workers' safety. Every member of this chamber—government, opposition and crossbench—believes that a worker when they go to work should be able to work safely and go home to their families. We have them in our constituencies. We have been there. I have worked in a chicken abattoir. When I left school my first job, other than volunteering in my parents' camping store, was in a chicken abattoir. I have done it. I have worked in an abattoir and I did not join the union, I might add. But that is what we are saying—

Ms Grace: Your choice!

Mr BLEIJIE: I take the interjection, but I would also have loved a choice to join a non-affiliated union of the Labor Party. If the minister thinks it was my choice to join or not join, then why not have the choice for other bodies to represent me?

Ms Grace interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: I take the interjection from the honourable minister. If is the minister's submission to this parliament, through her interjection, that I had a choice then why don't teachers and nurses have that same choice? Why do they not have the choice? If they want to save money in a cost-of-living crisis and join an association, an advocacy group or a union then let them, Minister. I will even agree to an amendment. If you agree to amend this legislation, we will back it. We will back an amendment to this legislation that allows that same choice that the honourable minister thinks I should have had as a young kid working in a chicken abattoir. Bring it on, I say. The minister said 'bring it on' earlier. Bring on the amendment because the Labor Party do not want teachers and nurses and workers to have that choice. They do not at the moment, and this is basically legislating competition out of existence. That is what this bill does.

It also talks about the workplace health and safety representatives being able to choose their own trainer. Members have to understand that many of these trainers are owned by unions and subsidiaries of union movements. This is why the Labor Party is saying to workplace health and safety representatives, 'You can now go and choose your training provider.' I bet it ends up with a regulation down the track that there are only particular training providers that can provide this additional resource and professional development. It will be one owned by the union movement—guaranteed. That is what this is about. They are not only legislating out of existence other bodies to compete with the union movement donating to the Labor Party but also trying to build up the power of unions in workplaces.

One of these amendments talks about the unions being able to get involved in a workplace health and safety issue, despite the worker not wanting the union involved. It actually says in there that even if workers who are involved in workplace health and safety disputes or conferences do not want the union involved, this bill allows for an automatic right for the union to be involved. My accusation is that this legislation is bolstering up the union movement in Queensland, which will bolster the Labor Party's chances at elections. We have seen the financial gerrymander that they have put on the election already, and how tough it is for other independent candidates and the opposition crossbench to fight against a heavily funded union movement. This is what this bill is about.

Giving the unions an automatic right when workers do not even want it basically says that the Labor Party do not trust workers to make this decision. They do not trust the workers to have the judgement and the ability to work out whether they want representation in a workplace health and safety conference or dispute. But again, the Labor Party cannot stand on the high moral ground for workers' safety. Every member of this parliament seriously and absolutely believes that every worker has the right to go to work, to earn a living and to come home safely to their family. This bill will not achieve that objective. This bill is about union dominance in Queensland.

Debate, on motion of Mr Bleijie, adjourned.

Sitting suspended from 1.00 pm to 2.00 pm.

STATE DEVELOPMENT AND REGIONAL INDUSTRIES COMMITTEE

Report, Motion to Take Note



Mr WHITING (Bancroft—ALP) (2.00 pm): I move—

That the House take note of the State Development and Regional Industries Committee Report No. 42, 57th Parliament—*Examination of Auditor-General Report 6: 2021-22—Regulating animal welfare services*, tabled on 30 May 2023.

I rise to speak about the report titled *Regulating animal welfare services*. We on the committee spent a bit of time dealing with this issue. We found that there are Queenslanders who had, over the years, encountered some rigorous actions and legal actions by the RSPCA on behalf of the department. That is because we have a dual system here in Queensland. Basically, the department engages the RSPCA to provide animal welfare services, mostly in coastal communities, while the rest of Queensland is overseen directly by the department through Biosecurity Queensland. The department provides the RSPCA with \$500,000 a year towards the cost of inspectors and vehicles, and the cost of those enforcement activities for the RSPCA each year is reported to be \$4.6 million.

We heard from a variety of people that there were issues regarding the amount of holding fees for animals and the training and suitability of officers. In general there was a premise that there needed to be greater accountability for these Queenslanders. We found that people are facing large costs and are looking for a more active oversight by DAF. The Audit Office conducted an audit and found—

- There was limited oversight of RSPCA Queensland inspectors ...
- The department did not have effective mechanisms to ensure RSPCA Queensland followed the same procedures for prosecutions ... as Biosecurity Queensland. ... no oversight of RSCPA Queensland's decision to prosecute people ...

- ... The department had not ensured that there was a transparent process for approving and amending a schedule of recovery costs.

...


- ... the department needed to ensure it had regular performance reporting from RSCPA ... to evaluate its performance.

They were fairly direct recommendations and I thank the Auditor-General's people for that. I also want to thank the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries, DAF, for how they have responded to that. I think they have responded really well. It is probably an example of how departments can take on those suggestions and see what they can do to improve their services to Queensland.

Subsequently, an amendment bill was passed in December 2022. We found that the department was clarifying inspectors' accreditation, including requirements for managing conflicts of interest, and having oversight. Recommendation 1 was completed by December 2022. Recommendation 2 was classified as 'in progress' at the time of our report. DAF was overseeing inspectors' minimum performance and creating a register of current inspectors. It was very good to see that DAF was participating in the RSPCA's decisions to prosecute people, and that is very important. That recommendation is still in progress, but the department has now assumed full responsibility for the conduct of all prosecutions under this act.

We found that the department had completed recommendation 3 about overseeing engagement with the RSPCA—being more accountable. They have created performance measures to ensure there is accountability and there is better oversight as well through oversight bodies and they are making those bodies self-assess against better practices.

In this report we found that review is complete. Once again we want to say 'well done' to DAF for taking these on board. I think we have a really good system now. I want to commend Minister Mark Furner for taking on these recommendations and overseeing this valued improvement to how the department does their work. At the end of the day there is more accountability, more accessibility and more fairness for Queenslanders who are facing these kinds of actions.

 **Mr PERRETT** (Gympie—LNP) (2.05 pm): I rise to speak on the examination of the Auditor-General's report titled *Regulating animal welfare services*. The Auditor examined how animal welfare is regulated and how the performance of regulators could be improved. At the time DAF and the RSPCA were delivering animal welfare services. The AO focused on the effectiveness of DAF's oversight of the RSPCA. The RSPCA is an unusual body in that it enforces animal welfare investigations on behalf of the state. It is a private charity which has powers of entry and seizure yet is not directly related to government. It can also use SPER to enforce orders and not have to go through the channels other private organisations use.

The Auditor found DAF's oversight was neither sufficiently proactive nor effective in overseeing the RSPCA and supporting it in the exercise of its powers. It found four themes: appointment and work of inspectors; investigation and prosecution; conflicts of interest; and monitoring and managing performance. The conclusions were very worrying. There were serious concerns about oversight and accountability, accreditation and conflicts of interest of inspectors. The Auditor found DAF had no oversight to ensure the RSPCA had implemented procedures and guidelines and no established codes of practice for the animal types it regulates. DAF did not have visibility checks to balance the RSPCA's investigative powers and demonstrate fair and just process, including applying for and executing warrants, using body worn cameras and seizing personal technology devices. DAF was not involved in and did not oversee prosecution decisions or charge and plea negotiations.

The Auditor recommended clarification of accountabilities and inspector accreditation, and called for regular reports on inspector performance, training and/or independence declarations and to manage conflicts of interest. The parliamentary committee noted that DAF implemented three of the Auditor's recommendations and two were still progressing.

Further progress was needed to clarify and strengthen the department's role. This would be achieved by establishing minimum performance and reaccreditation standards, register of inspectors and control of identity cards, participation in prosecution decisions, review investigations, monitoring complaints, overseeing conflicts of interest, and establishing minimum standards of care of animals.

The other area which required further progress was better managing performance, with DAF partnering with the RSPCA to develop measures for judging the effectiveness of enforcement measures and using financial reports to ensure accountability of the funds. In addition to these outstanding recommendations, the parliamentary committee said it would—


... still encourage the department to formally establish a requirement for RSPCA Queensland to publish its fee schedule for treating and keeping animals. Furthermore, we also encourage the department to apply a similar or applicable level of transparency to any further activity agreements with RSPCA Queensland.

I am frequently wary about the purported motives of animal welfare groups. Groups such as Animal Liberation Queensland and Place Advocacy do not understand what is required to manage rural properties legitimately and responsibly. In a pursuit of unreasonable and ideologically driven objectives, they continually seek to undermine agricultural industries; to criminalise, persecute and destroy the businesses of primary producers; and to undermine community activities in regional and rural towns. As well as carrying the mantle as the moral authority to make comments on and adjudicate animal welfare issues, the RSPCA acts as a lobby group. It needs to be cautious and balanced when it comments on broader animal welfare issues including live animal trade and horse events such as Bull n Bronc, rodeos, campdrafts and horse racing.

In the last few years the RSPCA has faced controversies of maladministration, misconduct and corruption, unfair dismissals, an outcry over hefty executive bonuses, conflicts of interest and concerns about how the organisation was run. There have been complaints about excessive euthanasia of dogs, animals not receiving the appropriate levels of care, unfair targeting of pet shops and breeders, bullying by inspectors and charging exorbitant fees. When people complain, they have been told, 'Go to court.' Nevertheless, the Auditor-General told the committee he focused on DAF as the responsible party for administering the regulation of animal welfare services. He said—

The scope of the audit did not include RSPCA Queensland's processes and governance arrangements.

Over the years I have received several complaints about the RSPCA. While not all complaints are substantiated, the organisation's special status requires transparency and openness. It needs to be beyond reproach. It is integral if we are to have faith in the administration of animal welfare. It is a sentiment that was front and centre of Professor Coaldrake's findings.

 **Mr SMITH** (Bundaberg—ALP) (2.10 pm): I rise to contribute to debate on the *Examination of Auditor-General's Report 6: 2021-22—Regulating animal welfare services*, which is report No. 42 of this parliament by the former State Development and Regional Industries Committee. Former members of the committee were the member for Bancroft, the member for Lockyer, the member for Burleigh, the member for Traeger, me and the then member for Ipswich West. At the time of this report by the Auditor-General it was the former Animal Care and Protection Act 2001 which looked into the way that the RSPCA engaged with the department around ensuring that the department had oversight of the practices of the RSPCA and what it was able to do under legislation. Following the Auditor-General's report we saw an amendment act, as the member for Bancroft has already noted. I will not go into great amounts of detail in terms of the broader amendments within that act, but I will speak to a few things that the audit conclusions found that that amendment act later corrected.

The Auditor-General's report found that there was limited oversight of RSPCA Queensland inspectors. When we went through that particular amendment act process or the review of the bill, it did very much come to light the power that RSPCA inspectors have and the extraordinary powers that they have beyond other government agencies and organisations which bring about a great sense of responsibility. When RSPCA inspectors have such a great level of responsibility, it is important to ensure that there is a regulator that is checking their actions and what those responsibilities entitle them to do. The report noted—

The department did not have a clear framework for managing inspectors' training and performance or a scheme for managing complaints and conflicts of interests.

I note that in this report there was a statement of reservation from the member for Traeger, who did rightly outline that there were a large number of complaints about the actions of the RSPCA. We know that inspectors within the RSPCA care about animals, care about the welfare of animals and care about responsible owners of animals, but it is always important to ensure that if there is any complaint put forward about an organisation that has responsibilities vested in it by government it is clear and on the public record what those complaints are and that those complaints can be processed and managed to ensure that there is a fair and just result to any investigation, as there should be for any level of complaint. The report further found—

To effectively administer the Act, the department needed to ensure it had regular performance reporting from RSCPA ... The department also did not have a financial model to determine what funding RSPCA Queensland requires.

As I noted, an amendment bill was passed on 2 December 2022. I will speak to recommendation 1 of the Auditor-General which states—

... that the department amends the Animal Care and Protection Act 2001 to:

- clarify inspectors accreditation and accountabilities
- include requirements for managing conflicts of interest
- have oversight of inspectors recommendations for prosecution
- have access to all information inspectors collect as part of their investigation
- require the department to approve a publicly available fee schedule of reasonable cost recovery


The recommendation in this report notes that that has been completed, as was suggested by the Auditor-General, through the amendment act that passed in December 2022. The report states that it—

... clarifies the accountabilities and accreditation of inspectors

I think that is very important. As I said before, if we are going to put vested powers—extraordinary powers—into the hands of those who are not members of the Queensland Police Service, for instance, but still have the ability to investigate and charge, then we need to ensure that there is proper conduct and that needs to come about through training. I think that was a very good measure that we put forward. Recommendation 2 in the May 2023 report was in progress and the report states—

The Amendment Act provides the department with the power to suspend or cancel an inspector's appointment if they fail to meet certain accreditation and performance standards.

That is an important thing to ensure that not only are we providing the training that is needed but also the department does have oversight and can do that. With those comments, I support the member for Bancroft's motion.

 **Mr KATTER** (Traeger—KAP) (2.15 pm): It is not surprising that we highly object to the whole notion of the RSPCA having such a lead role in the conduct of inspections and policing of animal welfare in this state. In fact, we made it very clear in our statement of reservation that it is not surprising that these audit conclusions are going to say that, but that really misses the main point here that we are dealing with an ideologically driven organisation. I remember years ago talking to someone in my family who was donating to the RSPCA when they said, 'It's great. They save dogs and cats.' I said, 'Hang on, this is a politically motivated organisation.' It is against live exports, against intensive farming of pigs, chooks and feedlots and against rodeos. It would hate the pig hunting that we do out there which is pest eradication free of charge for the people of Queensland and the government of Queensland with introduced species. These people are against all of that.


The equivalent would be perhaps getting the Shooters Union in Queensland to do crowd control and Extinction Rebellion being audited by the likes of another interest group that would do crowd control by saying, 'Can you just audit those people holding up traffic on the South East Freeway?' Of course there is going to be a bias supplied in the way they do their duties. If I am into rodeo and I am out in Mount Isa and my horse is looking sick for whatever reason, despite whatever care and attention is provided the RSPCA inspectors can come and take my horse. You are telling me that they are not going to express some bias in the way they do their duties? We are expected to believe that there will be a process of accreditation for these inspectors and that that is going to do the job? Of course it is not. The reason they are there and given a fake badge by the government of Queensland is that they ideologically align with these activities that they do not like that are prevalent in regional Queensland.

There are not a lot of things that we get to enjoy anymore. We have crocs in our rivers. We still have our rodeos, but those opposite are trying to take them away from us. You can still do some pig hunting sometimes, but that is going to be clamped down on. I know the government is going to try and have a go at that, yet these guys are wanting weapons and you leave them there unabashed? The Auditor-General has outlined that there are some problems here and they are not doing very good, yet we are still saying, 'That's okay. Let's just tighten up a little bit around them, but let's still let them do what they're doing.'

In terms of some of the stories we heard—and it was outlined before—the RSPCA sells pets for profits to help fund its business, but it goes and inspects without notice and prosecutes pet shops that compete against it. As I said, inspectors can go out to a big rodeo area or horseracing area and just start hitting people with fines or whatever. If you expect that they are not going to express some bias, you are not being objective in this discussion at all. It is absolutely no surprise at all to find these recommendations from the audit in the committee report, but what is not discussed in the report is the fact that the central part of this problem is that you have the wrong people in there. We cannot get biosecurity officers. In the whole northern and southern gulf the government hardly has one biosecurity officer up there anymore, and that fits much more in their role. Why can we not beef up the number of DAF biosecurity officers and make them joint roles?

We already have pet shelters. Mount Isa has the terrific Paws Hoofs and Claws. They do a great job looking after animals. There is no RSPCA out there and I do not think there is any in Townsville anymore. The Townsville rehoming shelter does a great job. We do not need the RSPCA up there. They are not looking at dogs and cats, but they are certainly quick to prosecute anyone if their horse or turtle is sick. I am not kidding about turtles. They have prosecuted people who had sick turtles in a pet shop. They will come after anything and they will use their bias as much as they want.

We keep forgetting that they are a political ideological organisation as much as anything else and, I think, much more so than an organisation that looks after dogs and cats. We heard some absolutely horrible stories about what they have done to people. People have been almost sent broke. People have had to go court to get back their animals. They are trying to fight for their business or their integrity and reputation. Here we are waving them through and saying, 'Well, let's just tighten up things around them.' That is not good enough. In this day and age in Queensland there should be more accountability. You should not have such people looking after these issues when they are clearly politically biased.

 **Mr LISTER** (Southern Downs—LNP) (2.20 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the debate on the State Development and Regional Industries Committee report on the Auditor-General's report titled *Regulating animal welfare services*. It was very interesting to hear some of the things the member for Traeger said because they ring some bells with me given what has happened recently in my own electorate.

I was approached by some very disappointed volunteers from the Macintyre Animal and Pet Rescue, which is a great volunteer organisation in Gundy. They told me about a person who was living with 34 dogs in a tent on the side of the road in Texas. The dogs were malnourished and without water. The poor person was covered in faeces. The entire tent was covered in faeces. There were real concerns about the welfare of the person and also the dogs, because quite a few of the bitches were due to have litters of puppies. It was a very distressing situation. The Macintyre Animal and Pet Rescue volunteers said that they were unable to get any support from the RSPCA and they were not able to get assistance from Biosecurity officers.

Mrs Frecklington: That's their job.

Mr LISTER: I take the interjection from the member for Nanango; it is their job. Obviously, Texas is not the leafy suburbs of Brisbane and there are distance issues and so forth. However, there were 34 dogs involved, and probably a lot more by now. Quite apart from the moral obligation we have to look after the person who I fear was not well, there is also the question of looking after the animals. It turned out that the volunteers did a whip around and provided 80 kilograms of dog food to the person, who has since moved somewhere else. The RSPCA were of little help. It disappoints me to be reminded that they have been very zealous in prosecuting cases that appeal to their political proclivities but would not go to Texas to investigate that very serious case.

I understand there are not many Biosecurity officers, distances are great and so forth. Reports and that sort of thing are great, but we need to recognise that there are major animal welfare matters that do not involve the usual things, such as feedlots and so forth, that the commentariat get fired up about. Dogs or cats are being abused, kept in poor conditions or abandoned and the good volunteers of the Macintyre Animal and Pet Rescue and others, such as Southern Downs ARK in my electorate, have to pick up the pieces. They run on a shoestring budget. They are run by volunteers who work every hour that God sends and some besides, cleaning the shelters, looking after the animals and organising the local vets, who do a great job to vaccinate them et cetera. They all say to me that more needs to be done at a state level.


I think one answer would be, when there is a reasonable suspicion, to empower council officers to enter a premises to do something about such things. We have seen plenty of bills pass through this House that have enabled public servants to enter a landholder's property to inspect for tree clearing and things such as that. Why can that not be done for rangers employed by councils, for instance? That is something that Carey Emerton from Goondiwindi raised with me when I was there a week or so ago, and I certainly agree with her. I ask the government to consider that. What is officially in reports and what departments and organisations are supposed to do in this field and what they actually do may not always be the same thing.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING COMMITTEE

Report, Motion to Take Note

 **Ms RICHARDS** (Redlands—ALP) (2.25 pm): I move—

That the House take note of the Education, Employment and Training Committee Report No. 36, 57th Parliament—*Inquiry into the Cairns TAFE upgrade project*, tabled on 30 August 2023.

The Education, Employment and Training Committee made a self-directed decision to do a public accounts examination of the Cairns TAFE \$18.95 million upgrade project at what is now a really fabulous, thriving and vibrant campus. That upgrade was done under the Advancing our Training Infrastructure initiative. We had the opportunity to tour the facility with a range of staff and we met a number of students on the day. We took submissions. We were briefed by officials. The project has generated a whole new vibrancy for the campus. It has allowed them to offer new courses and programs that are really important to people in Far North Queensland. It has also helped to increase the number of VET in Schools classes.

Over the past 18 months to two years, the committee has had a really broad-ranging look at the vocational education and training space, including through a second self-directed inquiry. On 10 June we held a forum in Cairns as part of our trip to visit the TAFE campus. We met with Mr Bruce Houghton, who is the principal at Bentley Park College. It was fantastic to see the school's involvement with the Cairns TAFE project. They all spoke glowingly about the partnership to deliver vocational education and training for students in the secondary school environment. We know that the investment in improving the TAFE campus has strengthened the ability of TAFE to attract new enrolments.


We saw the improved quality of the workshops and studio spaces, particularly in the Banggu Minjaany Art Gallery, which is absolutely fantastic. We had a very detailed tour of the upgraded mechanics workshop. Many cars were being repaired diligently by students who are acquiring those skills and training. Another part that appealed to many of us—I am not sure if it appealed to the member for Stafford, but I was pretty impressed—was the upgrade to the hair and beauty salons in the hospitality precinct.

Mr Sullivan: They did a good job on me.

Ms RICHARDS: They did. I recall they offered to give us all a little bit of a helping hand. We might have been looking a bit scraggly on the day. It was great to see local businesses getting involved through TAFE. It was very clear that our investment in projects such as this provide the opportunity for businesses, schools and students to come together to make sure we are delivering skilled people for the jobs that are needed in Far North Queensland.

In addition to the hair and beauty salons, which, as I said, were a very popular space, a lot of work was done on replacing air-conditioning chiller blocks, electrical switchboards and major transformer works. As I said, the art gallery was a wonderful space. They have installed new solar. I have forgotten the name of the facilities manager at TAFE, but that gentleman spoke glowingly about the work they did with QBuild to deliver the project. He spoke about how proud he was of the value for money he was able to deliver. He has done a fantastic job and looks forward to doing more great work up there in Cairns TAFE.

From the committee perspective, we were extraordinarily impressed with the value for money received by investing in TAFE. We know how important Queensland TAFEs are in making sure that our young people have the skills to meet the jobs of today and the jobs of tomorrow. I commend this report to the House.

 **Mr LISTER** (Southern Downs—LNP) (2.28 pm): I rise following the contribution of the member for Redlands.

Ms Richards: I should have said 'thank you'.

Mr LISTER: I can speak for the committee, since the chair missed that bit, by saying that we had a great time doing this inquiry.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Hart): When you have finished, members.

Mr LISTER: I want to pay compliments to all members of the committee: the member for Redlands as chair and the members for Stafford, Rockhampton, Theodore and Hinchinbrook.

Ms Richards: A good travelling party.

Mr LISTER: We were a good travelling party and we learned a lot. If there is one particular benefit of the committee system it is that it gives backbenchers exposure to all sorts of aspects of government administration and outputs. I certainly learned and experienced things that I did not even know I did not know, as I often do with committee work. I was particularly impressed—and I was just talking to the member for Theodore about this—that the Cairns TAFE has a contract with the federal government to provide ship masters certificates, particularly for our Pacific neighbours. Over many long years the federal government has provided patrol boats as a gift to our Pacific neighbours. As part of that, they train the crews to be able to sail them and take them back to their home. There was a bridge simulator there, which is fantastic, and they also give them the experience of using commercial vessels in Cairns harbour. That was great to see.


There is not enough time for me to talk about all of the recommendations, of course. One recommendation of the committee report was—

The committee recommends that the Department of Employment, Small Business and Training (i) clarify when it will open the next round of applications for Skills Assure status, and (ii) clarify how it decides whether to issue more targeted invitations to apply for Skills Assure status in response to an identified need.

It is important that there is always scrutiny and renewal in the Skills Assure supplier role because I did hear from some training organisations that deliver skills under this program that there are others out there who do not necessarily do the right thing. I am sure it is a minority, but we heard anecdotal evidence that young people in particular who have an entitlement under the federal scheme of a certain amount of funding for vocational training are being signed up to courses that are dead ends for them. An example I could concoct might involve training someone from Thursday Island as a heating engineer. Where that has happened, the government ought to be vigilant and hold suppliers to account to ensure they are not being party to a wastage of training entitlements for some of these young people.

I would also like to say how important the training system is in regional areas like Southern Downs. I was in Goondiwindi talking to some training providers who were saying that completion rates for training that is relevant and for which employers need those particular skills are always much higher. It is important that we look at the delivery of TAFE and VET training in rural Queensland to ensure we are not constraining the growth of employment, of business and of communities because of a lack of training. That is something that has become very clear to me, too.

I really enjoyed the opportunity to do this inquiry. I thank the members of the committee and those who worked with us, and I thank those people from all over Queensland who submitted to us and informed us of their needs and views. I commend the report to the House.


 **Mr O'ROURKE** (Rockhampton—ALP) (2.33 pm): I rise to speak in respect of report No. 36 of the 57th Parliament on the Education, Employment and Training Committee's inquiry into the Cairns TAFE Upgrade Project. The Cairns TAFE campus is a critical training hub for Far North Queensland. It is the region's largest TAFE area, servicing a student population of more than 8,000 students. The overall purpose of the upgrade project was to modernise the campus to ensure its ability to meet the current and future training needs of students and their employers in Far North Queensland. We looked at the upgrades of the specialised training areas including: the installation of a new freezer room; the refurbishment of the maker space; upgrades to the automotive workshop; installation of a new solar power system; the cultural museum; upgrades to the hair and beauty and hospitality precinct; and the supporting infrastructure, including the electrical switchboards and transformer replacements. As a committee, we were satisfied that the project was necessary and value for money. The project allocation was \$18.59 million. Overall, the project was delivered under budget at a cost of \$15.65 million. It was designed and delivered in an appropriate manner, improving access to high-quality facilities for students and employers in Cairns and Far North Queensland. The committee made one recommendation. That was that the Legislative Assembly note the report.

Through the upgrades, TAFE was able to offer several new courses. It was able to increase the numbers of classes available on campus which, in turn, attracted more new enrolments. Improvements to campus navigation made it easier for students and members of the public to find their way around the campus. These upgrades generated increased training and employment opportunities for local residents during the construction phase as well.

With TAFE being the training hub for Far North Queensland, the committee encourages the government to explore what else can be done to ensure existing facilities continue to meet the needs of their communities, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. The staff were very keen to show the committee around the campus and were very proud of what they had achieved in the upgrades across numerous areas. I thank them for their hospitality. It was pleasing to note that the

department advised that most trade packages were delivered by QBuild. For those trade packages that required technical expertise not available via QBuild, the department found suitable suppliers via the tender process managed by QBuild staff.


The department advised that in its view QBuild performed exceptionally well on the project. The supervision of all work was of the highest standard and the majority of projects were handed over defect free. I would also like to thank the other members of the committee. We had a good time travelling around looking at these facilities. It was a really enjoyable trip. It is so important that we look after our TAFE services. When we consider that we have Fee-Free TAFE, free apprenticeships et cetera, it is essential that we provide our young people with the opportunities they need to have successful careers into the future. I commend the report to the House.

 **Mr BOOTHMAN** (Theodore—LNP) (2.37 pm): I, too, rise to make a short contribution to the inquiry into the Cairns TAFE upgrade project. As my fellow committee members have alluded to, it was very interesting to participate in this committee inquiry and travel to Cairns to see what was done and how the \$18.5 million was spent. I refer to the comments of the member for Southern Downs. The shipmaster course was very interesting. I have never seen a simulator like it. Individuals from the Pacific nations come to Cairns—which is very important for Cairns and actually helps with tourism—seeking education. Fascinatingly, the teachers could give individuals participating in the course technical issues to deal with. For instance, I remember that the software simulated wind pulling across the Cairns harbour. The motors on the ship stopped working and therefore the pilot had to control the ship as it was coming in. Having these issues pop up forced the students to think very quickly to ensure the boat did not leave the channel it was supposed to be traversing. It was fascinating seeing that and talking to the TAFE teachers about how they run the software and the certificate process.

It is very important that we ensure the projects and the courses at TAFE are value for money. Something I am very passionate about in my neck of the woods is ensuring our TAFE courses are suitable for local industries. For instance, just outside my electorate is the Coomera marine precinct—which is one of the main shipbuilding areas in Queensland. Riviera and other different boat manufacturers are based there. One thing I have always been passionate about—and I know my fellow committee members would have heard this many times—is upholstery courses in marine precincts. Marine upholstery is a bit different from automotive upholstery because they use different types of materials. We need to invest in that in the Coomera marine precinct because it is very important going forward to ensure the next generation of upholsterers have the necessary skills to work in the marine industry. The Cairns precinct services the Cape York area and Thursday Island. Therefore, it is very important that there is ample accommodation freely available for students going to Cairns for their TAFE education.

I take the member for Redlands' comments. It was such a delight, especially for the member for Redlands and a couple of others, to see the facility where they run the hairdressing course. It was an amazing facility. It is probably one of the neatest hairdressing facilities I have ever seen. It is a phenomenal facility. Those students certainly have facilities that are second to none. It was money well spent in that respect. As someone who has frazzled hair half the time, it was something that does not really interest me too much.

It is very important that they have certain courses and that the courses are utilised by the students. There were some concerns from submitters and the people who came to talk to us to ensure we get the best bang for buck when it comes to TAFE and the courses that are provided.

 **Mr SULLIVAN** (Stafford—ALP) (2.41 pm): I rise to support the committee's report. I do so as a proud former member of the Education, Employment and Training Committee. I would like to join the chair, the deputy chair and other members to commend this report to the House.

As has been reflected by members who have spoken before me, this was a genuine cross-party committee which included the member for Hinchinbrook. I thank the chair and the deputy chair for setting that tone early on. I think this was really important work that we could do.

To be blunt, we tried to save the parliament some money. We included the specific investigation of the Cairns TAFE upgrade as part of our broader investigation into vocational education and training in regional Queensland, which included a visit to the maritime specialist centre, which the member for Theodore has just spoken about. We travelled to Thursday Island as well as regional south-western Queensland, which was really important.

In terms of the Cairns TAFE upgrade, I am so proud to be part of a government that has delivered that investment into that really important training facility. As the chair reflected, they really got bang for their buck. It is a world-class campus. They stretched the money to include high-end quality technical things such as electrical trade training with multiple hubs and multiple stations for the high-end electrical

tickets that they need, the hairdressing and make-up station and the hospitality area, which is semi-commercial. They have really good partnerships with local businesses, which was wonderful to see.

They also made small touches like extending the roof cover over the mechanical engineering and car mechanical area so they could train in all weather. We all know what the weather in Cairns is like. Whatever the weather, they could keep the sun or the rain off them depending on the day. These simple things mean they could extend the number of students and the number of courses they have. Really simple things like that make a really big difference.

They also had good input from students and staff alike to create an interconnectedness between the courses. That reduces the silo effect that sometimes can happen on any campus but particularly in the VET area. There were common spaces, and it did have the feeling of a genuine campus where people could feel welcomed and interact with each other. I think that is really important for people. Whether they are young students straight out of school or coming back out of the workforce, it is important that they have that sense of belonging at a campus like that.

As previous speakers have said, the Cairns campus is the hub for Far North Queensland, so it is really important that we get it right there, and I really do think we did. I congratulate the TAFE staff. I congratulate the project manager and their partners. I also reflect that it was a good sign that the TAFE CEO and CFO came along on our regional trips because they wanted to see firsthand what it is like on the ground and engage in all of our meetings.

I have already thanked the chair, the deputy chair and other members of the committee. I want to give a particular shout-out to the secretariat because they had particular challenges. We deliberately tried to make sure we had community engagement in all of the places we went. Unfortunately, the air travel at the time posed some challenges. I am not saying that as a First World problem. I am not talking about the discomfort to us; I am talking about having to delay or postpone public hearings where genuine witnesses were trying to participate and we were trying to include that participation. Rob and the team did everything they could to try to make sure we achieved that. Through no fault of his own, it was a bit of a matrix, if I can put it that way. He worked his guts out. We really thank him for that.

We did manage to achieve genuine community input, from TI to out west and everywhere in between. Again, I thank the committee members for their genuine approach to this. Specifically to Cairns, it is a wonderful facility that I think will be a real legacy for Far North Queensland.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Report, Motion to Take Note



Mr HARPER (Thuringowa—ALP) (2.46 pm): I move—

That the House take note of the Health and Environment Committee Report No. 38, 57th Parliament—*Vaping: An inquiry into reducing rates of e-cigarette use in Queensland*, tabled on 31 August 2023.

This report was about vaping. We conducted an inquiry into reducing rates of e-cigarette use in Queensland. I start by thanking all of the members of that committee who undertook extensive consultation with the Queensland community on vaping. We know that it is a rife in every single community. There are a number of members of parliament on both sides who also contributed to this inquiry. I will start with a quote from Dr John Gerrard, our Chief Health Officer in Queensland, who said—

This is the time to do something. In five or 10 years time—once it is well and truly established—it is too late ... We cannot ban cigarettes now ... but we have the opportunity to take an aggressive control of this right now. This timing is perfect.

Community consultation informed the committee that there is no doubt that vaping is having a very concerning health impact on young people in Queensland communities. A concerted joint effort between the Commonwealth and state is required to shut down the illegal selling of vapes that are impacting our young people, who perhaps cannot see the ongoing health risks as this trend continues. I echo the comments from the Chief Health Officer.

We made 14 recommendations. I will talk about the first recommendation, which states—


The committee recommends that the Queensland Government investigate establishing a joint task force involving Queensland and Commonwealth agencies with the primary objective of ending the illegal retail supply of e-cigarettes, including online, especially to people under the age of 18.

It is timely that I just received a briefing from health officials during the lunchbreak of progress in that area. I had only just written to the minister to say that we need to double down on our efforts to stop young people getting addicted to nicotine with these multiflavoured, attractive vapes that are available in retail stores and servos.

The tobacco industry is heavily regulated in terms of plain packaging. You cannot buy a packet; they are behind closed doors. Meanwhile, down the road these pop-up stores are addicting the young people in our communities and we need to do everything we can to stop it. It is serendipitous that tomorrow the federal government will move another bill in relation to vaping—of course, it is up to the states to enforce whatever comes out of that—but I note that the Nationals are opposing it. They are not going to support the bill, and that will be an interesting observation for Queensland. We are doing everything we can to stop this. I see these illegal pop-up shops in my local area, as I am sure all local members do. The vaping rates in schools are a result of the number of students gathering and sharing these things. It is unhealthy. They are full of toxins; they are harmful. We will see the outcome of that if we do not do something further.

I have called on both the police minister and health minister to double down on the efforts in my community to shut down those shops that open up just like that. They seize thousands of them. I have reports and updates on how much they have seized in Queensland, but there is more to be done. I look forward to seeing what the Commonwealth does with their bill. There are a couple of things the Queensland government is already doing, including taking action on vaping. We have: \$1.3 million for a new youth focused public health campaign about the harms of vaping; \$3.9 million annually for Quitline to deliver nicotine dependent services to Queensland; \$5 million established for all schools with access to an online interactive program on vaping, alcohol and other drugs to support student wellbeing and engagement from term 4, 2023; and a program to strengthen alcohol and drugs education, inclusive of vaping. That has been made available to Queensland schools and will start early this year.

We have to do more to stop this. The tobacco industry is cleverly trying to make our young people in Queensland addicted to nicotine. Let's double down on our efforts in Queensland.

 **Mr ANDREW** (Mirani—PHON) (2.51 pm): I rise to make a brief contribution to the debate on the Health and Environment Committee's report No. 38, 57th Parliament, *Vaping: An inquiry into reducing rates of e-cigarette use in Queensland*. I would like to thank the committee and the secretariat for all of the good work they have done as we travelled around the state to investigate this issue. It is a very grave problem in our schools.


I would like to thank the chair and committee members for using Queensland government labs to break down the chemical composition of some of these vapes. There is an alarming amount of different chemicals, including pesticides. Nicotine rates vary. We cannot express enough that these things are dangerous poisons. Vaping devices pose at least three threats to our environment. More than 250,000 Queenslanders vape regularly that we know of. There are more than 100 tonnes of e-waste generated annually by Queensland vapers, and that is not taking into account what is coming in illegally. Existing e-waste programs do not accept vaping devices. These things catch fire. It is easy for kids to use them. They do not have to take lighters. They just get them out, go into a toilet cubicle and basically start pulling on these things. They are pulling poisons such as nicotine and pesticides of all descriptions and varying percentages into their bodies. They get a head rush and they think it is great. Unfortunately, it is killing them. A lot of people told us about the sickness that resulted from it. They have stopped vaping because of the way it affects their body. It harms their whole system.

There are legal ways of being able to vape. We looked into that, and we thank all of the witnesses who came in. They talked about how they could access legal vapes and legal nicotine to put in the vapes. It does have merit in certain ways with regard to the legality of being able to help stop smoking; there is no question about that. The vapes we were concentrating on were the pretty little vapes in all different colours and different flavours that are out there to entice young children. It is an illicit black market and it is earning millions and millions of dollars. It is putting actual businesses out of business. It is also the situation that both state and federal governments do not collect tax on it, so we had to have a look at it. We did a great job. We are going to implement national disposal schemes for that, but personally I do not think we should have them at all. We found that these things are just coming in from all over and we cannot control it. Having no legislation and no way of being able to tax it and regulate it is difficult as well because it has just run rife in our community.

All of my children talk about vapes all the time. My eldest daughter's boyfriend vapes all the time, but now he has given it up because he can hardly breathe because of it. It is a very dangerous substance. I want to say thank you to everyone. I support the bill and the way it has been drafted. The

faster we get rid of vapes in Queensland, the better. These pop-up shops are everywhere. They are even at Sarina near my office. They are all over the place. The government needs to do more about shutting them down.

Another thing I found very confronting was that you need to have 90 kilos of chop-chop to be outside of the law. You could go into the back of a shop where there is a 60-kilo bin of chop-chop, but no-one could take it away or confiscate it because the law states there has to be over 90 kilos before they can confiscate it. That blew me away. That is a heck of a lot of tobacco, especially when you have a little pouch of tobacco. Can you imagine having a 90-kilo pouch? The authorities had to leave it. We discovered a lot of things that really blew our mind as far as the organised crime that backs these things, the way these shops are popping up, how much they could sell, the way they are selling it and how it is so cheap to buy. It focuses on children, and we do not want to see that in our health system going forward. We do not need those problems; we have enough problems with our health system now. Hopefully, we can get the message out there. I know that most of the teachers in our schools are doing the right thing, although we have seen things in the paper recently that blew our minds, but we are on top of it. We know about it. Thankfully, we are putting legislation in place.

 **Ms BATES** (Mudgeeraba—LNP) (2.56 pm): I rise to speak as the shadow health minister in response to the health committee's report into reducing rates of e-cigarette use in Queensland. There is no doubt that the tide has turned on smoking in our great state, whether it is cigarettes or e-cigarettes, but vaping remains a dangerous pastime. Unfortunately, it is attracting young people who believe it is not as bad as smoking. It is: make no mistake. It has led to a proliferation of illegal operators who are capitalising on this new wave of customers.

We know that the Labor government's modus operandi is to create a distraction to avoid attention on their own actions or inactions. We need to investigate the Labor government's role in the proliferation of these illegal shops selling nicotine products, which is their job to police. Labor passed new laws last year to give the state the power it needs to prosecute these shops, so where is the evidence that they are using them? In Mudgeeraba I have spoken to many tobacconists, small businessmen and women, who face an uphill battle in getting any action on regulation and policing of local illegal chop-chop shops. They are confronted with operators who often have connections to organised crime and undercut them at every opportunity. They breach advertising rules and they deny government the taxes and duties other legal operators have to pay. Labor strikes again at the heart of small business by imposing regulation and then doing nothing to support or police it. Together with local police and public health units, we have worked to get this Labor Party government to enforce the laws it has introduced and put a stop to the sale of cheap illegal tobacco through these storefronts. Once again, Labor is leaving it to the already stretched thin blue line. There does not appear to have been any increase in public health officers available to help crack down on this burgeoning black market.

I have been writing to the Attorney-General, who was the health minister, since 2021 about a range of these chop-chop shops in my electorate. The response was underwhelming. All the current Attorney-General could say was, 'Talk to the feds.' That is right: she blamed the federal government for the illicit tobacco supply and hid behind the Australian illicit tobacco taskforce. When you introduce regulation, it is up to you to enforce it. I note that the committee made 14 recommendations, and I call on the minister to advise the House when she will be reporting back to this House on how these recommendations will be implemented. Otherwise, this is just another report that will sit on the shelf gathering dust, ignored by those opposite.

Queenslanders will not be surprised by that because that is the Labor way. I spoke on 24 May about my Mudgeeraba community and these illegal tobacco shops—the chop-chop shops as they are commonly called—which have been operational for years. I wrote to the previous health minister about this issue, and that was three years ago now. That email cited 85 illegal chop-chop shops in 15 electorates in Queensland, and nothing changed. I wrote that these illegal chop-chop shops—there was one in Mudgeeraba, one in Worongary and one in Burleigh Waters that I knew about—all have illegal signage. Now I have another one that is only five shops away from the Mudgeeraba electorate office.

Those illegal signs have cigarettes on the front of them. They have tobacco on the front of them. They have smokes on the front of them. They are illegal chop-chop shops. They are not hard to recognise. When my licensed Cignall tobacconists—the one from Mudgeeraba, the one from Worongary and the one from Burleigh Waters—came to see me and made a complaint, I made a complaint to Queensland Health on their behalf and they had Queensland Health come down on them like a tonne of bricks. Queensland Health visited their shops and did not even visit the illegal chop-chop

shops. Those local businesses are losing up to \$30,000 a week. This is revenue which is taxable—it goes to the Commonwealth—but the only place it is going at the moment is into the pockets of the owners of these illegal shops. They will keep doing it until there are laws that can be enforced to stop them from doing it and when Queensland Health have enough staff to actually work with our thin blue line to do something about it.

Both of these shops—the one just up the road from me and the one down near Wallaby Bob’s—were raided about a week after the legislation came in. That was nearly eight months ago. Both of them were back up and running the next week. My poor small businesses are all having trouble. The Coles supermarket told me that they ran out of cash on a Friday afternoon because people were actually going in and withdrawing cash from Coles because they had to pay cash at the illegal chop-chop shop. Now I notice that, like the one at Yamanto, they have an ATM in the illegal chop-chop shop, and nothing is being done to fix it.


Debate, on motion of Ms Bates, adjourned.

WORK HEALTH AND SAFETY AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Resumed from p. 763, on motion of Ms Grace—

That the bill be now read a second time.

 **Mr BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (3.02 pm), continuing: As I was saying before the short break, this bill is not about workplace health and safety, although that is in the title. This bill is about union encouragement and union membership; it is not about choice for workers, it is not about choice for nurses, it is not about choice for teachers. We have seen the industrial relations landscape change in Queensland whereby it is all about what is in the best interests of the union movement in Queensland and the Labor Party.

We have seen in the legislation—not only in the industrial relations legislation but now in the workplace health and safety legislation—that the government is basically legislating competition out of existence because it does not help their affiliated unions and it does not help Labor coffers. There are associations and advocacy groups out there that want to stand up and give workers a say and a voice but they do not donate to the Labor Party or any other political parties, and that is why the Labor Party has a problem with it and that is why we are seeing this legislation introduced just before the election this year. We will be in caretaker mode in about six months time and that is why this bill is in the House today.

Do not take my word for it. I have a copy of an email from a staff member at Warwick East State School to all of the teaching staff at the school. I talked earlier about the Teachers’ Professional Association of Queensland. This email said—

As TPAQ is not a registered employee organisation it:

- is not, and is not entitled to be, a party to an award or certified agreement made with the Department of Education;
- is not able to represent the industrial interests of employees who are covered by the Teaching in State Education Award—

It went on—

While the Queensland Government Commitment to Union Encouragement Policy encourages union membership among State Government employees, TPAQ is not covered by the provisions of the union encouragement policy as it is not an industrial organisation.

That is the nub of it, and I table that email.

Tabled paper: Extract from an email, undated, regarding TPAQ [\[413\]](#).

Opposition members interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: That was sent out to all of the staff at Warwick East State School. I see the interjections from those members of the union movement over there. They are nodding that that is exactly right. If we want to talk about the union encouragement clause, we need to look at the recommendations of the committee, which the government have said they have accepted today. Recommendation 5 says—

The committee recommends that, if the Bill is passed, the OIR consider undertaking an awareness campaign so relevant organisations and workers are fully informed about the changes to who can lawfully represent workers under the new definitions contained within the Bill.

That means this Labor government are going to spend money educating workers about the right union. When I say 'the right union', I mean the union that will favour the Labor Party—not the workers. That is what they are going to do. This committee has recommended at recommendation 5 that money be spent educating the workers. Not only do the Labor Party in Queensland not believe that a teacher or a nurse has the ability to join an association, a union or an advocacy group of their own choice, whether it is an industrial relations matter or workplace health and safety matter; they believe they do not even have the capacity to understand who is and who is not which organisation. That is what this is about. The Labor government are about to embark on an education campaign before the election. Add that to the hundreds of thousands of dollars the Labor Party government are already spending educating the Queensland public on these policies. That is what it is about.

It is about destabilisation of the other advocacy groups and industrial organisations that are taking members from the traditional Labor Party unions. That is the nub of it and the Labor Party do not like it. The Labor Party do not like it because if the union movements affiliated through the Queensland Council of Unions are losing money then who else loses money? The Labor Party, and the Labor Party do not like that because it is an election year. As I said, whether it is the industrial relations legislation or the workplace health and safety laws we are debating today, it is all the same. Labor are directly attacking workers.

In contrast, the Liberal National Party firmly believe that workers—whether you are a teacher, a nurse or another worker in Queensland—should have the right to choose an industrial association, advocacy group or legal group to represent their interests. It is about your choice and giving you a choice for that particular body. If you do not want to join an expensive union, you should not have to. No worker should be forced to join these expensive, Labor dominated unions, because the money they are paying to these unions in a cost-of-living crisis is being funnelled back to the Labor Party for their election. I see the minister rolling her eyes—deny it.

When I have been talking in these debates about the association between the union movement, the Queensland Council of Unions and the Labor Party, members opposite are all like, 'Absolutely, yes. Our preselections demand it. Our preselections rely on the union movement. We are part of the union movement.' In fact, the Labor Party is not part of the union movement; the Labor Party is the union movement. They were all interjecting earlier, saying, 'That's right. This is who we are. We want the money from the union movement.' The Liberal National Party believes in choice for the workers.

Another concern I have raised in this bill is that if these health and safety representatives think they see an issue they will have the additional power to shut down not only a work site but a whole business. I refer to the submission made by the Australian Meat Industry Council. I might add for the Labor members over there—and this will come as a surprise to them—that I worked in an abattoir as my first job after leaving school. They might think, 'How does a Liberal National Party member have a real job?' Well, more people on this side have had real jobs in our lives than that mob over there.

Mr Mickelberg interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: Did you? I take the interjection from the member for Buderim. He worked in an abattoir as well.

Mr HARPER: Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I take personal offence at his remarks about former jobs and I ask him to withdraw.

An opposition member: He never mentioned your name.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Bush): Thank you, member, I do not need your direction. The standing orders are that unless a member is personally named offence cannot be taken. I did not hear a member being named but I will certainly keep an ear out.

Mr BLEIJIE: The Australian Meat Industry Council said in their submission to the committee—
The HSRs within industry are not safety experts, they generally only complete a 5-day training program.

They said that sometimes the training course has no association with the actual industry that the health and safety representative is working in. In these particular businesses, you could have a health and safety representative—who will be trained and have their ongoing professional development done by an RTO which is owned by the union movement—shutting down work sites, shutting down businesses and having no idea of the safety implications or other implications on that business.

This bill is chaotic. Everything this government does is chaotic. We have seen it with the industrial relations minister on so many pieces of legislation. We saw it today. When I talked about transparency and openness earlier today, I asked the government to just be up-front with the people of Queensland. I have to say that we have seen a total lack of openness and transparency about lots of things, including the Olympic and Paralympic Games, and I would say to the honourable ministers if you did not discuss cancelling the games at cabinet, why won't anyone just come out and say it? That is the reality of it. Why won't anyone own up to it and say it?

Mr de BRENNI: Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I am sure you know where this is going. It is in relation to relevance.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Kawana, I note you only have just started that line of debate, but I will caution you to come back to the bill straightaway.

Mr BLEIJIE: I talked earlier on this bill before the lunch break about transparency and openness, and I said that Minister Grace has a reputation of these sorts of bills before an election and then donations are made by the union movement. I will submit this on that point of order made: I am pretty sure that although the government have many positions on many of these issues on the Olympic and Paralympic Games I have discussed, workplace health and safety will be a central key element to those. These workers who we are discussing in this very bill today will be on the project that this government is advocating for, this government has announced. I would say to the Leader of the House, nice try, but it is directly relevant because workers in Queensland—


Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Member for Kawana, I take exception to the comment. I have made a ruling that I would like you to come back to the bill. I note the point you are making around transparency, but I have asked you to come back to this bill, and I will ask you to move on.

Mr BLEIJIE: As I said at the outset, this bill is nothing but Labor currying favour to the union movements. It is a 'you scratch my back, I'll scratch your back' bill. We have seen it in the industrial relations space; we will see it again. As I disclosed before the lunch break, \$43,000 was donated by the AWU only a week ago—only a week ago, incidentally two days before the by-elections on the weekend, I might add—\$43,000! The AWU made a submission to this bill. So, \$43,000, and the AWU also donated \$18,000 in February of this year to the Labor Party in Queensland for their election coffers. Is it any wonder we are getting this bill debated this week, just a week after the union movement are donating and filling the Labor Party coffers for their election campaigns?

That is why we do not support this bill. This bill is not about workplace health and safety. This bill is a rort. It says 'work health and safety'—

An opposition member: Removes workers' rights.

Mr BLEIJIE: I take the interjection. It actually removes workers' rights. It removes teachers having a choice, it removes nurses having a choice and it removes any worker in Queensland having a choice. Whether it is an industrial relations matter or a workplace health and safety matter, it removes their choice about who they have representing them. It forces the union onto construction sites. We do not have time to even get into the debate today about the CFMEU—the bullying, the intimidation, the additional cost that every project has in Queensland because of the CFMEU and other union movements. As I said as well, no member in this House has the moral high ground on workers' safety. We all want workers to go to work and come home to their families, safe. This bill is not about workplace health and safety; this bill is about denying workers' rights. The Labor Party Queensland should be ashamed. Only the LNP will put workers front and centre and give them the rights they deserve.

 **Ms RICHARDS** (Redlands—ALP) (3.13 pm): I rise to support the Work Health and Safety and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023. To have to listen to this bloke, seriously, with a track record in industrial relations. You cannot take that seriously for a second. Track record: wage freezes. Track record: voted against labour hire laws. Track record: voted against paid domestic and family violence leave. Track record: voted against industrial manslaughter laws. Seriously? I do not think for a moment that anyone in this chamber can take this fella seriously. Honestly! When we talk about representing workers—

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Bush): Use correct titles, member for Redlands.

Ms RICHARDS: Sorry. Nobody can take the member for Kawana seriously when it comes to protecting Queensland workers here in this state. That is absolutely an absurd proposition. I am not sure if the member for Kawana remembers the debate that we had on the previous piece of legislation

around registered industrial organisations. It was well documented. The organisations that he asserts are representing Queensland workers are not registered. I remind everybody of this spaghetti diagram. This is what NPAQ looks like. This is NPAQ. I tabled it in my last contribution. I will table it again.

Tabled paper: Document, undated, titled 'QAS Group and NPAA Services Organisational Chart as at 2 November 2021' [\[414\]](#).

Quite frankly, you should be absolutely frightened if you are paying them any money to represent you as a worker here in Queensland. They have no credibility whatsoever. To hear from the other side about NPAQ and TPAQ, you only need to look at their shareholder structure, their operational structure, the individuals involved in those organisations to see it is a dodgy, Ponzi scheme, literally. I am telling you, every Queenslanders should be worried if they are paying fees to an association that is not a registered industrial organisation that will advocate strongly for Queensland workers.

I will take that a step further. On the last debate we had on industrial relations, we received a submission to the committee from the Hon. Justice Peter Davis, the President of the Industrial Court of Queensland.

Mr Lister interjected.

Ms RICHARDS: Member for Southern Downs, you remember well Justice Peter Davis's contribution.

Mr Lister interjected.

Ms RICHARDS: I will table this letter as well when I am done with it, member for Southern Downs—

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, members!

Ms RICHARDS: He was quite scathing about those associations that claimed to represent workers in the Industrial Relations Commission. You know that well, member for Southern Downs; I do not need to lecture you on that. If that evidence provided by the honourable—

Mr Lister: He should never have filed a submission—

Ms RICHARDS:—the Hon. Peter Davis—if that doesn't tell Queensland what organisations like NPAQ—

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Pause the clock! Member for Southern Downs, the member is not taking your interjections. I caution you to stop yelling across the chamber.

Ms RICHARDS: If the submission made by the Hon. Peter Davis, President of the Industrial Court of Queensland, does not clearly outline which organisations misrepresent their ability to represent Queensland workers, nothing else does. There are three pages, and I will table that. He talks in here about lawyers coming in to represent as part of this organisation that are not actually representing rightfully Queensland workers. They are being charged fees that they should not be charged. It is all outlined and well documented in this letter. I will table that again for the benefit of all Queensland workers because I think they need to be aware of the scam that is being run by organisations that have themselves set up as associations.

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 22 June 2022, from the President of the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission, Industrial Court of Queensland, Hon. Justice Peter Davis, to the former Minister for Education, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing, Hon. Grace Grace, regarding the Industrial Relations Act 2016 [\[415\]](#).


Would you have your local garden club as a registered association or your local hockey club represent you as a worker in the Industrial Relations Commission? I do not think you would. Quite frankly, to have sat and listened to 30 minutes of the member for Kawana talking down the great work that unions do to protect Queensland workers is outrageous—absolutely outrageous. Again, I go back to the spaghetti diagram. I urge everybody in this chamber to take a very close look at the names on that table and see how it is related. Have a look at where their premises are residing. See if you can find their constitution for a moment. It is not there. Quite frankly, again, to assert that organisations like NPAQ and TPAQ are capable of representing Queensland workers and giving them their best possible representation is outrageous.

This bill is about strengthening again the protection of Queensland workers. Every worker in Queensland deserves to come home safely. Health and safety representatives are important persons within a workplace, and they need to have the right training and the right provisions within legislation to make sure we can protect Queensland workers.

I am really proud of this piece of work that strengthens and promotes the role of health and safety representatives, and clarifies their powers so that they know what they can exercise and the functions they can perform. This bill will promote consultation with workplace health and safety officers, and every

industry is very different. Health and safety representation in a hospital context is very different to that in a construction context. Making sure we have health and safety representatives who have the right training and who understand their role in the workplace to keep workers safe is of paramount importance.

Again, the committee did some great work. I congratulate the committee on the work they did. I had the opportunity to chair the public hearings before I transitioned over. I thank the member for Miller for concluding the report on this piece of work. The committee recommended that the bill be passed and made four other recommendations around developing guidance and resource materials for health and safety representatives and ensuring the Office of Industrial Relations considers how industry-specific knowledge is critical to HSRs. As I said, every workplace is very different—whether that be a hospital, a construction site or a dam site. These are very solid and sound recommendations. I was pleased to hear that the minister has taken all of that on board in terms of how the Miles Labor government continues to protect workers here in Queensland. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr LISTER** (Southern Downs—LNP) (3.20 pm): What a wicked corruption this bill is. What a disgrace that we have members of the Labor Party who are—all of them, I understand—in one way or another, in receipt of support from the union movement. This bill is a wholesale destruction of the right of choice for workers. It benefits the financial benefactors of the Labor Party in the trade union movement and it disadvantages the competitors of those benefactors. I say that anybody in this House who is in receipt of funding for campaigns or in-kind support—union staff paid to work on their campaigns, conduct research or something like that—who will vote in support of this bill should think very carefully about how that looks.

I say that it is inappropriate for those who are beneficiaries of the additional money that the trade union movement will get. I am talking about not just those who openly declare that they are affiliated with the Labor Party but also those who publicly claim that they do not support any political parties. I have seen the Queensland Teachers' Union's website claim that they do not support any political party. That is nonsense because, as the member for Kawana quite correctly said, they channel funds for the purposes of the Labor Party and Labor Party politicians—for their campaigns, their preselections and so forth—through the Queensland Council of Unions. If we want to talk about a Ponzi scheme, that is a wicked corruption. It is a circular economy of money where the Labor Party comes into this place and uses the levers of government contrary to the interests of workers—taking away their choice—in order for the union movement to pay for their campaigns, provide them with their preselections, provide them with their selections for ministries and even tell us who will be Premier. I think 'Blocker' Bullock had a role in that. I say that any member of this parliament who has enlivened those conflicts of interest has no business in supporting this bill. It is totally inappropriate.

The member for Redlands tabled a document and said that it was a submission made by a judicial officer to a previous bill. I say that no judicial officer has any business involving themselves in the formulation of legislation in this parliament and that the separation of powers works both ways. We heard about the independent review. The member for Kawana spoke very eloquently about how we have very little faith in the independence of that review because, as is often the case, the independent review is conducted by people who are Labor luminaries, friends of the trade union movement and so on. Added to that suspicion is the fact that none of the submissions or the identity of the submitters to that review were made public. I am pretty sure that the red unions were not asked to engage with them and provide input. I might say, by the way, that I am a proud member of the Independent Workers' Union of Australia, a red union.

Government members interjected.

Mr LISTER: I hear members interjecting that they are not unions. I remember that in the committee hearing I put it to one of the unions: if the test of whether a union is able to properly advocate for the rights of its members is whether it is registered or not, wouldn't you support a registration process for other associations in order that they might be subjected to the strictures and the oversight that they all talked about and that the minister talked about in her second reading speech? The answer came back, 'No. No, we oppose that.' That gets to the nub of the issue here. It is not about protecting workers; it is about creating and protecting a monopoly for trade unions who, one way or the other, finance the campaigns, provide the preselections and provide the ministerial selections for members of the Labor Party in this place. That is what it is about.

Earlier I was speaking to the member for Warrego about this and she made the very pithy observation to me that we have a government that has created a select committee to look into the duopoly of the supermarkets—as we know, when you concentrate the sources of supply, prices go up


and service goes down—yet the government is trying to eliminate competition and choices for workers as to who will be assisting and representing them in workplace health and safety matters. This is one virtuoso slap in the face for workers that says, ‘You don’t know best but the trade union knows best, so we’re going to prevent you from having a choice. We’re going to impose trade union representatives on you, even if you don’t want them to be involved.’ That is really regressive stuff.

The minister spoke at length about the strictures, the supervision and the standards that have to apply to organisations in order to be registered. On the one hand they are saying, ‘No, you can’t let other associations or red unions, for instance, be registered. They are not up to standard. That could not happen,’ yet we have heard about the CFMEU and their unlawful conduct, which has been catalogued at length in this place and others over many years. I have not seen them deregistered. If registration is supposed to be the assurance of good conduct, what is the Labor Party doing about the CFMEU? What is the system doing about misconduct of the kind that was mentioned by submitters to this particular bill?

I emphasise the point made by the member for Kawana earlier. He said that one of the submitters, the representative of the Australian Meat Industry Council—I am sure the member for Buderim knows, having been an abattoir worker, like the member for Kawana—said that it is decades since union representatives in that industry have been drawn from people who kill cows or who are boning meat products from animals in the abattoir industry. This fiction that the best representation will come from some union hack that has been foisted on the workers is utter nonsense. It is trying to gain access, trying to get someone in there who can cause troubles and who can threaten stoppages and interventions in order to do some sort of deal with the employer. We heard that about the CFMEU. I think one of the submitters talked about a case where the CFMEU on the Sunshine Coast or Caboolture had intervened to stop a concrete pour, costing hundreds of thousands of dollars. Those are the sorts of coercive and intimidatory tactics that we see when unions flex their muscles unlawfully. The idea that registration is the only way that workers can be protected properly is a nonsense, because we can see that registration does not curtail unlawful conduct by the friends of the Labor Party.

Workers deserve a choice and increasingly they have been making that choice. They have been walking away from registered trade unions—the ones that provide money to the Labor Party—and joining organisations like the Teachers Professional Association of Queensland and the Nurses Professional Association of Queensland. They charge not much more than half the price of their equivalent Labor Party supporting unions. Where does the difference go? I would hazard a guess that it is all of the extra staff that the union puts into working in the back offices of Labor Party members to try to get them over the line, doing research for Labor Party purposes and running third-party campaigns. When you do not do those things, you can actually afford to run the organisation and to provide services, insurance and advocacy for workers at not much more than half the price. That is the nub of the matter. We are talking about dollars.

The whole idea that this is to look after the interests of workers and improve workplace health and safety is a total fiction. It is about money. It is about those flows of money that I spoke about before, collected by the trade union movement, with a monopoly gifted to them by the Labor government, which flows back into supporting the re-election of Labor Party members of parliament and the selection of those members to be in the ministry. In any other context this would be seen as corrupt conduct. I think any local government councillor who were to enliven the conflict of interest like this and vote or advocate for measures in council that would disadvantage the opponents of their benefactors and reward their benefactors would probably find themselves in front of the CCC. I think this bill is a stain, even by Labor Party standards. This is the second bill we have seen in recent times that has tried to monopolise access to workplaces and I think it should be voted down.

 **Mr SULLIVAN** (Stafford—ALP) (3.30 pm): I rise today to proudly speak in support of the Work Health and Safety and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023. I do so as a proud member for Stafford and also as a former member of the Education, Employment and Training Committee that has dealt with a significant number of IR reforms during my time in this place. This is just the latest step in the Labor government’s proud support of Queensland workers.

As my entry on the parliamentary register shows, I am a long-serving and proud member of the Australian Workers’ Union which covers a wide range of areas that are particularly relevant to this bill, including construction and mining. It also covers others that may not come to mind to start with, such as retail and people working in delis in shopping centres who deal with the machinery, the ovens and those sorts of things in a basic retail setting. It is important that we can empower those workers to protect themselves.

Before I continue with my contribution, I want to touch on some of the points raised in this debate and some of the lunacy. I want to reflect on them seriously. The member for Kawana specifically named and reflected on the integrity of someone like Deirdre Swan. She was not just a former respected union official; she was a long-serving commissioner and a very respected member of the QIRC—respected by employer and employee organisations alike.

A government member: True; respected across the board.

Mr SULLIVAN: She is respected across the board. It goes to show that the member for Kawana has learnt nothing. He continues to attack judicial officers and continues to attack independent decision-makers. It is absolutely disgraceful. Those opposite—all of them collectively—have learned nothing. Despite the fact they had to introduce 'Operation Boring' to try to keep the member for Kawana away from the media for six months before the 2015 election, they have learned nothing. He continued the same behaviour and what did they do? They promoted him and he has made it very clear that he will go back to being the same old member for Kawana that he was when he was Queensland's worst ever attorney-general. It is terrible.

In terms of industrial relations and overreach, I remember the constitutional overreach when he introduced the undemocratic legislation to try to stop unions talking in public, to try to silence unions from actually having a voice in democracy. What happened? It was overturned in a second by the courts and it came back here in a heartbeat and was overturned because of its obviously unconstitutional elements. The member for Kawana did not even have the guts to come in here and do it himself. It was poor old Jeff Seeney.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Bush): I will ask that you withdraw that unparliamentary comment.

Mr SULLIVAN: I withdraw. The member for Kawana did not even come in and overturn the unconstitutional elements himself; he hid behind the then member for Callide, then deputy premier Seeney, who was introducing a land bill, a state development bill or something of the like. He had to do it by way of amendments; the member for Kawana did not even do it himself. That was how they withdrew those obviously unconstitutional attacks and overreach against working people of this state. That is his history and it is the history that those opposite are doomed to repeat because they promoted him to deputy leader. That says everything to Queenslanders and it sends a shiver down the spine of public servants. It sends a shiver down the spine of Queensland workers.

In terms of the contribution of the member for Southern Downs, the notion that a head of jurisdiction would be consulted and have input into legislation in good government is good behaviour. That is absolutely what we do each and every time, whether it is the Chief Magistrate where relevant, the Chief Justice, the President of the Court of Appeal or the head of the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission. It is absolutely normal for a good government to consult the head of jurisdiction where it impacts their jurisdiction. For the member for Southern Downs to suggest that that is terrible behaviour shows a lot about what the LNP think about their relationship with the legal profession and with the judiciary. It is absolutely outrageous. We have had the member for Kawana attack a very respected commissioner of the QIRC. We have had the member for Southern Downs attack the President of the QIRC, a silk and a justice of the Supreme Court. They have learned nothing and they will continue to do that. It shows what they would do if, God forbid, they were on this side of the House. It is absolutely ridiculous.

I turn now to the absolute disdain that those opposite have for what workplace health and safety officers do. The member for Southern Downs said, 'They are there to cause trouble.' Saving people's lives in making workplaces safe is not causing trouble; it is making sure that the workers—he or she—go to work in the morning and come home alive. If that is causing trouble, I am happy that they cause trouble. If that is the view of those opposite, does that not say everything about their view of Queensland workers? It is absolutely disgusting.

As for the price of these fake unions, there is no wonder that they undercut proper unions' prices because they do not do anything. They do not have any representative rights. They do not abide by the standards of the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission. The definition is 'industrial organisations' and those opposite forget that that includes employer organisations just as much as it does employee organisations. Those opposite might remember that there are really strict conditions in place for employer organisations including the organisation that the former member for Redcliffe ran into the ground for which he ended up spending some time at Her Majesty's pleasure. Those opposite might remember that it is employer and employee organisations that are properly regulated and are held to account, not these fake unions.


Those fake unions have said this in their own words, as I have said before, in a hearing in front of the committee. It was put to them that it seems that all of these so-called unions are run by the same people; they have the same secretaries, presidents or treasurers; they are located at the same place; and they have the same structure. It was put to them, 'Are you actually just a front for all of these bodies? Are you actually associated?' The answer put to us as a committee was, 'We are one and the same.' By their words, they admitted that they are a front for a fake union. As the member for Redlands said, we may as well talk to the Stafford Garden Club in terms of their ability and rights to represent workers in this state. It is an absolute front by their own words.

Ms McMillan: That's a bit harsh for the Stafford Garden Club.

Mr SULLIVAN: I take that interjection from my friend the member for Mansfield. I apologise deeply to the Stafford Garden Club. They should not be associated with such a fraud as a fake union. I apologise.

I think the monetary penalties make this effective legislation. If those who are responsible for making safety decisions think they are free and have no chance of being held responsible because they take out insurance, effectively the deterrence is removed. It is important. The whole purpose of the existing regime is that people have to have front and centre in their mind the workplace health and safety of their workforce. If they think they can be cavalier because someone else will pick up the cheque, that undermines the whole system.

I also support the role and work of elected health and safety representatives. They are there on the ground. They need to have the training and bravery to stand up when something is wrong and they need to be empowered to do that before it is too late. We do not want to have a coronial inquiry and then fix the problem. We want empowered elected workplace health and safety representatives to be able to do their job on behalf of their workmates and protect people so that they go home safe at night. That is what this bill is about, that is what this Labor government is about and that is what our movement is about. Those opposite can whinge and whine all they like, but we do not back away from it for a second.

 **Mr DAMETTO** (Hinchinbrook—KAP) (3.39 pm): I rise to make a contribution on the Work Health and Safety and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. I am proud to rise to speak on this bill that was before the Education, Employment, Training and Skills Committee. The bill obviously makes some far-reaching legislative changes—and I will get to those in a moment—but some members have made contributions today that areas of concern are cease work directions and support for cease work notices.

The objective of this bill is to introduce key reforms to: strengthen the role of health and safety representatives; enable HSRs to choose the provider of their required training; clarify the rights of work health and safety entry permit holders; clarify entities that may assist workers and act as their representative in relation to workplace health and safety issues—and I believe that is to address the rise of other unions coming into the union space; and move certain proceedings from the Magistrates Court to the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission. I am so glad that those opposite are concerned about those in the workplace, because they could not give a damn what I am saying, Madam Deputy Speaker.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Bush): Thank you, member. I think what you are alluding to is the fact that there is a bit of volume by members in the House. I ask you to keep the noise down. Thank you.

Mr DAMETTO: Thank you very much for your protection, Madam Deputy Speaker. Other key reforms proposed by the bill are: amending category 1 offences to include negligence as a fault element in addition to reckless conduct; prohibiting a person from providing, entering into or benefiting from insurance to cover liability for monetary penalty under the Work Health and Safety Act 2011; and clarifying information sharing regarding those regulators in workplace health and safety breaches. The bill aims to legislate recommendations that were made by the independent 2022 review of the Work Health and Safety Act and the Boland review in 2018, which was a national review of workplace health and safety laws in this country.

Deaths and near misses should also be considered when voting on this legislation. The ability for workplaces to remain safe places and the ability for people to report those instances should be paramount. I come from a mining and construction background. Some of the work done on those sites, although done in a safe manner, can be quite risky. Workplaces do their best and most employers do

their best to make sure that the safety of their workers is paramount. In cases where there are unsafe workplaces, people should have the right to stand up and say that something needs to be done. In that case, this legislation makes provision for people to call for a stop work. That is a very strong and powerful thing to be able to do on a work site but a necessary thing to do. No-one should accept a death on a work site. Everyone should be moving towards zero harm. It does not matter if it is a construction site in the middle of Brisbane, a work site in regional Queensland or a mining and construction site.


Every Queensland mining death is a tragedy and every one of those can be prevented. Recently two men succumbed to their injuries at Dugald River when their vehicle fell down a slope. That was an absolute tragedy. I know people who work on that mine site and were working on the shift before that incident. That is the kind of thing that sends a shiver down your spine when you hear stories like that, especially having worked in those underground environments myself, and when talking to friends who were working there. Those sorts of tragedies should not happen. If people see something and they are concerned about it, they should not feel like they are forced to walk past it. They should have the opportunity to call for a stop work to ensure that it is rectified and the safety concerns are addressed. We want to ensure we are looking after Queensland miners and all workers in Queensland. That is something that the KAP has always stood up for. The fact is that the most important and most valuable thing to go in and out of a mine is the workers, and I will say that time and time again because I truly believe it.

A 27-year-old worker was killed at Saraji Coal Mine near Moranbah earlier this year. This is another tragedy that should not have happened, and there have been so many others back through time. As the member for Stafford was saying at the end of his speech, the reason for the labour movement was to tighten up regulation in the workplace. At places like Mount Isa Mines, men were walking around with tar soaked hats and safety helmets when there were deaths underground. Part of the labour movement came out of that mining industry. We would love to see the labour movement move back towards its core business. I know that Queensland workers are looking for political parties that will support them now and into the future. The KAP will be there to support workers to ensure not only their rights and responsibilities but also their safety is paramount on a work site. As I said, every death is one too many and these reforms will go some way to ensure that cease work directions and notices are supported.

The explanatory notes state that the bill amends section 85 relating to the fact that a health and safety representative may direct unsafe work to cease. That is a good thing, but we also need to ensure it is not exploited on construction and mining sites. I have been on sites—not in this state but in other states across Australia—where I have dealt with union representatives who have not acted in the best interests of their workers and are more pushing from a political point of view. We have to ensure that if those practices are coming into Queensland we keep an eye on it and ensure it is implemented properly and policed properly and is not exploited.

I want to bring up a scenario that played out only a couple of weeks ago at Kidston on the pumped hydro project. Underground workers were on night shift and operating 300 metres below ground and due to finish at 5.30 am. At 5 am they felt a rumble and heard an explosion. Terrifyingly, they were still underground—something that should never have happened. That is under investigation and we look forward to those findings, but preliminary reports from some of the family members of those workers are that that was not handled well by the people in charge of the Kidston project. For those who do not understand, there is a tag board. If there are no tags on the board, there can be a blast. If there are people underground, that means there are tags on that board and a blast cannot occur. As I said, that incident is still under investigation, but that should never have happened. That was a near miss that could have quite easily been a double fatality.

I hope this legislation goes some way to sending the right message to those people running these projects, even if they are not a mining and construction project. More and more now we have renewable energy construction projects happening. If there is work happening that is similar to a mine site then I believe that they should be held to the same strict safety regulations. The KAP will always support legislation that is in the interests of ensuring Queensland and Australian workers are looked after so that every person who goes to work gets to come home safe.

 **Mr O'ROURKE** (Rockhampton—ALP) (3.48 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Work Health and Safety and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023. I was a member of the Education, Employment and Training Committee that was tasked with considering the bill. We received 14 submissions, conducted

hearings and received departmental briefings. The bill continues our government's long record of strengthening workplace health and safety laws in Queensland and we are leading the nation in doing so.

In 2017 in this House I spoke in support of the substantial reforms that introduced the offence of industrial manslaughter and established the independent Work Health and Safety Prosecutor. This ensured that Queensland workers are protected by modern work health and safety laws. Unfortunately, many of us have been impacted by workplace fatalities and we understand the impact they have on loved ones, friends and colleagues. In the past couple of weeks we have seen another fatality on an industrial site in Central Queensland. I express my deepest condolences to the family, friends and workmates of workers who have lost their lives as a result of work injuries. For the record, the LNP voted against those industrial manslaughter laws. Since being in opposition, the LNP has voted against: labour hire licensing laws; paid domestic and family violence leave; industrial protections for workers subject to sexual harassment, sex-based and gender-based harassment and improvements to birth related and parental leave; portable long service leave laws for community service workers, which is a workforce with about 70 per cent women; wage theft; and public holidays for Easter Sunday and Christmas Eve after 6 pm.

The bill gives effect to substantial legislative recommendations made by the independent 2020-22 review of the Work Health and Safety Act as well as nine recommendations from the 2018 national review into model work health and safety laws undertaken by Marie Boland. Three independent reviewers were appointed—Mr Craig Allen, a former deputy director-general of the Office of Industrial Relations; Mr Charles Massy, a barrister specialising in industrial relations and employment law; and Ms Deirdre Swan, a former deputy president of the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission—to conduct a review into the Work Health and Safety Act to examine whether existing frameworks in the act are robust and operating effectively to secure the health and safety of workers.

This bill implements recommendations of the review to strengthen the operation of the health and safety representative framework in the act. It does this by clarifying and better integrating the role of health and safety representatives in the workplace. Health and safety representatives are elected by their fellow workers. They understand the views and concerns of their work group and can provide a critical link between the employer and the workforce. It is an entirely voluntary role. The fact that people willingly step up into those roles for the worthy goal of helping to make their workplaces safer is something we should applaud. I wholeheartedly endorse the bill's objectives of promoting and strengthening the role of health and safety representatives.


One of the core findings of the review into the Work Health and Safety Act was that safety performance is improved when there is effective worker representation on work health and safety matters. The review recognised the great value of health and safety representatives and recommended a range of measures to improve the uptake of this role. As outlined by the minister in her second reading speech, the bill is integral to ensuring health and safety representatives are empowered to perform the role in the workplace. The bill encourages the election of a health and safety representative by requiring employers to advise workers about the role of the health and safety representative and invite them to facilitate an election. It also clarifies the uptake of health and safety representatives by clarifying the remuneration of workers attending health and safety representative training. It is important that workers taking on this role are not financially disadvantaged as a result of attending training.

Changes to better integrate health and safety representation into the workplace are also welcomed. They will be empowered to request and receive information to help them perform their role as well as accompany an entry permit holder or inspector so they can stay informed about issues on the workplace. Health and safety representatives will also be able to exercise the power to direct a person conducting a business or undertaking to cease unsafe work. This will be achieved by issuing a written cease work notice and displaying it in a prominent way in the work area. This approach is designed to minimise confusion about the detail of a serious risk that is imminent or immediate and will ensure all parties at the workplace have a common understanding of the issues.

I understand that the department is preparing guidance material to assist health and safety representatives to navigate these changes, which was recommended by the parliamentary committee in its report. I am positive that an increased presence of trained health and safety representatives at the workplace will correlate with improved health and safety outcomes for Queenslanders.

The bill also clarifies rules on the representation of workers by relevant registered unions for health and safety matters to ensure consistency with the amendments made in the Industrial Relations Act 2022. The reviewer found that the involvement of registered unions improves safety outcomes and

there is strong evidence that registered unions are the most important source of support for health and safety representatives. It should be noted that unregistered organisations are not subjected to the same rigorous transparency, accountability and registration requirements as registered industrial organisations. Therefore, the bill excludes associations of employees or independent contractors and other non-union organisations that represent or purport to represent the industrial interests of workers from involvement in resolving workplace health and safety matters. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr MICKELBERG** (Buderim—LNP) (3.56 pm): I rise to address the Work Health and Safety and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023. This bill purportedly seeks to give effect to the Queensland government's response to recommendations from the *Review of the Work Health and Safety Act 2011: final report 2022* and particular recommendations from the 2018 review of the model work health and safety laws, the Boland review. However, ultimately, this is a bill that is designed to entrench Labor's patrons, the union movement, and make it more difficult for workers to be represented.

The LNP do not agree that the Work Health and Safety and Other Legislation Amendment Bill should be passed. We do not agree it should be passed because we do not agree that the bill seeks to advance the safety of workers. I am sure that all members of the House would recognise that the safety of workers, at work and at home, should be paramount. However, this bill seeks to address union influence and not the safety of workers. The Labor government says that this bill seeks to implement necessary reforms that strengthen worker representation in relation to work health and safety, but the truth is that this actually takes away workers' ability to advance their own interests and to have advocacy of their choosing on workplace health and safety matters. This bill seeks to restrict the ability of workers to choose who advocates on their behalf.

Specifically, the bill seeks to legislatively establish a monopoly for a single predetermined union as the sole entity that is allowed to represent or assist workers on health and safety matters in the workplace. It also legislatively creates new right-of-entry powers that enable a predesignated union to enter workplaces and intrude upon workplace health and safety matters irrespective—and this is the key point—of the wishes of the workers involved. It begs the question: why has the government brought this legislation into the House?

I highlight a point that the member for Southern Downs made, which was that those opposite are hopelessly conflicted on this issue. They do not pretend to be anything other than the union movement. The Labor Party is the union movement. Every single member opposite owes their existence in this House to a union—every single one.

Mr Saunders: Hear, hear!

Mr MICKELBERG: I hear the 'hear, hear' from the member for Maryborough.

Mr Saunders: Very proud.

Mr MICKELBERG: 'A proud union thug', I think he was quoted as saying in the past.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Martin): Order, members!

Mr MICKELBERG: We will get onto some union thugs a bit later on. This bill is clearly designed to entrench union power. This is about union influence and union power; this is not about workplace health and safety. This bill seeks to broaden the rollout of employee health and safety representatives on job sites and to mandate time frames for their establishment. Those health and safety representatives will be able to receive copies of enforcement notices. They will be advised if a workplace health and safety entry permit holder is onsite and advised of any incident notifications made to the regulator. They will also be able to direct workers to cease work if there is a serious hazard. They will be entitled to earn the equivalent wage while they are attending training—training that in many cases will be delivered by RTOs owned by the union movement, which will funnel funds back to the Labor Party.

Given that many workers do not work a standard 38-hour week, those health and safety representatives will also be entitled to any overtime, penalties or allowances that they would have been entitled to had they been on the site. If it is a 24/7 worksite, they will be entitled to that overtime as well. If a health and safety representative reasonably believes that a person is contravening or has contravened the Work Health and Safety Act in circumstances that make it likely the contravention will continue or be repeated, section 90 allows the health and safety representative to issue a provisional improvement notice, a PIN, requiring the person to remedy the contravention. They will be able to choose their training without the need to consult the employer. I wonder: why would they want to be able to do that? Disputes around time off or reasonable costs will require mediation involving an inspector or the Industrial Relations Commission.

As I said, this bill will allow any relevant union—I will not go over the points made by the member for Southern Downs—to act as a representative of workers even if that union does not have any workers onsite who identify as members of that union. This is clearly a nod to the CFMEU and its ongoing turf war with the AWU. We know that those opposite owe the AWU a great debt, but we also know that members opposite, such as the member for Bancroft, are card-carrying members of the CFMEU. They are hopelessly conflicted on this issue. This will only seek to incentivise parties to take matters to the Industrial Relations Commission rather than to resolve them at the lowest level. This will not advance the workplace health and safety rights of workers; this will make it more difficult for employers and employees to work together for the betterment of safety of employees.

The bill also prevents companies taking out insurance to protect themselves and their officers from the liability of paying penalties for noncompliance with workplace health and safety laws. I heard the member for Stafford earlier proclaiming that this was a great thing, but I wonder if he would consider that professional indemnity insurance for a nurse, a lawyer or any of those other occupations which are necessarily risky, which may necessarily expose the worker to a liability, is something we should also do away with. I would suggest it is not. I would suggest that it is an important measure to protect those who work in those industries. If you support that argument, surely you should support the right of employers and of their officers to ensure they can protect their liability through insurance. Let's be clear: no insurer is going to insure a party that wilfully and blatantly disregards the law, because that would be a bad risk. The reality is that this is just about rewarding the union movement.

Let us look at the union movement. We have heard a lot about the value and the virtues of the union movement. Let's have a look at their record. In 2018 Justice John Reeves of the Federal Court of Australia said 'the CFMEU had a culture of wilful defiance of the law'. In 2016 Justice Kavanaugh said that 'the CFMEU engaged in systemic and wilful defiance of court orders'. He imposed penalties on that union for contempt of court. In 2019 Dave Hanna, former president of the CFMEU Queensland branch and a good friend of this Labor state government, was convicted of fraudulently receiving \$150,000 in payments from a labour hire company. He got six years in prison for that—as he should have. Roy Savage, a former Queensland Health Services Union official, was convicted of fraud in 2018. He got five years. Who can forget Kathy Jackson? She got two years and nine months in prison. Michael Williamson, the former national president of the HSU, got seven years. He knocked over a million dollars from the union—from union members. This is the calibre of some individuals in the union movement. I want to make the point that this is about some individuals, but to suggest that unions are the paragon of virtue and that only a registered union is able to represent the rights of workers is a nonsense.

In a contribution a couple of weeks ago I said that elements of the union movement were akin to organised crime. Let's look at the record of the CFMEU and the comments—

Government members interjected.

Mr MICKELBERG: I hear those opposite saying it is a big call, but let's look at the comments from justices of the Supreme Court and the Federal Court. Based on the contribution of those individuals and the record of the CFMEU, I think in many cases they are organised crime—not like organised crime; they do behave as organised crime. If we look across the road at Queen's Wharf, I understand that in January there were only six days when people were active onsite.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Pause the clock. Member, I believe you are starting to stray. I have given you a fair bit of latitude. I bring you back to the bill.

Mr MICKELBERG: Thank you, Deputy Speaker. I am talking to the influence of the union movement in Queensland and its effect on productivity and on workers' safety. Across the road at Queen's Wharf, workers were onsite for six days in January. I am told that the CFMEU went onsite—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Pause the clock. I will just take some advice. Member, I have just given you some pretty clear direction in relation to the direction you were going in your speech. You have chosen to ignore that and continue in that direction. I will give you the call, but if you continue down that path I will sit you down.

Mr MICKELBERG: Thank you, Deputy Speaker. I am directly addressing the statement of reservation in the committee report—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: You can resume your seat, member.

Notice of Motion, Dissent from Deputy Speaker's Ruling

Mr MICKELBERG: Mr Deputy Speaker, I give notice that I will move dissent from your ruling.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): That is fine. You can resume your seat.



Mr RUSSO (Toohey—ALP) (4.06 pm): I rise to speak to the Work Health and Safety and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023. The Education, Employment, Training and Skills Committee in its report No. 2 to the 57th Parliament, tabled in this Assembly on 23 February 2024, has recommended to the Assembly that this bill be passed. The primary objective of the bill is to give effect to the Queensland government's response to recommendations in the *Review of the Work Health and Safety Act 2011: final report* in 2022. The bill also implements particular recommendations from the 2018 review of the model work health and safety laws, the Boland review.

Key reforms proposed by the bill include: strengthening the role of health and safety representatives; enabling HSRs to choose the provider of their required training; clarifying the rights of work health and safety entry permit holders; clarifying entities that may assist workers and act as their representatives in relation to work health and safety issues; moving certain proceedings from the Magistrates Court to the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission; amending category 1 offences to include negligence as a fault element in relation to reckless conduct; prohibiting a person from providing, entering into or benefiting from the insurance to cover liability for monetary penalties under the Work Health and Safety Act 2011; and clarifying information-sharing arrangements with other regulators in relation to work health and safety breaches.

The Work Health and Safety Act 2011 sets out requirements and standards for securing the health and safety of workers and workplaces. Not only does it outline what must be done to protect the health, safety and welfare of workers and visitors in a place of work; it also includes the legal obligations and duties of both employers and workers.

In the 19th century, perceptions of what constituted workplace health and safety were completely different from today. It was not uncommon for large numbers of workers to labour in factories with poor ventilation, excessive heat and machines that had no safety guards. Initially, there were very few regulations and legislative structures governing workplace health and safety. In Australia, provisions were largely based on the British health and safety legislation of the time.

From the 1880s, work health and safety started to be taken up as a major issue. Legislation that included provisions for matters like cleanliness, sanitation and adequate working space and safeguards for dangerous machinery was passed in Queensland in the 1890s. By the 1980s, changes in how work health and safety was viewed resulted in comprehensive industrial agreements being negotiated.

The majority of measures contained in the proposed bill before us seek to implement or address recommendations for legislative change from the Work Health and Safety Act review and the Boland review. These reviews and reports had separate consultation processes. Further targeted consultation was undertaken by the Office of Industrial Relations during the drafting of the proposed bill with key stakeholders from registered unions and employer organisations, industry and government bodies. Feedback received was incorporated into the final draft of the bill where appropriate.

Following their examination of the proposed bill, the committee made four recommendations designed to support the implementation of the provisions of the bill. Three of these recommendations are in relation to the training of work health and safety representatives. The third recommendation is that the Office of Industrial Relations undertake a campaign of awareness so relevant organisations and workers are fully informed of the changes as to who can lawfully represent workers under the new definitions contained in the proposed bill.

A number of stakeholders in the inquiry were concerned that the bill proposes to expand the role and function of the health and safety representatives. Work Health and Safety Queensland describes the primary role of the health and safety representatives as representing the health and safety interests of a work group and to raise any issues with their employer. There can be as many health and safety representatives and deputy health and safety representatives as needed after consultation, negotiation and agreement between workers and the employer or the person conducting a business or undertaking.

The *Review of the Work Health and Safety Act 2011: final report* found that for health and safety representatives to be able to perform the role envisaged by the Work Health and Safety Act it was necessary for them to be completely integrated into the identification and resolution of safety issues at the workplace. The evidence-based academic literature and research reveals that safety performance is improved where there is worker representation in work health and safety. This makes sense. Workers have a vested interest in ensuring good outcomes for not only themselves but also their workmates.

However, the final report also found effective worker representation and participation needs to be supported by: inspectorate support of the worker representation provisions; management commitment to better health and safety performance and to participative arrangements, coupled with the centrality of the provision for preventive work health and safety in strategies for ensuring the quality and efficiency of production; worker organisation at the workplace that prioritises work health and safety and integrates it in other aspects of representation on industrial relations; and support for workers' representation from trade unions outside workplaces, especially in the provision of information and training.

To address these issues, the bill proposes that persons conducting a business or undertaking: inform a health and safety representative when an inspector or work health and safety entry permit holder is on site, and permit the health and safety representative to accompany them, where the visit is relevant to the work group; and provide the health and safety representative with copies of the enforcement notices issued by the inspector, copies of entry notices provided by the work health and safety entry permit holders, and mandatory incident notification made to the regulator by the persons conducting a business or undertaking.

Clause 32 seeks to amend the Work Health and Safety Act to provide for the health and safety representative to issue a written notice, a cease work notice, to the person conducting a business or undertaking requiring them to direct one or more workers to cease unsafe work if consultation has failed to resolve the issue. The person conducting a business or undertaking would then be obliged to direct the relevant workers to cease, or not start, work to the extent that it relates to the matters referred to in the notice. The cease work direction would remain in effect until resolved or an inspector issued a prohibition notice or the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission decides or deals with the dispute.


These measures raised concerns with a number of stakeholders in the inquiry as they believed that the bill proposes to expand the role and functions of the health and safety representative. The proposed amendments would not alter the existing power for a health and safety representative to direct workers in the work group they represent to cease work without first consulting with the person conducting a business or undertaking or attempting to resolve the issue if the risk to workers is so serious and immediate or imminent that it is not reasonable to consult before giving the direction. The Office of Industrial Relations highlighted that any potential misuse of this power could be immediately referred to the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission.

In its response to submitters' concerns, the Office of Industrial Relations confirmed the amendments relating to ceasing unsafe work will be incorporated into health and safety representative training. It is the department's intention to update the training that health and safety representatives receive and to produce templates and guidance in this area.

At the public briefing on 30 January 2024, Andrea Fox, the Executive Director of the Work Health and Safety Engagement and Policy Services of the Office of Industrial Relations, told the committee—

I would note that there is a review currently happening at the moment around HSR training in the department around the delivery method and ways of improving that training. I did note lots of interest today from various parties in industry-specific training. The department has long had a view that there would be potential merit in that. That is something that has been discussed and explored in the department.

I commend the bill to the House.

 **Ms LEAHY** (Warrego—LNP) (4.16 pm): I rise to contribute to the debate on the Work Health and Safety and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023. It is disappointing that this bill before us is not more about workers and keeping workers safe in their workplace. Let me say at the outset that the LNP believe that the safety of people in their workplace is absolutely paramount. However, this bill is not about enhancing workers' advocacy and interests in relation to workplace health and safety matters. In fact, this legislation is a backward step when it comes to workers' health and safety.

The stated objectives of the bill are to give effect to the Queensland government's response to recommendations from the 2022 *Review of the Work Health and Safety Act 2011: final report* and particular recommendations from the 2018 *Review of the model Work Health and Safety laws: final report*, the Boland review. When we look closely, union involvement is all over these reviews.

The 2022 review was undertaken by Deirdre Swan, a former Queensland Industrial Relations Commissioner and former AWU branch vice-president, and Charles Massy, barrister and former Queensland Council of Unions policy officer. The 2018 review was undertaken by Marie Boland, a former organiser at the Australian Services Union.

The Labor government claims that this bill's purpose is to implement necessary reforms to strengthen workers' representation in relation to workplace health and safety matters in their workplaces. In fact, this bill removes a worker's right to choose who is involved in representing their interests. It empowers a Labor Party-supporting and/or affiliated trade union to barge in and represent workers on workplace health and safety matters, even in cases where such intervention by the union is opposed by the workers concerned. As well as an attack on workers' rights and their ability to choose who represents them, it is also an attack on those unions that do not financially support the ALP. This bill, in our view, is a sellout of Queensland workers in order to reward the Miles Labor government's financial and political benefactors in the trade union movement.

Mr Boothman: Payday.

Ms LEAHY: I take that interjection: it is payday.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Pause the clock. I ask the member for Theodore to return to his seat if he is going to be interjecting and his interjections are going to be taken.

Ms LEAHY: As outlined by the LNP shadow minister, the LNP will be voting against this legislation as it is clearly designed to entrench union power and influence on work sites in the guise of workplace health and safety, and it does not enhance the safety of workers. This bill is not about workers' safety or improving workplace health and safety for those workers. This bill is all about enabling a union monopoly.

The bill will broaden the rollout of employee health and safety representatives on job sites and mandate time frames for their establishment. The bill amends section 118 of the Workplace Health and Safety Act to clarify that workplace health and safety entry permit holders are permitted to remain at the workplace for the time necessary to complete the exercise of their statutory powers. This is subject to the limitation that such rights can only be exercised during the usual working hours of the workplace. On a worksite in 24/7 operation, this would allow workplace health and safety entry permit holders to stay onsite indefinitely. The bill makes it easier for workplace health and safety entry permit holders to access employee records.

The bill will also prevent companies from taking out insurance to protect themselves and their officers from liability in relation to penalties for noncompliance with workplace health and safety laws. This is equivalent to preventing a nurse from taking out professional indemnity insurance. The average person could not imagine being prevented from taking out indemnity insurance, but this bill does that. These changes are likely to incentivise parties to bring matters before the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission. It is likely that it will clog the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission without additional resourcing. This will cost taxpayers more and it will also cost the community more. It should be noted that the explanatory notes contain over five pages of discussion regarding consistency with fundamental legislative principles, reflecting the questionable motives of this bill.

I will turn to the statement of reservation provided in the committee report. I want to quote some of the things in this statement of reservation. It states—

We are particularly concerned about the glaring and shameful conflict of interest that exists where the government uses its majority in parliament to simultaneously legislate for the benefit of its financial and political benefactors ...

If a council did that they would find themselves before the CCC pretty quickly. It continues—

Specifically, the governing Labor Party benefits from large financial and in-kind election campaigning support funded by the trade union movement (both directly and via the Queensland Council of Unions), and also through third party campaigning activities undertaken by unions.

We saw some of those last weekend at the Ipswich West by-election. We saw disgraceful actions of people impersonating particular organisations and handing out illegal how-to-vote cards.


Mr Mickelberg: It should be illegal.

Ms LEAHY: It should be illegal. It continues—

Furthermore, Labor Party MPs depend upon the political patronage of trade unions for party endorsement in their respective seats, and for selection for additional ministerial and parliamentary appointments. Indeed, the decisive role of union powerbrokers in the ascension of Premier Steven Miles to his current position was extensively reported in the media. This dependence of Labor MPs upon union influence to retain their jobs is another clear conflict of interest in the case of this bill, as the bill's provisions will reward those unions with monopoly powers and new rights of entry to workplaces, whilst simultaneously disadvantaging organisations which compete with those unions by locking them out of the system.

There will not be choice for workers. It continues—

As LNP members ... we believe that workers are entitled to choice, and that assumption that 'unions know best' is paternalistic and offensive.

 **Mr MARTIN** (Stretton—ALP) (4.23 pm): I rise in support of the Work Health and Safety and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. Workplace health and safety and workplace rights are very important to me and every MP on this side of the House—the right to fair day's pay for a fair day's work, the right to be treated fairly at work, the right to go to work and come home safely, the right to be listened to by your employer or manager, the right to be treated fairly and, importantly, the right to be represented by a real trade union. None of the rights and conditions that have been won by workers in Queensland have been given fairly. They have been fought for and won by real unions and their members and enacted by Labor governments.

This bill is another example of Labor enacting legislation that supports workers and their right to go home safely to their families. We are strengthening workplace health and safety laws in Queensland and building on the substantial safety reforms of 2017 which introduced the offence of industrial manslaughter and established the independent Work Health and Safety Prosecutor. The impact of workplace fatalities on loved ones, friends and colleagues is immense. The pain and grief is unimaginable. As other members have done in this debate, I extend my deepest condolences to the families and friends of workmates and workers who have lost their lives at work. We must do all we can to ensure that workers are protected in the workplace and that employers comply with health and safety laws.

It is disappointing that those opposite continue to oppose legislation that supports ordinary Queensland workers. Indeed, since being in opposition what is their record? They voted against labour hire licensing laws. They voted against paid domestic and family violence leave. They voted against industrial manslaughter laws. They voted against industrial protections for workers subject to sexual harassment. They voted against portable long service leave for community services workers. They voted against the wage theft inquiry, which led to wage theft becoming a criminal offence. They even voted against Easter and Christmas public holidays after 6 pm. Not only are they anti worker; they are also anti Christmas.

It is really no surprise that those opposite are arguing to weaken workers' safety and workers' rights by propping up fake unions that are unregistered and unregulated. They do not act in the interests of workers, and they have only been set up by LNP linked operatives to undermine workers' rights by splitting the workforce. It is the oldest trick in the book when it comes to industrial relations, although we have not seen such a sophisticated and devious approach until now. I am not surprised that it is linked to some well-known LNP members. These red unions are a tangled web of entities and incorporated associations that fall under the mysterious umbrella of the Red Union Support Hub. They are deliberately obscure in their ownership structure to hide from accountability and to hide who is pulling the strings. I am sure that a few people on that side of the House might be pulling the strings. Interestingly, all of the red unions are co-located at 41 Campbell Street, Bowen Hills, in the News Corp building. Recently one of these fake unions, the TPAQ, had a case thrown out of the Federal Court; that is how great that fake union is! I am sure it was very tricky, but they did not understand the distinction between state and federal jurisdictions. I wonder if the member for Callide understands that he is a state MP and not a federal MP.

Fake unions will take your money and try to convince you to leave a real union, and that is about it. It is their whole reason for existing. It has nothing to do with choice and everything to do with weakening workers' rights. That is why I am pleased to see recommendations in the bill from the Work Health and Safety Act review report that clarify what entities or persons may assist workers and act as their representatives in relation to workplace health and safety issues, ensuring they are a relevant union with the rules to cover that person's industrial interests and excluding entities purporting to represent the industrial interest of workers but that really have absolutely no idea what they are doing.

An important part of the bill is that it strengthens and promotes the role of health and safety representatives, including clarifying powers they can exercise and functions they can perform in the workplace. It promotes consultation about workplace health and safety between workers and their representatives, and it clarifies the rights that workplace health and safety entry permit holders can exercise at a workplace to assist workers. This is important because, in many cases, the most important part of any workplace health and safety system is that workers must feel confident enough to speak up. They must be able to raise issues at any time without fear of reprisals or discrimination. They must feel that when they raise issues they will actually be addressed by management and be taken seriously.

It is so important for good workplace health and safety that a good workplace health and safety culture exists. In fact the worst thing in any workplace is a culture where most workers do not open their mouths to speak up about hazards, especially hazards they see on a daily basis. This bill seeks to improve consultation and communication between workplace health and safety representatives and workers, which will go towards improving that culture.

I also want to add that I am a very proud former union official. I am very proud of the time I spent representing workers in Queensland. I conducted many meetings about health and safety, and I represented workers who had raised safety concerns. I am well aware that what is sometimes written up in a safety system, in a policy document or even in legislation is pretty far from what is happening on the ground. I think it is fair to say that in pretty much all recent workplace deaths or incidents around Australia there was somewhere a safety system or a hazard identification chart. Systems are important, but it is not systems that save lives. It is the daily work of people on the ground working out small solutions to small problems.

Debate, on motion of Mr Martin, adjourned.

MOTIONS

Cash, Legal Tender



Mr KATTER (Traeger—KAP) (4.31 pm): I move—

That this House:

1. notes that cash is legal tender accepted in Queensland;
2. openly supports the rights to use cash as a lawful form of payment throughout Queensland;
3. calls on the state government to take immediate steps to mandate that all state government offices, including all department service centres, and state-owned sports and recreation facilities, must accept cash as a legal method of payment; and
4. condemns any move by local or federal governments to move toward a cashless society.

This is about recognising that it is more than just a binary code and some digital currency that we want. Philosophically, this is where it cuts through. It represents an incremental creep on people's lives and freedoms if we are moving to a digital currency. I need to build into that because it is a really important point. Everyone rolls their eyes and says, 'What is this overreach?' but this is where it all starts. It is that incremental creep where some of those freedoms that we enjoy are offloaded. Cash is very intrinsically linked to that point.

It is a fact that the biggest users of cash are the elderly, those on a low income and those in rural and remote areas, so that is why we feel so strongly about this. We were very much reminded about this during some of the local disasters we suffered in the north this last season. When things go down—or even when our telecommunications are working in normal circumstances—it becomes very difficult for us to trade up there without cash.


I come back to the point about people's trust. The member for Hinchinbrook went over to China a few years ago. They have social credits there and if you play up—if you jaywalk, for example—all of a sudden, bang, money is taken out of your account. It can be an unforgiving system. We move straight down the path of George Orwell's *1984*. That is the extreme example of where this can land if it is not nipped in the bud right now. That is the reason for bringing this in front of everyone now. We could have complacency around this where everyone says, 'It's not even an issue,' but it is happening. Councils have been trying to pass it in North Queensland. Councils have been trying to go cashless. Sporting facilities are doing it now, as are buses. It is happening now and everyone is just watching it happen. It takes governments to be assertive and proactive to stop it.

Who is the big pusher of this? It is the banks. The big four banks made \$32 billion in profit last year. Cash costs them a lot of money and it is an inconvenience for them to shift cash around. That is difficult for them. They are in there with government and they have so much influence over our governments in Australia. We can see how their lovely relationship goes hand in hand there and how much influence they have.

We had the truck strike in Canada where people were standing up for freedoms and the Canadian government said, 'Let's freeze the bank accounts of these people because we don't like their political views and what they're doing. They're being disruptive so let's stop their bank accounts.' That erupted in a furore. They are the sorts of things we are exposed to in a cashless society. We talked about the natural disasters and the telecommunications. In Normanton, mobile phones have been out for eight

days at the moment. That does not happen very much in Brisbane or the south-east corner. These are the things we put up with. I go to the remote events that we have that run off cash—like the Sedan Dip and the Quamby races. A lot of these places are getting remote EFTPOS now, but a lot of them still run on cash and the people have to run floats to the banks in town.

Let me go back to the banks. Bankwest recently announced that they were going to close all of their 60 branches and go digital. They do not worry about customer convenience or remote communities, race clubs and small businesses. They are keen to get out of this and they need to be stopped. It is not enough to sit back and say that this is the market talking. Let us admit that we are all using less and less cash and that is why it takes a government to stand up and say that they are going to make sure they preserve a place for cash and for people's freedoms.

 **Hon. BJ MELLISH** (Aspley—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads and Minister for Digital Services) (4.36 pm): I move the following amendment—

That paragraphs 3 and 4 are omitted and the following inserted:


3. notes that state government institutions provide an array of payment options and will work with Queenslanders to support their payment needs; and
4. notes that many people in our community use electronic means of payment, however options should be available where possible.'

All Queenslanders should have the choice to use cash. The Department of Transport and Main Roads handles on average 20 million transactions per year on behalf of the government. These transactions are completed right across the state. TMR is committed to ensuring equity in the provision of services; this includes facilitating cash payments. The Queensland government accepts cash at more than 80 Queensland Government Agent Program counters in the regions, 58 customer service centres and three Queensland government service centres. Customers can choose to pay for services—like renewing their vehicle registration or licences—using cash. For example, in the electorate of Traeger, face-to-face government services are offered in Camooweal. This is at one of our Queensland Government Agent Program, QGAP, counters—and, yes, customers have the option to pay by cash.

In the last financial year, I am advised that the top three ways customers completed transactions were online, face to face and BPAY: 7.3 million transactions, or around 35 per cent, were completed online; 4.6 million transactions, or 22 per cent, were completed face to face; and four million transactions, or around 20 per cent, were completed via BPAY. With almost a quarter of transactions still being undertaken face to face, we know that many Queenslanders still like the option to pay by cash. We also recognise that some customers enjoy the accessibility of digital services and choose to pay and access services online. In January 2024 a record 525,000 Queenslanders were authenticated online. That means half a million more Queenslanders are signed up ready to complete their government transactions over the internet.

We know that this is not the best choice for everyone. We understand that access to cash to make a payment is a matter of equity. Not every Queenslander can obtain a credit card or can afford a smartphone, and it is important that this is reflected in the way they can pay for government services or products. On this side of the House we govern for all Queenslanders.

In terms of public transport, we are providing customers with different ways to pay for services, and that is reflected on our public transport network right across the state. You can purchase a paper ticket using cash through a machine, or you can pay and book online, or you can tap your go card or use your credit card, phone or smartwatch. During COVID-19 a decision was made to go cashless on the SEQ network in order to protect our frontline drivers and customers and their health and physical safety. However, you can still purchase a ticket at any bus or train station using cash. No matter what way customers choose to pay, we support Queenslanders having the right to choose.

 **Mr KNUTH** (Hill—KAP) (4.39 pm): This motion is very important. I will again read out the motion moved by the KAP member for Traeger. It is very important for rural and regional Queensland and Australia that this House: notes that cash is legal tender accepted in Queensland; openly supports the right to use cash as a lawful form of payment throughout Queensland; calls on the state government to take immediate steps to mandate that all state government offices, including all department service centres and state owned sports and recreation facilities must accept cash as a legal method of payment; and condemns any move by local or federal governments to move towards a cashless society.

First of all, I am going to read a KAP exclusive traditional Aussie poem titled *Cash is King Poem!*
It reads—

In the land down under where kangaroos hop,
We cherish our cash, we refuse to stop.
Mate, in Australia, we're a cash-lovin' crew,
We ain't jumpin' on that cashless hullabaloo.

Now, picture this, in a cashless regime,
When the power goes out, it's like a bad dream.
No EFTPOS, no tap-and-go spree,
Just stranded Aussies, as grumpy as can be.

In remote Queensland, where the internet's slow,
Try swipin' your card, and watch your patience go.
Buffering circles, spinning round and around,
Cash in your pocket? That's where it's found!

And what about cyclones, a true blue fear,
When nature decides to make things unclear.
With no power for days and cards on the fritz,
Cash saves the day, no technological blitz.

So here's to the notes and the coins that we hold,
In wallets, pockets and ash trays, they're worth more than gold.
A cashless society? I'd rather a kick in the shin,
Give us our cash mate, cause Cash is King!

I looked up in regards to cash is king, and I just want to show this sign. I think I might get in trouble, will I, Mr Speaker?

Mr SPEAKER: Yes, you will.

Mr KNUTH: Sorry, I forgot standing orders. The business is encouraging customers to use cash. They put a sign outside which reads—

Customer Notice

If you are able to pay using cash please do!!!

This will ensure that we keep 100% of your payment & the banks get nothing!!!

The member for Traeger brought up these figures. The four big banks delivered a record full-year profit of nearly \$32,000 million—\$32 billion—in the 2023 financial year, and what have we seen? We have seen bank and branch closures, forecast bank and branch closures and massive interest rate rises. We are seeing a very struggling economy and struggling people. This is why we are putting this motion forward. If we do not start doing something now, we are going to see massive impacts. I wish to read from an article from the *Straits Times* titled 'Cyclone-hit New Zealand exposes the risks of a cashless society'. It states—

The cyclone that tore through New Zealand last week has exposed the dangers of a cashless society, prompting the central bank to consider new ways of ensuring access to physical money when power and telecommunications fail.


New Zealanders were left unable to pay for vital goods such as food and water for days after cash machines and payment systems were knocked out by Cyclone Gabrielle, which left at least 11 people dead and displaced thousands as it cut across the upper North Island.

Some areas were still without connection more than 10 days later. It further states—

The central bank is having discussions with banks and independent third-party operators about how to ensure resilience in the system and make sure cash remains accessible.

The member for Traeger also mentioned that in 2022 we saw the Canadian government move to freeze bank accounts of truckies who were on strike. As I said before, we have to start now. We have to start protesting now because we are starting to see councils going cashless, state governments going—

(Time expired)

 **Ms HOWARD** (Ipswich—ALP) (4.44 pm): I rise to support the amendment, although after hearing the *Cash is King Poem!* maybe I am not going to! As with a lot of the Katter party motions and a lot of things they say here, there is definitely merit in the motion. However, I am really proud to be part of a government that believes in equity of payment for all Queenslanders. We know that people in Queensland should have a choice whether or not they are going to pay in cash. It is very evident that there is a rise in electronic payments. It is more convenient for many people. Transactions are easier to keep track of. I saw transactions in Parliament House today where some people paid in cash and some people paid electronically. It is the way of the world now.

As someone who originates from the regions and who represents a regional city, I appreciate the concerns around a cashless society. It is an issue that gets raised with me quite a bit. There are some businesses that demand customers pay them in cash. They are not actually legally allowed to do that but they do it, and it does cause quite a lot of concern in the community.


As I said, we are a government that supports equity. We want equal opportunities for everybody. I think that is reflected, as we heard from Minister Mellish, in our public transport network across the state. That network provides commuters a number of ways to pay. You can get a paper ticket using cash through a machine, you can pay and book online, you can tap your go card or you can use your credit card, your phone or your smartwatch. As we also heard from the minister, during the COVID-19 pandemic there was a decision made to go cashless in that system, and that really was to help stop the spread of the virus and to protect our frontline workers as well as customers. You can still purchase a ticket at any bus or train station using cash. We have a department of transport office in our area. I know that it often handles cash from customers.

I think in lower socio-economic areas there is a higher incidence of people who are still really happy to use cash. When there are emergencies or natural disasters, electronic payment systems can fail or become unavailable, as was outlined in that poem. Accepting cash ensures people can still purchase essential goods and services when digital infrastructure goes down.

It does not matter how you choose to pay; we support Queenslanders having the right to choose how they go about making payments. We understand that using cash for payment is an equity issue. As I said earlier, I think in lower socio-economic areas, as in some parts of my electorate, people still use cash. It is still very important to them.

There are people who resent the banks and the high fees that are often charged. They do not want to use the tap-and-go; they do not want to use electronic means as a way to get their money because of those higher fees. With cost-of-living pressures, people are really conscious of every single dollar that goes out of their hand.

I want to reassure everybody that on this side of the House we govern for all Queenslanders and that choice is incredibly important to us. I would like to support the amendment moved by the Minister for Transport and Main Roads and I commend it to the House.

 **Mr ANDREW** (Mirani—PHON) (4.48 pm): I would like to thank the Katter party for bringing this motion to the House. Cash is legal tender and the message needs to go out from this House loud and clear that there is nothing dirty or wrong with producing cash and paying for goods or services in that way. As for the amendment to the motion, I notice that Minister Mellish has said, 'however options should be available where possible'. They should be available everywhere. This is a very important issue. Cash helps people budget. It ensures people in the bush can make purchases where there is no internet, when the phone lines are down and in times of emergency.


I would like to bring to the attention of the House what the Queensland Auditor-General said to us about cyber insecurity. We have a situation where we could have power outages—we have been told this. Even the World Economic Forum, bless their cotton socks, have said that there are cyber insecurity issues from 2024-25 that could leave everybody in a situation where there is no power and the whole place could be blacked out. It would be catastrophic if we did not have any cash, because I am sure everyone will not write IOUs. There is another situation with cash, too. Moving to a digital economy the way we are—the trucks were mentioned earlier. The government used the stopping of digital accounts as a punitive measure because people were not happy with how things were travelling. This is the people's house and if they want to fight for their freedoms, that is their right—they have every right.

There is almost no area of human activity or human life that is not vulnerable to financial or government monitoring of one kind or another. Physical cash offers privacy in a way that electronic cash never can. This is important for people and it ought to be maintained. It also offers our older people relief from having to navigate the financial world online. Many people aged between 65 and 74 have

never even used the internet; they would not even know what button to push; they cannot even send a photo on their phone. Cash serves several important functions that cannot be disregarded. The risk of electronic systems failure, insecurity arising from the increased threat of cybercrime and concerns regarding identity and digital connectivity further underline the importance of access to cash for the citizens of Queensland.

Cash is the only form of money that citizens can hold without the involvement of third parties or access to broadband, electricity or equipment. It is simple, easy to use and you know how much you have. The other concept that is relevant here is the alienating effects of this drive towards a digital economy. There is no doubt that there is a growing mental health crisis that comes from the many pressures on people. One feature of that crisis is alienation. Things that used to involve friendly human interactions and relations between human beings are being replaced by faceless and anonymous online interactions. It is not good. There is no doubt that being able to interact with people by means of paying cash, could prove alienating when it comes to human relations. We must be careful about things that will reduce people's right, or choice, to interact with other human beings in day-to-day economic or social processes. It is critical that government, industry and regulators understand the importance of preserving people's access to cash, in terms of social and financial inclusion. This is an important motion. It speaks to the retention of choice and freedom and the dangers that are involved in removing that choice and freedom.

There is simply no question that access to cash, and the use of cash, is a matter of vital importance for not only many ordinary people but also community groups. The motion is straightforward. Refusal to accept cash as a payment is, I believe, unconstitutional and discriminatory. In every single government agency—across the whole spectrum, regardless of what department we work with—the acceptance of cash and the way that we do dealings with cash must be preserved at all costs.

 **Mr DAMETTO** (Hinchinbrook—KAP) (4.53 pm): I rise in support of the motion moved by the member for Traeger. Cash is king. To give people a bit of background on how cash became legal tender, originally people used to trade in gold or gold coins. That was the reality. People used to trade in gold, even in this country.

An opposition member: Or rum.

Mr DAMETTO: Rum may have been one of those commodities that was also well traded. The fact is, it was hard to carry gold around everywhere. So the banks started saying, 'How about you keep gold with us and we will give you an IOU to put in your book to show how much gold you have.' Talking about IOUs, member for Mirani, the reality is that people used to trade in those IOUs—that is how they used to run trade instead of actual gold. Eventually the banks cottoned onto this, they talked to the Australian government and the rest is history. All of a sudden, people had money in the bank, because they had gold in storage at the banks. The gold standard is long gone and obviously we print money like it is going out of fashion now—that is the reality of inflation.

Members have to understand that people appreciate the fact that they can use cash and they should have a legal right to be able to use that cash. That is what we are asking for at point 3 of this motion—preserving and moving towards preserving the ability to use cash throughout Queensland. There are a number of stadiums at which people cannot use cash right now. There are a number of businesses right now that are not taking cash. Cash should be accepted. I am pretty sure that if people cannot tell someone, 'You can only spend cash here', then they should not be able to tell someone, 'You can only use EFTPOS or online currency'.

We need to protect these rights, because if we continue the erosion of these things we will end up in a difficult situation. I was lucky to go to China in 2019. I saw a digital currency in Shanghai—a city of 27 million people. Shanghai has everyone on digital currency that is linked to the social credit system and to cameras. If you are jaywalking across the road they can take money straight out of your account. If people do not pay the money or if they have no money, their social credit comes down. Their social credit comes down anyway, which inhibits their ability to walk around the city, go to different places—even pay video games online. It is a very dangerous direction in which to head.

Queenslanders, especially rural and regional Queenslanders, value cash—that is how some of us do business. If someone in the bush wants to very quickly go and buy some hay from next door and they have 20 grand in cash, they can go over and buy their hay—they have the money in their back pocket. They do not have service out there, I will tell you that! If they have 20 grand, they can buy what they want. Go and buy an implement for a tractor, for all I care. We have to protect that.

The federal government tried to put a limit on how much cash people could actually spend. The previous federal government tried to put a limit on that, and guess what? It was pulled at the last minute. Allowing people to only spend 10 grand at a time would kill off most businesses. The banks are being very greedy about this. A number of banks are about to do away with chequebooks. In the bush cheques are how people do business. If they could not get access to cash, it is how they used to do business.

An opposition member: Your own policy will get you.

Mr DAMETTO: Absolutely. The banks continue to profit by pushing people away, making it easier and more convenient to use online systems and harder to get hold of cash. But guess what? They make money through merchant fees every time people spend money. Guess who pays for that? Either the small businesses we should be caring about or those people that the charge is being passed onto—the customer in some cases. In the middle of a cost-of-living crisis, we should be trying to save every cent in this state. I dare anyone in this House to say to a tradesman that they want to move away from cash and eventually go to a cashless society. I can tell members that that will be the fastest way to lose as many votes as possible.

People want the opportunity to be able to do business personally without government oversight and without government looking at every cent they spend. People might say, 'They are tax dodging.' Guess what? I have seen tax accumulate in this country only to be wasted. I reckon the more money we put in people's back pockets, the better. Let people have cash and the ability to trade in cash forever and a day. The KAP will protect the rights of Queenslanders and Australians when it comes to accessing legal tender and spending it in this country.

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

AYES, 44:

ALP, 44—Bailey, Boyd, Brown, Bush, Butcher, Crawford, D'Ath, de Brenni, Dick, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Healy, Hinchliffe, Howard, Hunt, Kelly, A. King, S. King, Linard, Lui, Martin, McCallum, McMahon, McMillan, Mellish, Miles, Mullen, O'Rourke, Power, Pugh, Richards, Russo, Saunders, Scanlon, Skelton, Smith, Stewart, Sullivan, Walker, Whiting.

NOES, 34:

LNP, 29—Bates, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Camm, Crandon, Crisafulli, Frecklington, Gerber, Head, Janetzki, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Lister, McDonald, Mickelberg, Minnikin, O'Connor, Perrett, Powell, Purdie, Robinson, Rowan, Simpson, Stevens, Watts, Weir.

KAP, 3—Dametto, Katter, Knuth.

PHON, 1—Andrew.

Ind, 1—Bolton.

Pairs: Furner, Nicholls; Lauga, Hart; Pease, Molhoek; Ryan, Millar; Tantari, Mander.

Resolved in the affirmative.

Amendment agreed to.

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

Mr SPEAKER: Ring the bells for one minute.

AYES, 44:

ALP, 44—Bailey, Boyd, Brown, Bush, Butcher, Crawford, D'Ath, de Brenni, Dick, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Healy, Hinchliffe, Howard, Hunt, Kelly, A. King, S. King, Linard, Lui, Martin, McCallum, McMahon, McMillan, Mellish, Miles, Mullen, O'Rourke, Power, Pugh, Richards, Russo, Saunders, Scanlon, Skelton, Smith, Stewart, Sullivan, Walker, Whiting.

NOES, 34:

LNP, 29—Bates, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Camm, Crandon, Crisafulli, Frecklington, Gerber, Head, Janetzki, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Lister, McDonald, Mickelberg, Minnikin, O'Connor, Perrett, Powell, Purdie, Robinson, Rowan, Simpson, Stevens, Watts, Weir.

KAP, 3—Dametto, Katter, Knuth.

PHON, 1—Andrew.

Ind, 1—Bolton.

Pairs: Furner, Nicholls; Lauga, Hart; Pease, Molhoek; Ryan, Millar; Tantari, Mander.

Resolved in the affirmative.

Motion, as agreed—

That this House:

1. notes that cash is legal tender accepted in Queensland;
2. openly supports the rights to use cash as a lawful form of payment throughout Queensland;
3. notes that state government institutions provide an array of payment options and will work with Queenslanders to support their payment needs; and
4. notes that many people in our community use electronic means of payment, however options should be available where possible.

Labor Party, Together Union

Mr SPEAKER: I call the member for Kawana.

Mr WALKER: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. In relation to the motion that is about to be moved in the House, I have been named but I am not a beneficiary or a member of the Together union. That is going to go to a vote with my electorate listed.

Mr SPEAKER: Member, you are entitled to speak on the motion to advise the House which parts of the motion you do not agree with, and that is the debate we will have in the House.

 **Mr BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (5.05 pm): I move—

That this House:

- (a) notes the campaign organised by the Together union promoting ALP members and encouraging unsuspecting Queenslanders to respond to the union's online activities;
- (b) notes the debranding by ALP members of their party affiliation as part of this campaign; and
- (c) calls on the Premier and the members for Algeester, Hervey Bay, Caloundra, Pumicestone, Maryborough, McConnel, Cooper, Thuringowa, Mundingburra, Redlands, Nicklin, Barron River and Cairns, members or supporters of the Together union, to renounce these tactics and support the restoration of fair electoral laws and practices.

The reason this motion mentions that particular member is that he has an opportunity to vote for this motion and renounce the practices of the Together union in Queensland, which is data harvesting hardworking Queenslanders' details. As I asked yesterday in a similar debate on another subject when we were talking about the union movement and Labor Party MPs, why are the Labor MPs debranding and leaving the Labor Party? Why are they so ashamed to be associated with the colour red? Why are they so ashamed to be associated with the Labor brand? Why are they so ashamed to be associated with the Labor Party? It is because of the chaos and dysfunction of the Miles government. That is why they are leaving in droves. That is why they cannot even put red on their flyers; they have to use purple. They are debranding and they are doing it through a union.

I table again for the House articles from the member for Caloundra, Mr Hunt; the MP for Barron River; and the MP for Cairns in which they are all absolutely debranding from the Labor Party. There is another one, the MP for Thuringowa, Mr Harper—purple debranding.

Tabled paper: Bundle of extracts from various websites depicting the member for Cairns, Hon. Michael Healy, the member for Barron River, Mr Craig Crawford MP, the member for Caloundra, Mr Jason Hunt MP, and the member for Thuringowa, Mr Aaron Harper MP [\[416\]](#).

I clicked on these links. They say they are a subsidiary of the Together union called Coalition of Working Families. When I clicked on it, I saw that the address is the registered address of the Together union. Then when I went to fill out the survey it asked for my name and address and then asked, 'What cost-of-living relief do you think I should be fighting for?' If the Labor Party members have not worked that out in nine years in government, what hope do we have that they are going to find the solutions for the cost-of-living crisis before the next election in a few months time? Absolutely none!

Here is the crack-up. I went onto the website. This particular website was 'jasonhuntforcaloundra.au'. That is a campaign website. That is a 'vote for me in Caloundra' from the member for Caloundra. However, the website is owned by the Together union. Not only that, the privacy policy states—

We also collect personal information through our websites and social networking services such as Facebook and Twitter. We use this information to improve our activities on your behalf, inform campaign and community activities, our website and receive feedback ...


We don't disclose sensitive information about you unless you agree, or would reasonably expect us to in order to conduct our usual functions and activities on your behalf.

The people filling out this survey are not members of the Together union; they are constituents in the electorates of these members of parliament. They are not subject to this privacy policy. This is a case of the union movement harvesting data for a Labor member of parliament for an election campaign.

In my motion I talk about electoral laws and practices. On the weekend we saw the AWU and their disgraceful campaign of fake how-to-vote cards representing the cannabis party in the by-elections. The member for Clayfield went through that yesterday. The day before the Ipswich West by-election, the AWU donated \$43,000 to the Labor Party. That was the day before the by-election and then suddenly the AWU were handing out fake how-to-vote cards preferencing the Labor Party. The Labor Party scratches the unions' back; the unions scratch the Labor Party's back.

This is a disgrace. I can understand why members of the Labor Party are debranding and leaving the Premier in droves. His ministers are leaving in droves. His ministers are leaking against him. He went to the Labor love-in and he told everyone about the importance of not leaking against the government. Within 24 hours they leaked against the Premier. They leaked against the government. We have seen an extraordinary leak in the last 24 hours where a cabinet minister went to the media and leaked cabinet discussions which the Labor Party now deny will ever be public despite the fact they have agreed to release cabinet discussions. But no, today they do not want to talk about it—it is no-one's business.

It is a disgrace. We can understand why Labor are debranding because guess what? Queenslanders have left the Labor Party. Queenslanders have given up on the Labor Party. Show Labor the door in '24.

 **Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for State Development and Infrastructure, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing) (5.10 pm): I move the following amendment—

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

- (a) notes the rights of registered unions like the Together union to campaign on issues impacting their members and the community and their right to highlight what members of parliament are doing to respond to the issues raised;
- (b) notes the campaign branding is a matter for the respective union; and
- (c) notes all Labor members continue to listen to issues raised by their community, including union members and organisations.'

It has been a while, but true to form the member for Kawana and the Leader of the Opposition's hatred of registered unions is always under the surface. One does not have to scratch too deep. I can see the *Courier-Mail* front page now: 'Labor MPs support union campaign'. What a revelation! I never would have thought that I had ever seen it before. I can assure the member for Kawana that there is not one member on this side of the House who is not proud to be a member of the mighty Labor Party.


When a union runs a campaign, of course it uses its colours. In the Together union, it is purple. Surprise, surprise! The member for Kawana is like a broken record when it comes to his hatred for unions—well, just registered unions actually, because we know those over there all support the fake unions. He was the worst attorney-general and IR minister in Queensland's history who introduced draconian IR laws curtailing the unions' ability and democratic right to campaign on political issues. He then found out that his laws had to be repealed because the High Court found that similar provisions in New South Wales infringed on the implied right in the Constitution to freedom of communication on political matters. What a bungle! That is the essence: the High Court of this country has said that, constitutionally, unions have freedom of communication on political matters. That is the law in this land, and who takes umbrage to that? The worst attorney-general that this parliament has ever had.

I am a very proud unionist and a very proud member of the Labor Party. When I headed the union movement we worked on many campaigns in the community—it is something that is in our DNA—such as supporting the LGBTQ+ community for the same rights in society. The biggest community campaign that I have ever worked on was the Your Rights at Work campaign where community organisations came out of the woodwork to support the campaign that the unions had put together, and how successful was that campaign? We have a right—a democratic right—to raise issues that are relevant to workers and community members, whether it is fighting for the right to collectively bargain, fair and safe working conditions, equal paid maternity leave, DV leave, industrial manslaughter, and the list goes on. The unions have been leading the fight on these important issues and they have brought about real social and economic change.

Unions are democratic organisations which fight for issues their members are passionate about and often involve themselves in community campaigns—obviously something about which the Leader of the Opposition and the member for Kawana have no idea what they are talking about or how these organisations run. However, they were very quick to support the fake unions on their anti-vaccination campaign in the community and very quick to get up in this House and defend the anti-vaxxers during a world health pandemic. So it is all right to debrand yourself and do that—that is okay—but if others want to join in a community campaign somehow the member for Kawana says that they cannot do that.

It is constitutional. They have a right. They are able to do that and it has nothing to do with debranding. It is all made up, it is all rubbish and those opposite come in here and waste time. Instead of concentrating on the issues that workers and the people of Queensland want us to, what do those opposite do? They find little bits about debranding and community campaigns. Honestly and truly, this is such a tired, lazy opposition.

(Time expired)

 **Mr MANDER** (Everton—LNP) (5.15 pm): I want to continue the theme that the deputy opposition leader began—that is, why would those opposite want to debrand? Why would they want to distance themselves from a brand that after the weekend is now officially toxic? It is officially toxic. Who would believe a 30 per cent loss of primary votes in the seat of Inala? Who would believe a swing of 18 per cent in Ipswich West to bring that seat back to the LNP? Who would believe that? The only two people happier than this side of the House about those results are the health minister and Annastacia Palaszczuk! They are the only two who are happier than we are—sitting back, rubbing their hands saying, ‘We told you so.’ Let us think about who might be leaking from the cabinet. I wonder who would benefit by leaks from the cabinet.

Is it any wonder that those opposite continue to want to distance themselves from this Labor Party when they constantly hear the comments and the gaffs from the new leadership team? Did members notice that the distancing and the debranding only happened once the new leadership team came into place, and is it any wonder when we hear some of the things that they say—some very serious things? On the weekend the Premier was at my local footy club at Mitchy when he was interviewed about how he felt about the weekend, and what did he say? He said that the LNP has done very well in sensationalising and politicising crime. That is an absolute insult to those victims of crime.

My question is this: which crime have we sensationalised? Which crime? Was it Emma Lovell’s tragic death at North Lakes? Was it the tragic deaths of Matthew Field and Kate Leadbetter at Redlands? Was it the tragic death of Vyleen White at Redbank about which the Premier also said that that crime could not have been prevented? Is it any wonder that those opposite are trying to debrand when we get comments like that from the insensitive Premier? Then we have the Treasurer and deputy leader, Cameron ‘Tin Ears’ Dick, who cannot hear—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Pause the clock. Resume your seat please, member. I will take some advice. Member for Everton, as an experienced member of this House you know that you use correct titles. I would ask you to use correct titles and I would ask you to withdraw that.

Mr MANDER: I withdraw. This is a Treasurer who is totally tone deaf and despite those massive swings on the weekend he came out that night in his presser and started rolling out the old speaking points, but no-one understands what the heck he is talking about—

An opposition member: Progressive coal royalties.

Mr MANDER:—like progressive coal royalties, preference deals, things that have no relevance to the everyday Queenslanders, but this is what he does. When he is not polishing the Binna Burra bell in his study, he is rolling out these talking points which mean absolutely nothing.

Then we have Minister Grace. I cannot believe what she said yesterday—I think it was during question time—when we asked about the tragic case of Russell Bates and the Logan Hospital. That was an absolute tragedy and her comment was, ‘These things happen.’ The same minister said that youth crime will always be with us. There is absolutely no empathy or respect for victims of crime and victims of a failed health system.

They will continue to run from this brand. It will get worse and worse as long as this government continues. They will continue to leak. What happened this week with the leak from cabinet of discussions about whether or not they should cancel the Olympics is nearly unprecedented. It shows that the rats are leaving a sinking ship. They are ready to jump off as quickly as they can. The infighting is happening.

There is nothing truer than what the member for Maroochydore said in her question this morning: the 'hunger games' are on. Who will survive at the end? After only a couple of months of a new leader we hear a murmur that they might change leaders again. Is it any wonder they are running away from the brand? It is chaos, it is chaotic, it is a crisis, it is getting worse and worse—and October cannot come soon enough.

Ms RICHARDS (Redlands—ALP) (5.21 pm): If this motion does not demonstrate clearly to all Queenslanders how bereft the opposition are of ideas then nothing ever will. We just heard from the member for Everton and the member for Kawana. Anybody tuning into this session has just seen the LNP on their best day. This is their biggest contest of ideas.

Let's talk about colours. Oh, my goodness! I quite like pink. Just so that you all know, pink is one of my favourite colours. My car is stickered in pink, with my logo and all of that. They talk about colours. Seriously, is that the best you have to bring to this place? If that is what you think Queenslanders are concerned about, honestly, go away, have a good hard look and come back. We have just heard the member for Kawana and the member for Everton—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Comments will come through the chair.

Ms RICHARDS:—talk about data harvesting. Let us talk about their Redlands candidate, who has put up a beautiful little petition that is all about data harvesting. She went to the front door of the Redland Hospital, but maybe she forgot to walk around the back to see where the intensive care unit, with 37 extra beds, is well under construction by ADCO Construction. She might have seen the new Lagoon Ward that has an extra 28 beds. Do not talk about data harvesting! Queenslanders are not fools but you take them for fools every day of the week. Quite frankly, this motion is a genuine waste of time.

Mrs Frecklington: Well, at least talk to it.

Ms RICHARDS: I take that interjection from the member for Nanango. I will talk about supporting organisations that want to listen to my community about the issues that matter most. We talk about cost of living because every Queenslander is feeling the pinch at the moment. I am very happy to support any organisation that wants to listen to my community and hear what approaches and options are available to deliver better for Queenslanders, such as those that build on our energy rebates and our energy-efficient appliance rebates.

We can go to the Redlands and talk to Alan, who just bought a new energy-efficient washing machine for his wife. That is what Queenslanders want to hear about. We can talk to any of the families in the Redlands who are really thrilled to be getting free kindy. That is what Queenslanders want to talk about. We can talk about free TAFE or Skilling Queenslanders for Work, which the LNP cut. As the member for Toowoomba South will tell us, past performance is the best indicator of future performance. We know what your past performance looked like. It is clear on the public record what the LNP's past performance looked like.

I am absolutely proud of the work that our government is doing to support Queenslanders in really challenging times with the cost of living. So many Redlanders are absolutely thrilled with the cost-of-living rebates and concessions that we provide to seniors. When I talk about our seniors I think of the Donald Simpson Centre. The people there love the rebates and the concessions they get. They also love the fact that the Miles government supports them to be connected, enjoy each other's company and not be socially isolated. The great work that the Miles government is doing to deliver for Redlanders is second to none. I am extraordinarily proud to stand behind anybody who wants to come, talk with and listen to Redlanders about the cost of living. I see the Leader of the Opposition with his head down at the moment.


Opposition members: Oh!

Ms RICHARDS: It was down then. There has never been more work done in the Redlands. They talk about past performance. I will talk about my past performance every day of the week. In our schools we have delivered air conditioning—2028 was the LNP's promise and we are all done and dusted in the Redlands. Every student has air-conditioned classrooms in what has been a really hot summer. We have delivered \$11 million for the new Redland District Special School. We have delivered for the high school. We are delivering a new kindy building at the Russell Island State School that will have six new classrooms. There is the satellite hospital. I looked at the dot points or the spin lines, because slogans are what the LNP do, right? Spin a slogan is what they do best. I am telling you: come out and have a look at all the great works that are happening with the satellite hospital.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Direct your comments through the chair.

Ms RICHARDS: I get tapped on the shoulder every day of the week by people telling me how good that satellite hospital is. You guys will most likely sell it off. That is the LNP.

(Time expired)

 **Ms CAMM** (Whitsunday—LNP) (5.26 pm): How good is Rebecca Young? Each and every day she is out there, working hard and listening to her community. She has delivered. When we look back at past performance, she has delivered for the chamber of commerce. We look forward to her joining us in this parliament in November to deliver for the people of the Redlands. She is a fantastic candidate. A 9 March Facebook post by the member for Thuringowa states—

I have committed to fight for more cost of living relief in 2024. Besides our recent energy rebates, what else would you like to see?

Then there is a link to a website headed ‘Let Aaron know what you need in 2024’. That post is proudly supported and sponsored by the Coalition of Working Families Queensland. I did some research into the member for Thuringowa’s advertising for data harvesting across Townsville and North Queensland. I referred to some marketing agencies because I was intrigued. We talk about colours. Why is purple the colour they have selected to align with? In marketing terms, purple is associated with wisdom, dignity and independence. I then questioned why it is that the member for Thuringowa and other members do not want to be associated with the colour red and what, in marketing terms, red means.

Mr O’Connor interjected.

Ms CAMM: I take that interjection from the member for Bonney. Red has the most powerful energy. If you want to encourage your target market to do something specific then red could give them the motivation to do so. I wonder: why is it that all of a sudden the member for Thuringowa and other members of this House are marketing themselves under a purple banner? I look forward to the coming weeks to see what other members of the Labor Party will do with colour to market themselves differently and align with their own union factions.

Mrs Gerber interjected.


Ms CAMM: I take that interjection. I thank the member for Currumbin because blue is aligned with trust, honesty and dependability.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Stop using your tie as a prop.

Ms CAMM: Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. We cannot wait to welcome our new member of parliament from Ipswich West, Darren Zanow, in the House. I want to remind the member for Thuringowa about what is important when asking those in Far North Queensland what is important to them. We certainly know what is important because we are on the ground listening, along with our great candidates in Natalie Marr, Janelle Poole and Adam Baille for Townsville. They are on the ground and door-knocking each and every day. They are out speaking and listening to their community. They know the failings of this Labor government in terms of the youth crime crisis gripping Townsville—a crisis which has members of that community leaving their keys out on their benches so that people can steal their cars without, hopefully, physically assaulting them. People know that they have candidates ready and willing to take up the fight. They do not need to be out with a union surveying people, because they are actually listening. They know the right priorities for government.

I pick up another point raised in this House about cabinet leaks in the past 24 hours. It is important that we highlight that obviously there is an issue in terms of the chaos and crisis of cabinet. It did not take that long. Without a doubt, what we saw in the House today and in question time was an audition either from the health minister or the Deputy Premier. We are not yet too sure who wants the top job. After the Premier’s big headline announcement with the housing minister when he was pressed on the hard questions about crime and about a tragic death in this state, what did he do? He giggled and laughed because he is out of touch—

(Time expired)

 **Ms BUSH** (Cooper—ALP) (5.31 pm): I will start by pointing out that the colour blue also means to be cold, aloof and uncaring. I wonder if perhaps that is a more appropriate colour reference for those opposite? I rise to make a contribution—

Honourable members interjected.

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

Mr de Brenni interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Leader of the House, when I am on my feet there will be no interjecting across the chamber. You are warned. Members, if I am on my feet I expect the chamber to be silent in the shortest time possible. The level of interjection and gesticulation across the chamber is unparliamentary. I ask that it cease.

Ms BUSH: Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. I rise to make a contribution to the amended motion. I welcome the motion because it gives us an opportunity to talk about the constructive working relationship that we have with the Together union, and, in fact, with our various unions. We do not shy away from the fact that we have that positive working relationship with unions.

That relationship has delivered incredible outcomes for Queensland's workers and the Queensland economy. If people are working an eight-hour day and a 40-hour week, they can thank a union. If there is paid annual and sick leave so that people can take the breaks that they need, they can thank a union. Paid domestic and family violence leave is something that the Together union and its members fought so incredibly hard for. In terms of workplace health and safety rights, people can be safe and protected at work and they can thank their union for that. There is sexual harassment and anti-discrimination legislation so people can work free from vilification and harassment—people can thank a union for that. On behalf of union members and all workers, I take offence at LNP attempts to try to bring unions into disrepute and suggest that they are some kind of thugs walking around trying to disrupt business. It demonstrates just how out of touch LNP members are.


Fewer than half of union members are women. Increasingly, they are young people. It demonstrates why the LNP has a women's issue and why it has an issue with young people. Unionists are cleaners, hospitality workers, teachers and nurses. They are those manufacturing our buses right here in Queensland. They are the sparkies helping with our energy transformation towards renewables.

I am a proud member of the Together union. I joined the Together union, in fact, in 2012. What else happened in 2012? I would like to give a shout-out to Campbell Newman, because I have him to thank for my union membership and, in fact, perhaps for being here. I was working at the Brisbane City Council at the time he was lord mayor. It was an incredible time. What he did at Brisbane City Council in terms of the sacking of all the staff was extraordinary. I and my colleagues were given notice pretty much on Christmas Eve that our contracts would end two years short. It was extraordinary. It was enough for me to take out my membership with the Together union. I thank them for their support through that time. Then what happened? He went on to become premier.

Ironically, I was working in the state government at that time and we all know what happened. It felt as though he followed me and tracked me down at the department of justice. It was extraordinary. He sacked not just me but 14,000 of my mates—14,000 public servants were sacked. It was extraordinary. People were walking around with boxes and being told to pack up their desks. I was working for Victim Assist in the department of justice—for all of the crowing from the member for Everton about looking after victims—and was told to come off my maternity leave a week after I had given birth to reapply and reinterview for my role with a range of other people. That is what we were living through at that time and that is why I am a proud member of the Together union.

In relation to the Together union organising third-party advertisements, it is a matter for the union. It is absolutely their right to be undertaking that kind of organising. If the Together union has decided to campaign on issues that are impacting its members and the community such as cost of living and the environment and choosing to highlight elected members in that campaign, the natural conclusion is that those members are viewed by that union as champions of those issues. That is something we on this side of the House are proud of. No-one is debranding. We are proud members of the Labor Party. If we want to talk about debranding, I have two words for those opposite—Scott Morrison. Let us think about that time and the debranding occurring in the Liberal Party.

The workers of Queensland owe a lot to our mighty union movement. Workplace reforms have been achieved largely through the organisation and collective action of our unions. I welcome the Together union's campaigning on issues important to my constituents such as cost-of-living impacts.

 **Mr JANETZKI** (Toowoomba South—LNP) (5.37 pm): I wanted to make my contribution tonight about the last eight words of this very fine motion moved by my colleague the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. The last eight words of this motion are 'the restoration of fair electoral laws and practices'. We have come a very long way in the past 10 years into the depths of gerrymandering and rigging of the electoral system in Queensland.

If there is one area of legislative reform that has been manipulated more badly than law and order, youth justice and the criminal laws of this state, it is the electoral laws of Queensland. It started in 2016 where with 18 minutes notice we saw a return to compulsory preferential voting. I note the member for Cooper was the last speaker to this motion. If there is one person who would be concerned about optional preferential voting, my guess is it would be the member for Cooper. That was in 2016.

I note the member for Sandgate on the backbench. He was up to his neck in the optional preferential voting deal on 18 minutes notice that night. There was no parliamentary process, no oversight by the public, no cabinet discussions and it was done in the dead of night with 18 minutes notice.

In 2017, on the eve of the state election, against the recommendations of the Belcarra report, property developer donations were banned. That was never recommended in the Belcarra report. That occurred on the eve of the 2017 election to nobble the Liberal National Party. In 2020 the Attorney-General came back to finish job. If members remember, the member for Redcliffe and Attorney-General would always be on her high horse and sanctimonious: 'We want to take money out of politics.' That was always the favourite contribution of the member for Redcliffe, the Attorney-General. Let us remember that. What about the \$25,000 that the Attorney-General took from the AWU in her first election campaign? She took money—

An honourable member interjected.

Mr JANETZKI: Yes, she will take the money out of politics alright.

Then we had the Star fundraiser and the \$4,500 that the Attorney-General took from an entity she was regulating! The Attorney-General was regulating it and still thought it appropriate to take the funding. In that particular tranche of amendments there were 229 amendments—over 100 pages—and they were circulated at 9.30 the night before. They were the biggest changes to the electoral system that Queensland had seen in a generation.

What to do now? Of course EARC, set up after the Fitzgerald inquiry, talked about optional preferential voting. The Leader of the Opposition has spoken about this. Optional preferential voting and the restoration of fair electoral laws and practices go hand in hand. Optional preferential voting was recommended by EARC, set up in the aftermath of the Fitzgerald inquiry, in a report delivered in November 1990. They were the biggest changes to the electoral system in Queensland's history.

Under the leadership of the member for Nanango last term I introduced a private member's bill proposing optional preferential voting. I recall the research I did back then. My favourite quote in support of optional preferential voting was—

It will strengthen the democratic principle by allowing voters to allot preferences only for candidates they wish to elect while still permitting them to cast their preferences for every candidate if they so desire. The change involves no derogation from voters' democratic rights; in fact, it will enhance them. It affects no particular party. Its sole objectives are greater simplicity, greater clarity and greater speed.

Who could have possibly said that? It was Gough Whitlam! I submit that 'it's time!' It is time to bring back optional preferential voting in Queensland. It is time to give expression to the true democratic voice of Queenslanders in this state. It is time to restore fair electoral practices in Queensland because over there at the moment all we are getting are retirements and rebellion—

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


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

Mr de BRENNI: The member for Toowoomba South is well away from the scope of the motion or its amendment. I ask for your ruling.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: There is no point of order.

Mr JANETZKI: All we are getting over there are retirements and rebellion, leaks and dysfunction, and a government that must be turfed out. Queenslanders know that the only time it will change is when we change the government.

(Time expired)

 **Mr HUNT** (Caloundra—ALP) (5.42 pm): I rise to speak in support of the amendment. With seven months to go before the state poll, the LNP are tackling the big issues for Queensland. In a rare example of them taking a position on anything, what do we see in today's motion? Is it cost of living? No. Is it housing? No. Is it community safety? No. Is it putting nuclear reactors on our beaches? Well, maybe.

Admittedly, they are quite keen on that. No. For the LNP, the burning issue right now is the selection of a colour palette for an ad campaign. These are apparently the 'right priorities'. Their contributions were brought to you today by Dulux!

Here is another shock. As a custodial Together delegate of 19 years, I am willing to support a community campaign run by the Together union. I was a proud Together delegate when the member for Kawana proudly announced in the media that there were no rapes in Queensland jails. 'I reject that rapes happen in jails,' he said. 'We have protections,' he said. I was a proud Together delegate when the member for Kawana said that prison officers were not facing any more dangers due to overcrowding. I was a proud Together delegate when the member for Kawana had one solitary prisoner in a 52-bed unit at Woodford because of the VLAD debacle during an overcrowding issue. Yes, I have a long and very happy association with the Together union.

The original LNP motion calls on me to renounce the tactics of a third-party community survey. The LNP want me to renounce listening to the community. The LNP have come into this House and demanded that I not listen to my community. Well, I refuse. I will use every mechanism I can to listen to the people of Caloundra and Queensland.

The LNP claim that this survey is encouraging unsuspecting Queenslanders into misdirected online activity. If, for example, I were responsible for a page that said, 'Today we're asking for your support to help make a real difference and ease the strain faced by millions of Queenslanders. Please give now if you can,' if I were deliberately targeting that message to people over 65, like most scammers do, and if it turned out that the cost-of-living page was just a giant con asking for contributions to a political party, now that would be misdirection. That would be both disgusting and dishonest, but who on earth would commit such a putrid and deceitful act?


Mr Harper: Surely no-one!

Mr HUNT: I beg your pardon. It was the LNP in May of last year—an online data and financial scam that said the only way to address the cost of living was to give them money. If I have a common interest with a union—any union for that matter—I will gladly support the campaign, particularly one as vital as the cost of living. I mean a real campaign, not a party political sham.

There is a real opportunity in this debate today that beautifully highlights the priorities of both the Miles government and the LNP. Just last week I joined the member for Nicklin at the TAFE in Nambour for the Sunshine Coast community forum. It was hugely successful. We were getting feedback about employment and skills priorities for employers and community groups while at the same time making the community representatives aware of the excellent work being done by TAFE, because this government backs TAFE and TAFE students. Make no mistake: the staff and the students at TAFE remember what the LNP did last time. They have not forgotten.

There we were engaged in a fantastic community consultation forum and I get a message from a Sunshine Coast journalist asking for a response because the LNP were worried. Apparently third-party ads that I was happy to support did not have any Labor branding or Labor colours. These are the big issues for the LNP on the Sunshine Coast—not roads, not rail, not education, not housing, not health, not safety. Oh, no. For the Sunshine Coast LNP, it is the colour scheme on the ads. I hope they take that to the next election as a demonstration of their right priorities.

When the LNP were last in government, one of the crucial things that disappeared from public sector EBA agreements was the consultation clause. The LNP are now demanding that I ignore Caloundra based on a clash of colours. That is a farce and that is a joke.

 **Mrs FRECKLINGTON** (Nanango—LNP) (5.47 pm): They can run but they cannot hide. What are they doing? They are just running away from their brand. I will bring this back to what this debate is about, and that is data harvesting, because all of those members are too embarrassed to look after their own constituents by going and asking them: what is going on in Queensland? We on this side of the House know exactly what is going on in Queensland. We have a government that is in complete crisis. We have a government that is in complete shambles. We have a Premier who is running away from his own Labor brand.

To see this, you only needed to be at the Brassall booth on the weekend in Ipswich West. I was there along with my husband and a heap of other people handing out how-to-vote cards or trying to vote when in comes the Premier. Was the Premier loud and proud in red? Was the Premier loud and proud saying, 'Vote Labor' or 'Vote for our candidate'—I cannot recall her name. Do you know what he did? He snuck in around the back. He was wearing a blue shirt and blue pants. He did have a maroon cap on. I will say that. It was not an LNP cap but it may as well have been. He was trying to blend in with us so much that my husband ran about 50 miles to not get in any photos with him.

There were a few Labor people there trying to hand out how-to-vote cards. They were wearing red shirts—not the Premier, because he is running away from the brand. The most telling thing was that when one of the people handing out how-to-vote cards for Labor yelled out down the big line of people, ‘Who would like a photo with the Premier?’ there was deathly silence—not one.

Mr Minnikin interjected.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: I will take that interjection—not even the booth workers. Labor booth workers were turning their shirts inside out. They can run but they cannot hide. Let’s remember what happened on the first day back here after that thrashing they got on the weekend. The Premier actually did stand up and made a ministerial statement for a couple of minutes, and then all of the ministers who were so busy leaking to the media—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Pause the clock. Member, I am just now struggling to see how that is relevant to the motion. I gave you some latitude, but I would ask you to come back to the motion.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: Thank you very much, Mr Deputy Speaker, but I was on a roll and it was all around—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Time to get off the roll.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: Mr Deputy Speaker, I am going to take you back to the trust issues we had with those members on the other side who are running away from their brand. They are completely debranding. They are only standing up for the purple union. All of the ministers who are members of the Together union were sitting there ready to go with their ministerial statements. Oops! ‘No, we’re too embarrassed because we’re too busy leaking to someone about what’s going on in cabinet.’ When I thought about it, maybe the Together union is trying to overtake the whole lot of them because they are trying to batten down and work out how many seats are going to be left.

I was thinking: would the member for Hervey Bay think he is going to be the leader? Then I thought no, because David Lee is going to come in and look after the people of Hervey Bay. I did hear the member for Caloundra. My goodness me! The member for Caloundra is in a world of pain, because bring in Kendall Morton! Kendall Morton is someone who is out there listening to her community. She is a pocket rocket—absolutely a true champion. I know that the member for Pumicestone had to go to her community to ask, ‘Do you want desalination on Bribie?’ I can tell you who does not want desalination on Bribie, and that is Ariana Doolan. Bring on Ariana in Pumicestone! I note that the member for Maryborough is very quiet right now—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member, you are nowhere near the motion or the amendment. I would ask you to come back to the motion and the amendment.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: The members I am naming right now are so embarrassed about going out to their community to find out what is wrong with their community. I can tell you what is wrong with the community right now—


Mr Saunders interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, member for Maryborough!

Mr Saunders interjected.

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

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: One of the issues affecting Queenslanders is the cost of living, with electricity prices going up three times the national average. We also have the housing crisis, the health crisis and the crime crisis, which is driving up people’s insurance. These are the issues that we on this side know all about. Unfortunately, all of those members are running and hiding from the Labor brand. They are huddling in and trying to work out how they are going to save their seats. We need to show Labor the door in ’24!

 **Mr HARPER** (Thuringowa—ALP) (5.52 pm): Taking up from the member for Caloundra’s contribution, it is the big issue of the day for the LNP’s motion to talk about branding and colours. Let me start by responding to the member for Whitsunday. Firstly, Townsville is in North Queensland, not Far North Queensland. If the member wants to talk about purple branding and stepping away from branding, here is a media article from the ABC which states—

LNP reprimanded over poll-booth tactics

The Australian Electoral Commission has found Liberal National Party (LNP) volunteers acted illegally by dressing in T-shirts with Greens party slogans in the Brisbane seat of Ryan.

I table that.

Tabled paper: Article from *ABC News* online, dated 21 August 2010, titled 'LNP reprimanded over poll-booth tactics' [417].

Thank you to the member for Mundingburra for providing this. Then in 2022, if you want to talk about branding, there is, 'How rural LNP candidates are distancing themselves away from the Party'. I will table that because it makes for interesting reading.

Tabled paper: Article from *Honi Soit*, dated 27 April 2022, titled 'How rural LNP candidates are distancing themselves from the Party' [418].

They want to talk about branding and colours, goodness me—the big issues of the day. In response to the LNP motion, I say that I will meet with all members regardless of what union they might be in and all members of my community, and I will fight for them every single day for improved cost-of-living relief, including Together members. I met with them recently. They talked about struggling with the cost of living. As a third term proud member for Thuringowa, I will always advocate for all people in my electorate, and I will fight on behalf of the Miles government for more cost-of-living relief. The LNP's response to the cost-of-living crisis is to campaign for different terms of reference for a review.

What we need is action on the cost of living, not more hollow promises. Our government is delivering. I know that every family is different, and good local members listen to their community and what is best for them. I am proud to have pledged that I will fight for more cost-of-living relief in 2024. I met with Alex Scott and Together members just last week. They told me how hardworking families are struggling with the cost of living, because I will always listen to my community. I will continue to work with the Together union and other unions and the Coalition of Working Families to give my community a chance to have their say on what cost-of-living relief would be best for them in 2024.


I support this campaign and I will be part of the process of listening and fighting for my community. It is not about party politics: it is about making a difference to Queensland families. The member for Kawana wants to talk about electoral laws. We know how the LNP gets their donations. I recall a certain boot camp and helicopter ride by the member for Kawana off to Lincoln Springs. It is the same mob who made a donation to the LNP. The writing is on the wall. We know that the LNP is anti-union. They do not support workers in this state.

I have been a proud member of my union, the United Workers Union, since 1990, and I continue to be a proud member and stand up for all those hardworking members. What did the LNP do when they were in power? What did they do to workers? They stripped away the long-held public holiday in May—nasty! They stripped away common law workers compensation rights to about 9,000 injured workers—nasty! They removed the rights and entitlements of injured workers—nasty! They used workplace health and safety as a political football and removed all rights and entitlements for workers—nasty! They supported the cutting of penalty rates and attacked the award system—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Resume your seat, please, member. I want to take some advice. Member, I am finding it difficult to find the relevance of this particular part of your contribution to the motion or the amendment. I will give you a moment to demonstrate that or move on.

Mr HARPER: Third parties, community organisations and unions have a right to participate in elections. It is an important part of our democratic institution that third parties can have their voices heard. Campaign expenditure caps and donation reporting are all part of the government's strong legacy on electoral reform. We introduced real-time disclosures laws; the LNP voted against those. We reduced the donation disclosure back to \$1,000 after the LNP raised it to over \$12,000. The LNP voted against banning property developer donations and challenged it all the way to the High Court when they lost. The Leader of the Opposition called donation caps and banning property developers from our democratic system a 'corrupt financial gerrymander'. The member for Nanango, before she was deposed as leader, was referred to the ECQ by her own party for holding dodgy meetings with property developers in 2020. The LNP cannot lie straight in bed.

(Time expired)

 **Mr MICKELBERG** (Buderim—LNP) (5.58 pm): Let's have a look at this Labor state government's record on crime. In 2023 there were 130,000 more victims of crime than in 2014—342,786 victims of crime under this Labor state government. What about the cost of living? Last financial year electricity prices were up 25.4 per cent when across the nation it was 13.4 per cent. Just this week we found out it is going up another \$53 just in Queensland.

What about housing? New lot approvals are down 35 per cent since 2015 and rent is up 46 per cent. What about health? Ambulance ramping is at 43 per cent—the worst in the nation. There are 290,000 people on the waitlist for the waitlist and there are more than 60,000 on a waitlist for surgery. This is hardly a record you would be proud of. This is hardly a record you would want your community to know about if you were the Labor members for Algester, Hervey Bay, Caloundra, Pumicestone, Maryborough, Redlands, Nicklin, Barron River or Cairns, so what have those members done? They have ripped off the red, they have draped themselves in Together union purple and they have tried to distance themselves from a generation of Labor failure.

Tonight I want to have a look at the performance of one of those members. Let us have a look at the member for Nicklin's performance and consider why he needs to run away from the Labor brand. The government's amendment states—

... notes all Labor members continue to listen to issues raised by their community—

Let us have a look at that. Just last week when a local Nambour business reached out on a community page for advice about unruly behaviour and issues with their business, the member for Nicklin—instead of going to visit the business to see what he could do to assist—decided to abuse the business owner online. That post has been conveniently deleted. What did he say? He said—

don't lecture us on our obligations, I won't tolerate that.

The business owner said—

Nice to know you don't want to hear the views of your constituents though.

The member for Nicklin went on to post—

yeah righto mate. I actually heard you. I might have given you the response you didn't want. Oh well. One less vote. Just speaking from on the ground. I know all the people in the space and you are not one of them. I can live with that.

For a bloke who came in here on a margin of 84 votes he is pretty confident, but it is the people of Nicklin who miss out. Embarrassingly, the business owner pointed out to the member for Nicklin that they were actually tagged in the original post by the member for Nicklin. The reaction from the member for Nicklin when businesses were discussing these issues online shocked other small business owners in Nambour who are also suffering under this government's lack of action on crime. Some of the responses included—

Ally was very respectful. In my opinion you haven't been. Let's see if we "tolerate" that next time you're up for election. You come across as very arrogant.

And—

Robert Skelton MP for Nicklin you are embarrassing yourself. I voted for you last election but I won't again.

Other comments in response from locals on the post included—

he is the member of parliament and I am absolutely disgusted in his behaviour and the way he has responded to the public who was asking for assistance.

That is hardly listening. Another community member said—


Robert Skelton MP for Nicklin Your attitude in this thread is appalling. What an arrogant, heartless attitude you seem to have.

Arrogant and heartless: where have I seen that before? It is written on the faces and heard through the words of every single member of this tired, third-term Labor government. They are arrogant and heartless. Just yesterday in response to concerns about a man who had lost his life and should not have—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Member, can I ask you to come back to the motion or the amendment. I have given you some latitude but you have strayed a long way away.

Mr MICKELBERG: Thank you for your guidance, Mr Deputy Speaker. It is clear that those opposite are not listening to their community. Arrogant and heartless is business as usual for this Labor government. The member for Nicklin is not listening to his community and he has given up on the small businesses in his community. He does not want to listen. Those same businesses reached out to our local community champion, Marty Hunt. Marty and I will be meeting with those businesses next week to listen to their concerns because Marty cares about the Nicklin community, Marty will fight for the Nicklin community and Marty will listen to the Nicklin community, unlike the current member for Nicklin. I know that Marty has the right priorities for Nicklin.

Rather than hiding and running away from Labor's shameful record, it is time for Labor to listen to their constituents—not to harvest data for their union mates. It is time to listen. It is time to tackle health, housing, crime and cost of living. It is time to show Labor the door in 2024.

 **Mr KING** (Kurwongbah—ALP) (6.03 pm): I feel like I have sat through a verbal assault rather than a speech. Thank you for that, member for Buderim. I might have to put in a workplace health and safety claim for tinnitus after sitting over here for a while.

I have been here a little while now but I always thought that union bashing day was Thursday. You got us a day early. Once again, they have come into this place attacking unions and by extension their workers. In my experience, the other side have never met a public servant they did not want to sack. In attacking the very union that represents public servants and their interests, they have attacked thousands and thousands of public sector workers. Funnily enough, that union's colour is purple. I am not shying away from my union, my union's colours or the Labor brand for that matter. I will still drive my red car around. Don't worry, I am not getting it painted purple just yet. I had a purple car once—just saying. I have had a few purple cars—I realised that as I said it—and they were beautiful too. They were all V8s.

This is about attacking unions, so I would like to talk about attacks on unions and particularly why the Together union would be involved in a cost-of-living campaign. They would be concerned because when the LNP were last in power they sacked 14,000 members of unions, and they would have had a real cost-of-living worry with no jobs. They told them they had nothing to fear and sacked them. My wife was part of that, so that is part of the reason I am here. It was a difficult time for everyone. There has never been an apology in any way, shape or form that I have seen. They stripped away May Day, which Together union members would be fearing, I am sure. They cut penalty rates. They introduced laws to stop the democratic rights of unions to campaign on political issues—laws they had to repeal because they were unconstitutional. They never shied away from their plans to sell assets, and that is the other reason I am here. The electricity industry will always be in public hands.

Even in opposition they have not learned a single thing. They voted against labour hire licensing laws, voted against paid domestic and family violence leave and voted against industrial manslaughter laws. Who could do that? The Together union obviously would be worried about that as well. If you injure a worker or kill a worker, you should be held responsible for that, and to vote against that is abhorrent.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Member, I would ask you to come back to the motion or the amendment.

Mr KING: I will. I will talk about the Together union and the wonderful members they represent and about other unions like the Teachers' Union and the nurses union. We hear a lot about the fake unions and structure; there is no structure in the fake unions. In my union and other unions, people come up through the ranks. You get a tradie who ends up being the leader and organises—

Mr MICKELBERG: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I seek your guidance. Is the member anticipating debate with respect to the workplace health and safety bill that is before the House that directly addresses this issue?

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I will take some advice. Thank you, member for Buderim, for your point of order. I will listen carefully. Please be aware that there is a bill that deals with matters in relation to workplace health and safety. There has been a wideranging debate in that second reading debate in relation to unions. If your contribution can stay away from that bill, I will allow you to continue in that vein.

Mr KING: I certainly will continue but I will move on to talk about cost of living. The Leader of the Opposition will short-change Queenslanders. He will rip out cost-of-living support that the Miles government has already delivered thanks to our progressive coal royalties. I know that those opposite love talking about progressive coal royalties. They paid for free kindy, massive energy rebates, free TAFE and rego freezes. We are doing everything we can to lower household bills and we know that it will all be at risk under an LNP government and the short-sightedness of the Leader of the Opposition. Last time, as I said, they sacked 14,000 public servants. We know they will have to sack even more with the Olympic-sized black hole they have got.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member, you need to come back to the motion or the amendment.

Mr KING: Mr Deputy Speaker, this motion is about a cost-of-living campaign that they are saying the Together union is running, so I was just talking about the cost of living that we are trying to address as a government. We are giving \$550 in a cost-of-living rebate on electricity bills for all Queensland households, and I am sure Together union members are not worried about that. We have free kindy for all four-year-olds from next year, saving thousands of families up to \$4,600, and I am sure Together union members are not worried about that. They are more worried about an LNP government. They are worried about having jobs if an LNP government gets in, and that is what this is all about.

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

In division—

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order, members! Honourable members, a reminder to the House that standing orders still apply during divisions and division bells. Members' correct titles will be used. Members not adhering to that will be warned under the standing orders.

AYES, 44:

ALP, 44—Bailey, Boyd, Brown, Bush, Butcher, Crawford, D'Ath, de Brenni, Dick, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Healy, Hinchliffe, Howard, Hunt, Kelly, A. King, S. King, Linard, Lui, Martin, McCallum, McMahan, McMillan, Mellish, Miles, Mullen, O'Rourke, Power, Pugh, Richards, Russo, Saunders, Scanlon, Skelton, Smith, Stewart, Sullivan, Walker, Whiting.

NOES, 29:

LNP, 29—Bates, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Camm, Crandon, Crisafulli, Frecklington, Gerber, Head, Janetzki, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Lister, McDonald, Mickelberg, Minnikin, O'Connor, Perrett, Powell, Purdie, Robinson, Rowan, Simpson, Stevens, Watts, Weir.

Pairs: Furner, Nicholls; Lauga, Hart; Pease, Molhoek; Ryan, Millar; Tantari, Mander.

Resolved in the affirmative.

Amendment agreed to.

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

AYES, 44:

ALP, 44—Bailey, Boyd, Brown, Bush, Butcher, Crawford, D'Ath, de Brenni, Dick, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Healy, Hinchliffe, Howard, Hunt, Kelly, A. King, S. King, Linard, Lui, Martin, McCallum, McMahan, McMillan, Mellish, Miles, Mullen, O'Rourke, Power, Pugh, Richards, Russo, Saunders, Scanlon, Skelton, Smith, Stewart, Sullivan, Walker, Whiting.

NOES, 29:

LNP, 29—Bates, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Camm, Crandon, Crisafulli, Frecklington, Gerber, Head, Janetzki, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Lister, McDonald, Mickelberg, Minnikin, O'Connor, Perrett, Powell, Purdie, Robinson, Rowan, Simpson, Stevens, Watts, Weir.

Pairs: Furner, Nicholls; Lauga, Hart; Pease, Molhoek; Ryan, Millar; Tantari, Mander.

Resolved in the affirmative.

Motion, as agreed—

That this House:

- (a) notes the rights of registered unions like the Together union to campaign on issues impacting their members and the community and their right to highlight what members of parliament are doing to respond to the issues raised;
- (b) notes the campaign branding is a matter for the respective union; and
- (c) notes all Labor members continue to listen to issues raised by their community, including union members and organisations.

Dissent from Speaker's Ruling



Mr BLEIJIE (Kawana—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (6.16 pm): I move—

That Mr Speaker's ruling on 7 March 2024 in relation to the member for Toowoomba South seeking to move an amendment to the Premier's Supermarket Pricing Select Committee motion be dissented from.

On 7 March, the Premier moved a motion to establish a select committee to examine the causes and effects of increased supermarket prices. The shadow Treasurer sought to move an amendment to allow the committee to examine additional cost-of-living pressures that lie within the state jurisdiction. These were to include the impacts of rising electricity prices on grocery costs, the impact of insurance prices on small and family businesses that sell groceries and the impact of rising water costs on grocery

costs. I refer to pages 556 and 557 of *Hansard*. The Speaker said that these additions were outside the original intent of the motion, which was about supermarket pricing and other things which may be related to the costs of living. Standing order 94, 'Relevance of amendments', states—

Every amendment must be relevant to the question which it is proposed to amend.

There are two matters on which I have taken issue with Mr Speaker's ruling, hence the motion of dissent. The first is with respect to relevance. I submit to the House that the amendment sought to be moved by the member for Toowoomba South was particularly relevant. I have referred to standing order section 94, 'Relevance of amendments'. Delving further, Erskine May states at 'Amendments to be relevant'—

The fundamental rule that debate must be relevant to a question (see paragraph 21.15) also means that every amendment must be relevant to the question to which it is proposed.

Stated generally, no matter ought to be raised in debate on a question which would be irrelevant if moved as an amendment, and no amendment should be used for importing arguments which would be irrelevant to the main question.

That is in line with standing order 94, 'Relevance of amendments'.

Mr Speaker, I put it to you that the amendment that was sought to be moved by the shadow Treasurer at the time was particularly relevant to the grocery inquiry because we make the point—and the direct relevance—that you cannot have a debate about grocery prices without looking at the water costs for farmers, irrigation costs for farmers, road maintenance costs for farmers to transport the groceries from farm to market, from farm to grocery stores. The member for Lockyer often talks about the great vegetables at Parliament House from the Lockyer—

Mr Krause: And Scenic Rim.

Mr Lister: What about Southern Downs?

Mr BLEIJIE: And Scenic Rim and Southern Downs—I take all the interjections from the regional and rural members of parliament. They would attest that, when you are looking at the relevance of a particular motion to the cost-of-living crisis in Queensland and groceries, they are directly relevant to farmers—agriculture, irrigation, road maintenance, farmers' water, insurance costs and the costs to maintain trucks that carry the groceries. If you do not have well-maintained roads, it causes issues and maintenance issues for the trucks.

Not only do I believe it complies with standing order 94 with regard to relevance; it follows precedent in New Zealand and their standing and sessional orders but also Erskine May, which we go to on many occasions with respect to debates in the House.


The second point I make is separate to the relevance of the amendment under standing order 94. I do not believe that the member was afforded the opportunity, having been stopped halfway through his amendment, to finish. The member was stopped and the Speaker ruled the amendment out of order and did not proceed with the amendment. I believe that the member ought to have been given the opportunity for the amendment to be heard. Then the Speaker, Deputy Speaker or Temporary Speaker would have been able to make a ruling based on the whole motion.

Mr Speaker did come into the chamber later and offer further explanation as to his ruling, but the point is that the ruling was made at that particular point in time, and at that particular point in time the member for Toowoomba South was not afforded the opportunity to be fully heard on the amendment. At the same time, the Leader of the House jumped up after the ruling was made and said that the amendment would have been over the 250-word limit. Again, the member was not afforded the opportunity to fully put his amendment and he should have been. That is my point.

In 15 years in this House I have never moved or debated a dissent motion—I have given plenty of notices of motion that I intend to dissent from a Speaker's ruling—but I have followed through on this one because I absolutely believe that the member should have been afforded the opportunity to be heard. The member should have been afforded the opportunity to put his full amendment. Then, having the full amendment before the House, the Speaker is in a position to make a ruling. The Speaker subsequently came into the House and said that the amendment was unintelligible. I do not agree that was the case. I believe the amendment was intelligible. I believe that the amendment as moved by the member for Toowoomba South does not offend previous rulings of the Speaker.

I submit to the House on two fronts. One, I believe that the amendment sought to be moved by the member for Toowoomba South was entirely relevant, because you cannot look at the cost-of-living crisis and the cost of groceries without having a look at all the issues that are directly relevant to that particular issue. I disagree with the Speaker's ruling that it was not relevant, because I believe that it

was relevant. The cost-of-living crisis in Queensland is real. So, too, are the costs to farmers and truck drivers—maintenance of vehicles, insurance costs, holding costs and petrol costs. These are all relevant. We were simply trying to expand the grocery cost-of-living inquiry to look at all of the fundamentals and everything in the Queensland government's control that could lead to better recommendations by the select committee to achieve better cost-of-living relief for Queenslanders. I am afraid we will not be able to because of the restricted motion moved by the government and the opposition not being afforded the opportunity to amend it. Hence, I have respectfully moved this dissent from the Speaker's ruling.

 **Hon. MC de BRENNI** (Springwood—ALP) (Leader of the House) (6.24 pm): I rise to oppose the motion of dissent moved by the member for Kawana and current Deputy Leader of the Opposition. The motion before the House this evening pertains to a notice of motion of dissent given in this chamber by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition on 7 March. That was in relation to a ruling made by the Speaker regarding an amendment the former deputy leader of the opposition, the member for Toowoomba South, attempted to move in relation to the motion moved by the Premier.

As all members know, Speaker's rulings are a judgement made by the Speaker about the ways the rules of this House should be applied and interpreted. As the umpire of debate in this chamber, Speaker's rulings are made based on the standing and sessional orders and years of precedent and consideration by former Speakers and their deputies. The parliament of Australia's website—

A ruling is a decision or determination made by the Chair on a matter to do with the business or operation of the House. Usually a ruling will be given in response to a point of order ... when a Member queries or challenges in some way an aspect of proceedings or debate. In some circumstances, however, a ruling may be given without a point of order having been taken—for example, a Member may propose to move a motion or an amendment, and the Chair may intervene immediately of his or her own volition and rule the proposed motion or amendment out of order. The Speaker must preserve order in the Chamber to enable business to be conducted properly.

While that is from the Australian parliament, the same principles apply here. The government supports the ruling that you, as Speaker, gave in respect of an attempted amendment by the member for Toowoomba South. Further, I note your statement as Speaker earlier today that the debate on the motion tonight must be relevant to the decision of the Speaker.

The facts of the matter before us are clear. At 11.51 am on Thursday, 7 March the Premier moved a motion without notice, after leave was granted, regarding a supermarket pricing select committee. As outlined on page 556 of *Hansard*, the motion moved was regarding supermarket pricing—not a general cost-of-living motion, which was moved but not agreed to by this House the night before. At the conclusion of the Premier's motion, the Speaker put the question, which is recorded in *Hansard*. Mr Speaker said—

The question is that the motion be agreed—

At that time, the member for Toowoomba South rose to his feet and attempted to seek the call. I note that the Speaker used his discretion and allowed the member for Toowoomba South to attempt to move an amendment, despite the Speaker having already commenced putting the question. It should be noted that the Speaker did not have to do this. The member for Toowoomba South went onto say—

I seek to insert the following paragraph after the final paragraph of the Premier's motion—

As members present should know, this is not how you move an amendment. There were two options available to the member for Toowoomba South. The first was for him to rise before the question was put by the Speaker and seek to insert additional paragraphs properly lettered (g), (h) and (i) under section 2(f) of the Premier's motion. Alternatively, the member for Toowoomba South could have moved an amendment to say, 'Speaker, I move that the following words be inserted after 3(d)'. The member for Toowoomba South chose neither of these two options available to him in the pursuit of his objective.

Subsequent to the Speaker's ruling on 7 March, the Speaker clearly stated that 'amendments must be legible and intelligible'. While I respect the member for Toowoomba South—despite his years of service in this chamber and the support of the colleagues beside him—he was unable to move an amendment which was intelligible. In addition, the amendment tried to insert additional terms of reference after the powers and membership of the committee were established. This goes to one of the core aspects of why the member's amendment was not intelligible. Despite not moving it correctly, the member for Toowoomba South proceeded to try to amend the motion by adding in additional words and elements which were not related to the motion which was before the House, including references to electricity and dams.

The member for Kawana knows his way around social media, so I am sure he can navigate himself to the Queensland parliament website. The Queensland parliament website posted on its Facebook page recently—

The House forms special committees known as Select Committees to address specific issues.

It goes onto say—

Take, for instance, the Supermarket Pricing Select Committee, which was formed specifically to examine supermarket pricing issues.

Select committees are established to examine discrete matters. What those opposite tried to do was broaden the motion well outside the scope of the original motion moved by the Premier. Erskine May states—

'The fundamental rule that debate must be relevant to a question ... also means that every amendment must be relevant to the question to which it is proposed.

It continues—

Stated generally, no matter ought to be raised in debate on a question which would be irrelevant if moved as an amendment, and no amendment should be used for importing arguments which would be irrelevant to the main question.

This is exactly what the member for Toowoomba South did. He tried to move an amendment which imported arguments which would have been irrelevant to the main question that was before the House at the time. Not only was the amendment out of order; it was also unintelligible due to the failure in its drafting. As outlined in the Speaker's fulsome ruling on pages 581 and 582 of *Hansard*—


... the amendment must be relevant to the question proposed to be amended. The motion sought to appoint the Supermarket Pricing Select Committee. The amendment, in addition to the argument referred to above, then sought to insert terms of reference that went well beyond the Supermarket Pricing Select Committee appointment and attempted to go to wider issues, including cost of living, water security and other issues. It was beyond the scope of the original motion.

The government agrees with the Speaker's ruling because it is exactly what occurred. I note that in 1951 Speaker Mann made a similar ruling when they ruled an amendment out of order regarding a motion moved by the then premier. This shows that there are clear precedents which this House must follow. The member for Toowoomba South tried to widen the motion before the House with elements which were not related to the motion before the House.

The government notes as well that there are 12 other committees established by this House including: the Cost of Living and Economics Committee; the Clean Economy Jobs, Resources and Transport Committee; the Health, Environment and Agriculture Committee; and the Community Safety and Legal Affairs Committee. These committees are established by this House to cover a range of issues including those raised by the member for Toowoomba South in his attempted amendment. In addition, as I indicated on 7 March, there are relevant standing orders which govern the word limit of motions. The amendment the member for Toowoomba South was attempting to move in addition to the existing motion would have exceeded the word limit and, therefore, be out of order pursuant to the standing orders.

As the member for Kawana has revealed this evening, he has indeed been a member here for a very long time—in fact, I am advised 15 years tomorrow—and so the member should know how this place works. The member was a manager of opposition business for five years, so one would think he would know the rules and the precedents, but clearly that is not the case. From time to time members of this place, experienced and inexperienced, do not succeed in their objectives. It is unbecoming, I submit, that in those circumstances a member seeks to abuse the rules of the House to compensate for their failure by bringing into question a ruling pertaining to that member's inadequacy.

The Speaker may have ruled the member for Toowoomba South's amendment out of order, I submit, on numerous grounds. The decision to rule it out of order in relation to relevance in this case is just one of a number of rulings open to the Speaker. Therefore, for the reasons I have outlined, the government will not be supporting this motion of dissent moved by the member for Kawana.

 **Mr NICHOLLS** (Clayfield—LNP) (6.33 pm): I had put a few words down in order to address the particular issues, but the member for Springwood's contribution in relation to inexperience, making changes and amendments and the orderly conduct of the House will force me to make a few diversions from my planned remarks. Firstly, it was the disorderly conduct of the business of this House by the new Leader of the House that resulted in a motion being moved with no notice given to the Manager of Opposition Business and no discussion—it was not up for debate—at 11.50 am when he suspended standing orders in order to move the original motion. There was no notice, no discussion with members of the opposition and no raising the matter with the Manager of Opposition Business. When it comes to the orderly conduct of the House and the business of the House, one would think that the Leader of the

House would at least have the courtesy to discuss the matter with the Manager of Opposition Business—the normal protocol. But no, the tricky member for Springwood decided he was going to spring something on the opposition in the hope that it would catch everyone by surprise. It was only compounded by the gross failure, in a political sense, of the member for Springwood about 10 minutes earlier when he moved a motion that the Treasurer be able to speak in relation to the preferences at the Ipswich West by-election. My, didn't that work out well when the Leader of the Opposition rose to his feet and immediately moved all of those things and—

Mr de BRENNI: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I was reasonably generous, but I cannot see how this is relevant to your ruling and the dissent motion.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Clayfield, I believe that you are attempting to talk to the fact that there was a motion moved which, of course, the subsequent amendment was related to. I will allow matters relating to that, but I do ask that you ensure you stay relevant to the motion.

Mr NICHOLLS: Thank you, Mr Speaker. We had that failure and then, of course, we saw yesterday the member for Springwood—talking about experience in the House—completely vacating ministerial statements in this place for the first time I have seen since 2006. My, didn't that work well!

Mr Speaker, as you know, I hold the position of Speaker in high regard. As the symbol of independence of this place against all forms of coercion and influence, the role of Speaker holds special prominence. The Speaker must stand firm against threats and inducements, indeed, especially those coming from the executive government of the day, a tradition my friends the member for Theodore and the member for Condamine will be pleased to note dates back to the mid-19th century. The role of Speaker of course dates back far further than that, back to the 1300s when the Speaker was originally an instrument of the Crown. That role has changed over time and it was in the mid-19th century that the Speaker became the bulwark of the House and its members against excessive influence by the Crown and executive government.

As well as the position of Speaker, I hold you personally, Mr Speaker, in fond regard. It is with some hesitation that I rise today to support the motion moved by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition because such debates as this evening's debate are indeed rare. However, rare does not mean it should never happen. There are instances when people appear before courts and judges and seek to have those judges disqualify themselves on the basis of apprehended violence or some other perceived wrong that would otherwise lead to an unfair result. It is rare, but it happens. As long as it happens according to the rules and a proper and a reasoned argument is put forward, there is no reason it should not occur.

Mr Speaker, despite your usual sagacious, considered and wise decisions, many of them involving myself, we do find ourselves at odds with you over your recent ruling on 7 March. It is important to note we are debating the merits of the ruling you made shortly after 11.51 am that day and recorded on page 556 of *Hansard*. We are not debating, as the member for Springwood would have, a point that was not taken or made, nor are we debating the subsequent statements that you made. It was the ruling that was made shortly after 11.51 am that day. That ruling, as you know, reads—

... I am going to interrupt you because I asked you to ensure the amendment was relevant, not seeking to ... change the ... intent. The intent is the establishment of a committee which relates to, I understand, supermarket pricing—

I am sure you are aware of the rest of that, Mr Speaker. It was not the subsequent comments that you made that we are debating today. It is our case that the intent of the amendment was indeed abundantly clear and complied with standing orders and with practice because there is no particular form that is prescribed in standing orders. Standing order 91 sets out the requirements, standing order 93 says it must be in writing, standing order 94 goes to relevance and standing order 95 goes to the question being put.

McGee in his practice, which is often the go-to for us in this place, said—

The precise verbal form used to express the amendment is not critical as long as the intended effect is clear.


The intended effect is clear in my submission and one only needs to read what was put forward. The intended effect—and this answers another one of the matters you raised, Mr Speaker—was, 'I seek to insert the following paragraph'. The member for Toowoomba South clearly says what it is that is required, 'I am seeking to insert a new part into the motion'; it is an amendment and he is seeking to insert it. This answers one of the matters that you raised, Mr Speaker, with respect. As it states—

Notes, the most critical drivers of the Queensland cost-of-living crisis have been excluded from examination in the inquiry and inserts ...

It again addresses one of the matters that you raised in your explanation, Mr Speaker, by inserting and making it clear that it seeks to insert the provisions in relation to the impact of rising electricity prices, the impact of skyrocketing insurance and the impact of rising water costs.

Mr Speaker, it matters not whether it was before or after the contents of the establishment of the committee. The motion as amended would have made perfect sense by simply putting that at the end of it. It does not matter whether it was paragraph 2 or paragraph 4; the intent was perfectly clear. As McGee says, the exact form, particularly a verbal amendment moved on less than two minutes notice, would not be substantive enough to rule it out. In our view, Mr Speaker, it was entirely appropriate. The intent was to comply with the motion and it is important to note that the motion predominantly dealt with the cost of living and the cost of living has been referred to on many occasions by the Premier. In fact, the media release issued on the day of the establishment of it refers to the cost-of-living crisis, as does his media release of 8 January where he says that he will be establishing a committee to deal with the cost-of-living crisis. The intent of this amendment was to broaden it, not to change it, and to implement a wider outcome and provide the committee with further grounds to investigate a cost-of-living crisis which was the underlying intent of the motion.

For those reasons, Mr Speaker, although it is rare, we believe it is essential that we make the point that it is entirely valid for that amendment to have been moved. That amendment was in order and it was in order for the House to debate that amendment. Had that debate taken place and it not been acceptable, it was for the House to determine and not, in our respectful submission, Mr Speaker, for you to determine and take that choice away from the members of the House.

 **Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for State Development and Infrastructure, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing) (6.41 pm): I rise to oppose the motion moved by the member for Kawana. I say at the outset that all of us on this side of the House have a high regard for the position of the Speaker and we have a high regard for the current occupant of that post in this parliament—a very high regard—because he does a very good job in balancing both sides of this House during what can sometimes be very raucous debate at times in the parliament. As a former deputy speaker of the Queensland parliament, I have firsthand understanding of the challenges that are involved presiding over this chamber, because sometimes things move very quickly. A motion is put, we are about to put a motion, a motion is passed and people are trying to change those motions. It is not an easy task to make a ruling, but members engage in vigorous debate in this place which could dissolve into less edifying behaviour if we fail to respect the Speaker and their rulings, often during very difficult and challenging times as I believe the situation presented itself with the courtesy that the Speaker showed the member for Toowoomba South, who wanted to move the amendment.

I look at other parliaments around the world where proceedings can sometimes descend into violence and compare that with the manner in which the Speaker makes sure that we conduct ourselves, as do the Deputy Speaker and the temporary speakers. Both sides of the House do an excellent job here in Queensland and I am resolutely committed to abiding by the rulings, particularly in difficult circumstances, that the Speaker makes. Without the Speaker, the parliament cannot operate. The authority of the Speaker must be respected and is essential to the operation of the parliament, and that is why dissent motions need to be carefully considered. In this respect, I find that moving a dissent motion when we are establishing a Supermarket Pricing Select Committee which will be bipartisan with six members from both sides of the House is deemed to be used as a political football to now move a dissent motion against the Speaker's ruling. I think it shows an opposition that has lost its way about what is important to the people of Queensland.

Mr Langbroek: This is not relevant.

Ms GRACE: I believe it is relevant because we moved a Supermarket Pricing Select Committee—

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

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. What is your point of order?

Mr LANGBROEK: Mr Speaker, it is very clear that in a dissent motion the debate must be about the issues of the motion itself, not debating the issue about which the amendments might have been moved.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you. I think I have allowed pretty broad latitude for other speakers who have also spoken beyond the actual motion of dissent itself. I will continue to listen, but I thank you for your point of order, member for Surfers Paradise.

Ms GRACE: The situation that we find ourselves in is that we have moved a motion regarding the establishment of a select committee, known as the Supermarket Pricing Select Committee, and in that motion there were very broad areas that that committee could examine. For example, the first line says—

(a) examine the causes and effects of increased supermarket prices; and—

that is a very broad examination that that committee would have the power to do—

(b) identify opportunities to increase transparency in the supermarket sector ...

Mr Speaker, at the time the question that the motion be agreed to was actually put and out of courtesy you enabled a possible amendment to be put and the amendment, I would advocate, went further than the motion as originally put and changed it in line with your decision and your ruling. In fact, there were parts of that amendment that were put which I would suggest were very difficult to have authenticated—issues like higher electricity prices in the nation since Callide C went offline.


Mr SPEAKER: Minister, I bring you back. I think this has happened in the past during this debate where a link has tried to be made between the possible amendment and matters. I will allow some latitude, but we do have to get back to the motion at its core, and that is the dissent motion and the procedural arrangements around that.

Ms GRACE: Thank you, Mr Speaker, for that, but I think authentication was a part in relation to your possible ruling. In relation to the Speaker's ruling at the time, I have reviewed the transcript and I know that the Speaker used his discretion and allowed the member for Toowoomba South to attempt to move his amendment. The Speaker did not have to do that. He carefully examined that he requested the member for Toowoomba South's amendment to be relevant and explained to the member why it was not relevant in terms of venturing into matters that were outside the intention of the motion and, I believe, failed to even have the ability to have them authenticated. The Speaker was at all times clear in his guidance and fair in the exercise of his authority.

As we all know, there are processes when a Speaker loses the confidence of this House. The Speaker has the full confidence of this House and the manner in which the Speaker conducted himself with regard to this matter was completely correct and the dissent motion is, in my view, not something that we are going to vote in favour of. The member for Kawana, on the other hand, took umbrage to the ruling and has moved a dissent motion before the House to which we are speaking. I believe that this motion should not be supported. This side of the House will not support the motion. The Speaker, when you look at the transcript on page 557, said—

I gave the courtesy to the member to commence the contribution. I had already started to put the question—I was not required to do that; I gave some latitude—and I am not accepting the motion on that basis.

We accept that ruling, we support that ruling and we do not believe that this dissent motion has any substance. We will be opposing this motion.

 **Mr POWELL** (Glass House—LNP) (6.48 pm): At the outset I would like to associate myself with the remarks made by my colleagues the members for Kawana and Clayfield. Like them, I convey my regard and respect for the position of Speaker as it has been held in parliaments throughout the Commonwealth, in particular, and of your service in that esteemed role, Mr Speaker. Like others, I note that, in moving dissent, we are doing so in an individual decision and in no way does that change my regard or respect for the role or your service in that role.

However, like the member for Kawana and the member for Clayfield, I do come to the issue of the particular ruling of an amendment out of order on the grounds of relevance under standing order 94. It is worth reiterating that the amendment sought to add a number of additional cost-of-living pressures to the terms of reference of the supermarket select committee, particularly around the impact of rising electricity prices on grocery costs, the impact of insurance prices on small and family businesses, and the impact of rising water costs on grocery prices.

I appreciate that relevance is a relatively subjective term. One person may consider relevance in a matter and another may not. Even big supermarkets pay for electricity. Even big supermarkets pay for insurance. Even big supermarkets pay water bills. They pass those costs on to customers through the prices of their groceries and products. Similarly in terms of relevance, the producers of the products that supermarkets sell pay electricity bills. They pay insurance premiums. They pay water bills. Those costs form part of the price negotiated with the supermarkets and, ultimately, they are passed on to the shopper. I appreciate that relevance may well be a subjective term, but I determine that, in this instance, issues such as electricity, insurance and water are incredibly relevant to any select committee's consideration and terms of reference designed to pursue, unearth and investigate supermarket prices.

Others have already pointed out references in Erskine May. I would like to point to New Zealand practice where, as a general rule, it may be said that amendments are relevant and as such admissible if they are on the same subject matter as the original motion. I contend that, as I have just identified, the efforts by the member for Toowoomba South to add those matters to the motion were well and truly admissible on the basis that they form part of the same subject matter as the original motion. That was the original decision.


As was later determined and referenced at pages 581 and 582 of *Hansard*, Mr Speaker came back in to determine that the amendment was also ruled out of order on the grounds that it was not legible or intelligible; that new terms of reference were being inserted after powers and membership and not with other terms of reference; and that the amendment was not relevant to the original motion and the proposed terms of reference. That latter matter returns to the original ruling around relevance; the first two matters do not.

On those matters, as was raised by the member for Clayfield, we had been given notice by the Premier that he would be moving a motion of this nature to establish a select committee. We acknowledged that there was certainly benefit in pursuing supermarkets on their grocery prices, but we also made it very clear, very early on, that we intended to ensure any such motion was amended to include a number of other matters—as I have just mentioned: electricity, insurance and water—under the bailiwick of the state government. We tried to work collaboratively with the government to ensure there was a motion that both sides of this chamber could agree to. That was not afforded us. We were not given the opportunity to see the motion, as the member for Clayfield pointed out. Therefore, I do acknowledge the amendment as it was moved on the spur of the moment may not have been accurate. As the member for Clayfield also pointed out, that verbal amendment, given on the fly, was a contribution to ensure that we could expand the original motion.

I appreciate that it is not Mr Speaker's responsibility to determine that the government sit down with the opposition and negotiate these things beforehand or, indeed, that the government give notice or provide earlier advice to the opposition. However, I provide that information on the basis that it is the mitigating circumstances with which the members of the opposition tried to amend that original motion.

I finish where I started: I respect and regard both the position and your service in this role, Mr Speaker. Moving dissent is not an easy decision but, in this instance, whilst relevance is a subjective matter, we believe that relevance was well and truly identified in the amendment that was put by the member for Toowoomba South. We believe it should have been accepted, it should have been put to the parliament for a vote and it was for the parliament to determine whether it became part of an amended motion, not to be ruled out of order.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Sandgate, there have been some interruptions. I give you two minutes.

 **Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE** (Sandgate—ALP) (6.55 pm): I rise to oppose the motion of dissent moved by the member for Kawana. In this place, a motion of dissent in a Speaker's ruling is a very rare event and a particularly serious one. I want to commend you, Mr Speaker, on the way that you carry out your role. I acknowledge that has been acknowledged by people from all sides during the course of this debate. I equally commend the Leader of the House for his excellent summation of the case against this dissent motion. In particular, I draw the attention of members to the 1951 Speaker Mann ruling. It is something that people should pay attention to.

This is a situation where the subject of the motion moved by the Premier was precise and limited in its scope. It sought to establish a supermarket pricing select committee. It is quite clear what it was all about. During what was quite orderly and proper procedure in moving that motion, an attempt was made by the member for Toowoomba South to move an amendment to it. As the Leader of the House has already made clear, that attempt by the member for Toowoomba South was problematic, to say the least. It had the potential to offend standing orders in a number of ways, whether it was that the terms of reference of the select committee had already been established, that the powers and membership of the select committee had already been established or that, indeed, the Speaker had commenced putting the question, which has been raised by a number of members. The member for Toowoomba South has been in this place for many years and he should have known what he was doing in that regard.

The reality is that the member for Toowoomba South's attempted amendments walked out the supermarket door, jumped on a bus, took a long ride to a power station and then a dam, and on that long ride the member for Toowoomba South's bus missed the stops called 'standing order 71', '250 word cap' and 'intelligible'. I encourage members to oppose this motion.

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

AYES, 29:

LNP, 29—Bates, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Camm, Crandon, Crisafulli, Frecklington, Gerber, Head, Janetzki, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Lister, McDonald, Mickelberg, Minnikin, O'Connor, Perrett, Powell, Purdie, Robinson, Rowan, Simpson, Stevens, Watts, Weir.

NOES, 44:

ALP, 44—Bailey, Boyd, Brown, Bush, Butcher, Crawford, D'Ath, de Brenni, Dick, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Healy, Hinchliffe, Howard, Hunt, Kelly, A. King, S. King, Linard, Lui, Martin, McCallum, McMahon, McMillan, Mellish, Miles, Mullen, O'Rourke, Power, Pugh, Richards, Russo, Saunders, Scanlon, Skelton, Smith, Stewart, Sullivan, Walker, Whiting.

Pairs: Furner, Nicholls; Lauga, Hart; Pease, Molhoek; Ryan, Millar; Tantari, Mander.

Resolved in the negative.

ADJOURNMENT

Glass House Electorate, Small Business Awards; Kilcoy-Beerwah Road



Mr POWELL (Glass House—LNP) (7.02 pm): May is just around the corner and May is Queensland's small business month, which means—

Mr Janetzki interjected.

Mr POWELL: I take that interjection from the member for Toowoomba South. We love our small businesses here in Queensland. That means it is time for the world famous 'Glassies', the Glass House Small Business Awards. They are bigger than the Oscars. They are more hotly contested than the Emmys, the BAFTAs and the Logies combined. It is the Glassies, celebrating all that is amazing about our small businesses and their employees that make the Glass House electorate what it is.

I had the great privilege of launching these alongside Maleny Commerce, the Montville Chamber of Commerce, the Glass House Country Chamber of Commerce, the Greater Caboolture Chamber of Commerce and the Woodford and Wamuran Business Network. You have to be in it to win it. Nominations open this Friday, 22 March. Head to www.andrewpowell.com.au to nominate your favourite small business and employee. You have to be nominated to be in the running. You, too, could end up taking out the coveted Gold Glassie, like Tamara Hazelden Real Estate did last year or Jim Goulton of Maleny Jewellers. You have to be in it to win it.

Whilst we are celebrating, the people of Peachester, Cedarton and Stanmore and road users in the area finally have some good news: Kilcoy-Beerwah Road at Cedarton is set to be restored to two lanes starting this month—if the government is to be believed. Let's not forget, this is two years after half the road was washed away in March 2022—two years of emails to the transport and main roads department, emails to not one but two ministers, two years of questions on notice, two years of petitions and two years of media interviews. Tragically, do members know what it finally took? It took a birthday cake. It took one of the saddest birthday celebrations I have ever participated in as I stood at those traffic lights at Cedarton on Kilcoy-Beerwah Road with a birthday cake. It was only then that this Minister for Main Roads finally awarded a contract for the work to start.

Edwards, Mr T



Ms HOWARD (Ipswich—ALP) (7.05 pm): I rise to pay my respects to an esteemed member of the Ipswich community, Tom Edwards, who recently passed away on 16 February at the age of 87. Thomas Haddon Edwards led a remarkable life over his 87 years—one that was dedicated to service, family and faith. He was a familiar name to many Ipswich people, who knew him as the owner of the electrical store and family business RT Edwards & Sons.

Tom's father, Roy, started RT Edwards in 1931. When Tom Edwards finished school at the age of 15, he joined the family business as an apprentice electrician at RT Edwards, joining his older brother Llew, who also apprenticed as an electrician and went on to become Sir Llew Edwards, the former Liberal state member for Ipswich, Queensland deputy premier and Queensland treasurer. I want to acknowledge Tom's grandson Sam O'Connor, who now sits in Queensland parliament as the member for Bonney.


At the age of 19, Tom took over the RT Edwards business and turned it into a retail success story. In 1969, he opened the first RT Edwards electrical appliance store at Booval Fair, just across the road from my electorate office. After 77 years, the business that Tom's father started with just five pounds, employed 350 people and grew to 18 electrical retail stores, three furniture stores, a commercial division and an electrical contracting and service division. This is testament to Tom's business acumen and robust work ethic.

Tom started his career when electrical goods such as televisions, washing machines and fridges were becoming affordable household items to the majority of the population. Tom capitalised on this booming demand, but his real skill was in nurturing relationships with his staff and customers. He knew all of his staff by name and was widely known to have an open-door policy. He also knew his customers personally and made every effort to always put the customer first.

A great story recounted by Tom's son Gary was of the time a Panasonic delegation from Japan came to meet Tom at one of his stores to present him with an award. Tom refused to shut his office door during their meeting, and halfway through the delegation presenting his award he spotted a customer not being served and excused himself to attend to the customer. The Japanese were allegedly in awe of this display of exceptional customer service. It just sums Tom up perfectly.

Tom was known by many to be not only an outstanding businessman who had a passion to serve others; he was also a man of faith who loved his family and volunteered in leadership roles at his Raceview Congregational Church, where he was a life deacon. Tom's wife, Ivy, was the love of his life. For 64 years they were bound by their devotion to family and faith. Tom is survived by his wife, Ivy; their four children, Gary, Suzanne, Paul, and Anne-Maree; nine grandchildren; and five great-grandchildren. I extend my sincere condolences to all of Tom's extended family and friends. Tom leaves behind a lasting legacy as a person who dedicated himself to family, his business and his beloved community of Ipswich. Vale, Tom Edwards.

Mudjimba Island

 **Ms SIMPSON** (Maroochydore—LNP) (7.08 pm): I table a petition with over 1,000 signatories on behalf of my community in the fight to protect the beautiful coral reef around Mudjimba Island.

Tabled paper: Nonconforming petition regarding boats dropping anchors around Mudjimba Island and causing significant damage to the coral reef [\[419\]](#).

This petition is calling for the Queensland state government to urgently act to install much needed permanent moorings which boaties can use to protect the coral reef by stopping the dropping of their anchors on the coral below while still maintaining public access in safety. Together with my community, I am strongly advocating for the protection of the coral reef around Mudjimba Island, just off the coast from Mudjimba on the Sunshine Coast. I back my community, who are asking the government to do the right thing to protect this precious coral reef. This is why they asked for the moorings.

The island is a conservation park but the marine area surrounding it is not protected from the damage that is being caused by the growing numbers of boats dropping anchor on the reef below. We want to protect the coral reef and maintain safe access for the public by the provision of these moorings. That is why last year I took a deputation of concerned citizens to the environment department and the minister's office here at Parliament House. The minister's office promised a feasibility study to look into the issue. This week the minister responded, saying that, instead of the moorings which the community requested, they will install six reef protection markers around Mudjimba Island to advise people where they can anchor without damaging the reef.


The minister's media statement also claimed there was no evidence of damage to the reef which local divers dispute. The government should release the feasibility report to explain why the minister believes this is the right solution, whether these markers will have the effect the community wants—which is to protect the reef—what other options were considered and why they were rejected. I quote from one of the local dive community members who said—

Moorings would provide a practical solution for both vessel, reef protection, and safety, especially during strong northerly winds. They would allow boats to operate on the opposite side of the island, sheltered from the winds, without the risk of anchor drag. Our community strongly believes that moorings are the best and final solution, and they can be implemented quickly.

That is why there has been disappointment with the minister's announcement and that the full information has not been released. There are still genuine concerns about whether this will in fact stop the damage. There is also concern that the damage that the diving community have told me about has

not been acknowledged. I ask the minister to please release this feasibility report, to explain the information and to engage with the community. They are concerned. We want to see this area properly protected.

Algester Electorate, Ramadan

 **Hon. LM ENOCH** (Algester—ALP) (Minister for Treaty, Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, Minister for Communities and Minister for the Arts) (7.11 pm): Last Saturday night I was afforded the great privilege of being invited to a large Iftar dinner hosted by the Bangladesh Association in Brisbane. Iftar, of course, is the sunset meal to break fasting every day of Ramadan.

Ramadan, for those who are unfamiliar, is recognised as one of the most significant and holy times in the Islamic calendar. It is a month of spiritual reflection and self-improvement and, for those observing Ramadan, eating and drinking is refrained from between sunrise and sunset for the month. It is this daily fasting that is broken by the Iftar that brings family and friends together to celebrate, pray and reflect. Ramadan and Iftar is a practice that has taken place for thousands of years and remains very much an important part of many families' lives across my electorate of Algester and across Queensland.


The Iftar I attended last Saturday was the first for this year and the first I have attended since the shocking events of Gaza became part of the world's everyday news feeds. I spoke to guests whose families and friends have been impacted by the conflict and I heard their pain and despair for others during this holy month of Ramadan. I was mostly struck by the words of the Iman, who when he delivered the Dua, the Iftar prayer recited at the time of ending the fast, spoke of gratitude that the congregation could meet, pray and break fast together at the Iftar. He spoke of thanks that everyone could observe the spiritual practices in relative peace. He spoke of the ability of all in attendance to celebrate without fear. But it was the Iman's reflection of the observance of Ramadan in other parts of the world that were particularly moving.

He talked of his great despair for those in Gaza—those who may be unable to observe the holy month, the many women, children and families who are unable to secure food and water, medical assistance or safe shelter. His words were choked with tears as he said, 'But what of the people of Gaza?' I felt my tears too—the images of children against the backdrop of a devastating war zone flashing in my mind.

I have no doubt that there are many from across the Algester electorate who, in observing Ramadan, are thinking of family and friends in Gaza, but I also have no doubt that there are many Queenslanders like me who are seeing the images of conflict and are also asking, 'What of the people of Gaza?' It is this question that binds us from a humanitarian perspective and it is this question that compels me and many others to support an immediate ceasefire in Gaza.

I want to acknowledge all of the organisers of the Iftar dinner that I was able to attend and I acknowledge the Bangladesh Association in Brisbane for their efforts.

Condamine Electorate, Olympic and Paralympic Games

 **Mr WEIR** (Condamine—LNP) (7.14 pm): On Monday this week the independent Olympic infrastructure review ordered by the Premier was released with 30 recommendations made by the panel, 27 of which have been accepted by the Premier and the Queensland government—but what a debacle has unfolded from that point onwards.

The Toowoomba region was hopeful of a significant economic opportunity for its growing community with the announcement of the Olympic Games, especially given its close proximity to Brisbane and ongoing advocacy for a passenger rail connection to the south-east corner. It appears this excitement was premature as the investment in Toowoomba's sporting infrastructure by this government has gone missing.

The existing sporting stadiums need upgrading not just to host pre-games training or warm-up events but to host ongoing sporting, cultural and artistic events in the region. The investment mooted was to benefit the whole community into the future with the games fitting into this plan, not the other way around.

The population of Toowoomba and the surrounding communities is growing rapidly. The outlying areas of Highfields, Westbrook and Wyreema have seen large increases in the last 10 years with little to no infrastructure investment from this government. In 2014 Toowoomba had over 113,000 people


and in 2022 over 178,000 people, with a prediction of over 235,000 by 2050. The infrastructure investment needs to be made now to ensure the region is keeping up with the requirements of a growing region.

Toowoomba has long been regarded as a region of equestrian excellence. The boarding schools located in Toowoomba and nearby Warwick have many students who follow equestrian pursuits. Within the Condamine electorate there are a significant number of horse breeding enterprises.

There needs to be immediate and certain investment for the Toowoomba equestrian centre at the Toowoomba showgrounds—a critical piece of the community-based sports infrastructure that will service not only Toowoomba but all of south-west Queensland. This centre would be world-class and meet the shortfall of fit-for-purpose equestrian facilities that consider the needs of both the athlete and the animal. It would have the capacity to provide a facility not only for pre-games training and warm-up events but also for game events.

There seems little point in our region being part of the council of mayors if west of the Great Divide will gain nothing from the 2032 Olympic Games. Our region has the potential to host lead-up events such as hockey, BMX, mountain biking and boxing, and actual games events such as equestrian, shooting and archery, yet it has been ignored. The government needs to invest in our region for the long-term economic, social and cultural benefits that will be brought to fruition by developing our existing infrastructure for the games with the flow-on effects that will last for generations.

Mount Ommaney Electorate, Cost-of-Living Relief

 **Ms PUGH** (Mount Ommaney—ALP) (7.17 pm): I am laser focused on cost-of-living relief provisions for Queensland, especially for those living in my beautiful electorate of Mount Ommaney. For the benefit of those listening at home, some of our recent announcements around cost-of-living measures—just in case they have missed them—include the following.

The meningococcal vaccine will be free for eligible recipients including teens and toddlers. I am very lucky that in a few short months my oldest daughter will be able to receive this vaccine for free. I have spoken to so many parents who talk about how expensive this vaccine is. When you have a number of children, it is something that can really bite into your family budget. This is going to make a huge difference for people with babies and people with teenagers who have those high-risk populations living in their house.

Of course all Queensland residents over the age of six months are eligible for the fantastic free flu shots. That is going to be of huge benefit to our hospitals this winter as we keep more Queenslanders out of hospital and, more importantly, make sure that they stay healthy.

Of course we also have Free Kindy, which everybody knows I am super excited about. It means that all Queensland kids will be eligible for a free kindergarten program that runs for 15 hours a week before their child starts prep. Of course we have a new round of FairPlay vouchers that have recently been announced as well. I know all members of the House are very excited about that wonderful program.


We have also offered free period products to all high schools that would like them. I know that my daughter's high school, Centenary State High School, have those period products on offer for free for girls who need them, which is really important.

Of course we also have energy bill relief. That is over \$1,000 off this financial year's energy bills for seniors and over \$500 for every single Queensland household. This is such a financial relief for Queensland households. At the end of last year we announced we would be freezing rego from 1 July this year.

I am also really excited to be part of the Supermarket Pricing Select Committee, which is a bipartisan committee. Submissions are opening very shortly. We want to hear from all Queenslanders about the impact of rising grocery prices on their family budgets. Of course we want to hear from growers as well about the impact that is having on them, because we know that duopolies do not benefit anybody. I want to hear from Mount Ommaney locals.

I will be writing to Mount Ommaney locals shortly about what other cost-of-living measures they would like to see in this year's budget, because the cost of living is at the top of my mind. I am laser focused on it. I think it is really important that we keep up this good work.

Hinchinbrook Electorate, Road Infrastructure


 **Mr DAMETTO** (Hinchinbrook—KAP) (7.20 pm): The southern-most part of the Hinchinbrook electorate, the northern suburbs of Townsville, is a beautiful place to live. It is such a beautiful place that we have seen an influx of people move to the northern suburbs, especially after the 2019 floods because this area did not sustain the same type of flooding as other parts like South Townsville and Idalia. We have come up to about 20,000 enrolled voters over the last four years alone. We have had an extra 6,571 enrolled voters move to the northern beaches. If you add in children, that is probably over 10,000 people just in the last four years who have moved to the northern beaches.

These people do not ask for much. They are pretty happy with the northern beaches. It is a beautiful place to live. The one thing they want me to raise in this House is the fact that Woolcock Street at the northern part of Townsville Road coming into the city needs to be rectified and improved. I acknowledge the answer the minister gave in the House yesterday and the meeting he had with me after. I really appreciate that, but we need to raise it in this House once again to make it vitally clear that the people of the northern beaches expect better road infrastructure. We are seeing road infrastructure being promised all over the Townsville footprint in other electorates like Mundingburra, Townsville and Thuringowa. Just recently \$95 million was announced for Riverway Drive in Thuringowa.

We do not want to say this is pork-barrelling, but the reality is that the northern beaches and northern suburbs really need this infrastructure upgrade. If you have one incident on the Bruce Highway or you have one incident on Woolcock Street coming into Townsville right now, you will be backed up for an hour and a half. When it comes to motorway blockages that might not sound too bad for people in the Brisbane area or the Gold Coast, but that is the northern route coming into the city to go to our airport. It also goes to the industrial estate. We have a lot of people who work in the Shaw area and the Bohle area. That is where the working class of Queensland from the northern beaches and northern suburbs of Townsville work. They expect to get to work or school and their appointments on time.

We know that there has been significant work done by TMR on this, but we are calling on the state government to accelerate the options analysis. Make sure this options analysis is presented to the public as soon as possible so we know that the state government has a plan to fix this. That is what we want to demonstrate to the people in the northern beaches and the northern suburbs. We want to show there is a plan to fix this, and then we need money committed for the business case so we can show progression on this project. In 2020 we were promised that work would start on this. In 2022 the options analysis started. It is time to get that out into the public space and it is time to fund the business case.

Bundamba Electorate, Infrastructure

 **Hon. LR McCALLUM** (Bundamba—ALP) (Minister for Employment and Small Business and Minister for Training and Skills Development) (7.23 pm): The Miles Labor government's \$89 billion infrastructure Big Build is delivering right across Queensland and it is delivering for our local Bundamba community. It is delivering jobs and it is delivering state-of-the-art infrastructure that is delivering better services. There is no greater example of that than the brand new stage 2, \$710 million expansion of the Ipswich Hospital for which we recently got early works underway. This project is going to deliver 200 additional new beds, an expanded emergency department, additional operating theatres and, of course, more world-class health care closer to home. It follows hot on the heels of the stage 1 expansion to the Ipswich Hospital and our brand new Ripley Satellite Hospital. There is more world-class health care for our Bundamba community.

I want to acknowledge the incredible work of our frontline healthcare workers in Ipswich. They do an absolutely amazing job, and these new state-of-the-art facilities are there to provide brilliant workplaces for them as they are doing their job with passion and dedication in looking after our local community. Our Big Build is also delivering a major upgrade to the Bundamba train station. This is a huge project that is going to—

Mr Dametto interjected.


Mr McCALLUM: I am not going to take the interjections from the member for Hinchinbrook. In Bundamba this major upgrade to the train station—

Mr Dametto interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Lui): Member for Hinchinbrook, you are now warned under the standing orders.

Mr McCALLUM: This major accessibility upgrade is a wonderful project that I have been very proud to advocate for and deliver to the Bundamba community. Progress is really on track. I had the opportunity to drop in last week. I want to acknowledge the transport minister, who is next to me, and the wonderful staff at TMR, along with Hutchies builders. They are making great progress. This is a full accessibility upgrade, so it will ensure that everyone in our community is able to travel more easily and more safely. It will keep our community connected. This is what the Miles Labor government is delivering for Bundamba.

Toowoomba

 **Mr JANETZKI** (Toowoomba South—LNP) (7.26 pm): I want to talk about a whole range of wonderful people right across the Toowoomba community. There has been a lot happening, and I want to reflect on some of those achievements and events in our community that make it so great.

Firstly, I want to talk about the Empire Theatre's production of *Cinderella*. My precious daughter and I went on Friday night, and it was an outstanding event. It is amazing to see such talent on our local stage. I think about people like Shannon, who has been a fixture and a star on our stage for a very long time. I look at Gabriel, who was also in a lead role. I remember that young man—I am feeling my age—when he was first on the stage. He was a knockout on the weekend. He did brilliantly. Of course, there were fixtures on the stage like Vicki, who was brilliant as always too. To Giuliana, the CEO at the Empire Theatre and her entire team, both behind and her creative team: congratulations on another wonderful event.

I want to call out to Paul, who ran Swim Out of the Darkness, which is a mental health initiative that featured teams of swimmers swimming through the evening to support mental health initiatives. Paul bravely shared his story, and he has done an amazing job getting this community event up and running. I only see great things ahead for it in the future as it continues to grow in prominence and raise more money to get behind mental health initiatives right around our community.


The Darling Downs Environment Council has a new home at Picnic Point in Heller Street. I say to Don and Jenny and the entire team: it was great to be there the other day for the opening of Buru Dain Dan, Mountain's Edge. It is wonderful for the council to have its own special place at home in my electorate at the most beautiful Picnic Point at the top of the Toowoomba range.

Peak 2 Park was on. We had another amazing event there with Troy and his team. There were record numbers in the 10k—1,200 people participated in that event. To Optimise, the sponsor; Troy and his team at Willows; and Hey Media, who did all of the media work to promote the wonderful event: congratulations on another great event.

I also want to give a shout-out to Jai Gordon, a wonderful young man and sprinter who just picked up second in the 100-metre finals at the Queensland State Athletics Championships. He has had some serious hurdles to overcome. He has overcome them and he is going to keep progressing into the future, so well done.

Finally, I want to say congratulations to our mayor, Geoff, and our council—the incumbents and new members. I want to give a shout-out in particular to Gary Gardner, who has now joined the Toowoomba Regional Council. He was executive chairman of FKG Group and one of the most respected businesspeople in Queensland. That he would want to get involved with the Toowoomba Regional Council to push its future is to be applauded, and I wish Gary and the team, and Geoff as mayor, all the very best for the term ahead.

Bancroft Electorate, Rolled Gold Programs

 **Mr WHITING** (Bancroft—ALP) (7.30 pm): I rise to my feet tonight to talk about the rolled gold programs in my community that are keeping families together and keeping young people engaged with school and the community. These rolled gold programs are happening now. The LNP said that they want rolled gold programs out there to divert young people from youth crime, but we are doing it and doing it well in my area.

I will explain a bit about what rolled gold programs should do. They have to be about the following: prevention, which is working with families to get them out of cycles of poverty and homelessness; intervention, so when a person starts going down a path that is harmful, we intervene and divert them to other activities; and, as we heard the Premier say, detention is after that and when we need to have someone in custody to work with them.

I want to also say that there is a connection between domestic violence and youth crime. We need to emphasise that kids who are exposed to domestic violence are much more likely to go down this path. The programs at Deception Bay and North Lakes are playing a huge role in reducing domestic violence and youth crime. They do a lot with prevention and intervention. The Neighbourhood Centre at Deception Bay runs incredible rolled gold programs. The outreach family programs are funded by the department of child safety and they work with families at risk, and over 500 people have been through that program. There is a FFIN program, For Families In Neighbourhoods, which helps families as well, especially those undergoing financial difficulties. In fact over 800 people a year go through the Deception Bay Neighbourhood Centre for financial counselling and budgeting help. This is all about prevention and diversion. It is about helping people and families before they go down those paths. I want to briefly talk about the Y school at North Lakes-Mango Hill. There is \$8 million invested there to help kids who are disengaged. That is a great investment by YMCA in my area. That is rolled gold as well.

All of these programs are interconnected. The funds cannot be taken out of one and then expect everything to keep on rolling. They cannot be separated out. They all help families get back on track when they are undergoing incredible stress. These programs change the behaviour of young people, including schoolkids, and it helps them keep away from a path of crime. All of these programs and the people who run them are connected and networked. They are running rolled gold programs. These are rolled gold programs that are already happening. They help prevent domestic violence and they help prevent youth crime. They are out there now but they would be under threat if the LNP ever got into government. We know the LNP cut and they will do it again. When will they reveal what programs are on the chopping block in my community? They are ignorant of what rolled gold programs are.

The House adjourned at 7.32 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, Gerber, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Hart, Head, Healy, Hinchliffe, Howard, Hunt, Janetzki, Katter, Kelly, King A, King S, Knuth, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Linard, Lister, Lui, Mander, Martin, McCallum, McDonald, McMahan, McMillan, Mellish, Mickelberg, Miles, Millar, Minnikin, Mullen, Nicholls, O'Connor, O'Rourke, Perrett, Pitt, Powell, Power, Pugh, Purdie, Richards, Robinson, Rowan, Russo, Saunders, Scanlon, Simpson, Skelton, Smith, Stevens, Stewart, Sullivan, Walker, Watts, Weir, Whiting