



RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

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FIRST SESSION OF THE FIFTY-SEVENTH PARLIAMENT

Tuesday, 30 April 2024

Subject	Page
ASSENT TO BILLS	1253
<i>Tabled paper: Letter, dated 26 April 2024, from Her Excellency the Governor to the Speaker advising of assent to certain bills on 26 April 2024.</i>	
	1253
PRIVILEGE	1254
Speaker's Rulings, Alleged Deliberate Misleading of the House	1254
SPEAKER'S STATEMENTS	1254
Error in Question on Notice.....	1254
Tabled Paper, Out of Order.....	1254
School Group Tours.....	1254
PETITIONS	1254
TABLED PAPERS	1255
MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS	1258
Community Safety.....	1258
Police Resources, Community Safety.....	1259
Community Safety.....	1259
Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence.....	1260
Community Safety.....	1261
Community Safety.....	1261
Community Safety.....	1262
Community Safety.....	1262
Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence.....	1263
Public Transport.....	1264
Seniors.....	1264
QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE	1265
Youth Crime.....	1265
Youth Crime.....	1265

Table of Contents – Tuesday, 30 April 2024

Community Safety	1266
Youth Crime	1266
Community Safety	1267
Youth Crime	1268
Community Safety	1268
Youth Crime	1269
Victims of Crime, Support.....	1270
CFMEU	1271
Community Safety	1271
Miles Labor Government, Travel Expenses	1272
Community Safety	1273
Electricity Prices	1273
Community Safety	1274
Clairview Rural Fire Brigade	1275
Police Resources	1275
Youth Crime	1276
MOTION	1276
Business Program.....	1276
Division: Question put—That the motion be agreed to	1277
Resolved in the affirmative	1277
VICTIMS' COMMISSIONER AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE REVIEW BOARD BILL	1277
Second Reading	1277
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Community Safety and Legal Affairs Committee: Report No. 9, 57th Parliament— Victims' Commissioner and Sexual Violence Review Board Bill 2024, government response.....	1277
MOTION	1280
Order of Business	1280
VICTIMS' COMMISSIONER AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE REVIEW BOARD BILL	1280
Second Reading	1280
MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST	1295
Youth Crime	1295
Community Safety Plan.....	1297
Miles Labor Government, Performance	1298
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Extract from a social media account of the member for Caloundra, Mr Jason Hunt MP, regarding Westpac Rescue Helicopters.....	1298
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Document, undated, titled 'Register of WHS entry permit holders as at 29 April 2024'.....	1298
Community Safety.....	1299
Child Safety	1300
Cairns Youth Foyer	1301
Democracy.....	1302
Townsville, Police Resources.....	1302
Miles Labor Government, Integrity	1303
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Extract from a report by Professor Peter Coaldrake AO, dated 28 June 2022, titled 'Let the sunshine in: Review of culture and accountability in the Queensland public sector, Final Report'	1303
Community Safety	1304
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Article from the <i>Townsville Bulletin</i> , dated 12 September 2020, titled 'Political support secured for true test of trots in Townsville'.....	1304
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Article from the <i>Townsville Bulletin</i> , dated 22 February 2013, titled 'Out-of-control kids terrorising Townsville residents'.....	1305
VICTIMS' COMMISSIONER AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE REVIEW BOARD BILL	1305
Second Reading	1305
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Article from the <i>Gold Coast Bulletin</i> , dated 21 February 2024, titled 'QLD crime crisis: Surge in domestic violence offences eclipses even youth crime crisis'.....	1309
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Media article, dated 30 April 2024, titled 'Domestic violence Qld gets \$36m boost as calls for action grow'.....	1309
Consideration in Detail.....	1321
Clauses 1 to 131, as read, agreed to	1321
Schedules 1 and 2, as read, agreed to.....	1321
Third Reading	1321
Long Title.....	1322
EMERGENCY SERVICES REFORM AMENDMENT BILL; STATE EMERGENCY SERVICE BILL; MARINE RESCUE QUEENSLAND BILL; DISASTER MANAGEMENT AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL.....	1322
Second Reading (Cognate Debate)	1322
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Community Support and Services Committee: Report No. 42, 57th Parliament— Marine Rescue Queensland Bill 2023, government response.....	1322
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Document, undated, titled 'Reform Implementation Taskforce—Legislation and Reform Program: Stakeholder consult RFBAQ'.....	1328
MOTION	1329
Order of Business	1329
EMERGENCY SERVICES REFORM AMENDMENT BILL; STATE EMERGENCY SERVICE BILL; MARINE RESCUE QUEENSLAND BILL; DISASTER MANAGEMENT AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL.....	1330
Second Reading (Cognate Debate)	1330

Table of Contents – Tuesday, 30 April 2024

PLANNING (INCLUSIONARY ZONING STRATEGY) AMENDMENT BILL	1334
Second Reading	1334
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Document, undated, regarding the social housing register.....	1342
Division: Question put—That the bill be now read a second time.....	1342
Question resolved in the negative under standing order 106(10).	1342
EMERGENCY SERVICES REFORM AMENDMENT BILL; STATE EMERGENCY SERVICE BILL; MARINE RESCUE QUEENSLAND BILL; DISASTER MANAGEMENT AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL	1342
Second Reading (Cognate Debate)	1342
ADJOURNMENT	1350
Road Infrastructure; Gambling	1350
Motor Neurone Disease	1350
Betros, Mrs P; Carter, Mr B; Fire Ants	1351
Kelly and Carroll Family; War Veteran Support	1352
Burdekin Electorate, Road Infrastructure	1352
Parliamentary Friends of Music	1353
Hinchinbrook Electorate, Crime	1353
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Document, undated, titled, 'KAP, Youth Crime'.	1354
Upper Mount Gravatt State School	1354
Mount Lindesay Highway	1355
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Document, undated, titled 'Mount Lindesay Highway (Brisbane-Beaudesert), Johana Street to South Street (Jimboomba), duplication'.....	1355
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Document, undated, titled 'Mount Lindesay Highway upgrade program—Johanna Street to South Street, Jimboomba'.	1355
<i>Tabled paper:</i> Extract, undated, from the Queensland Transport and Roads Investment Program 2023-24 to 2026-27.....	1355
Autism Awareness Month; Apology	1355
ATTENDANCE	1356

TUESDAY, 30 APRIL 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 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 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: 26 April 2024

A bill for an Act to amend the Geothermal Energy Act 2010, the Greenhouse Gas Storage Act 2009, the Land Act 1994, the Land Regulation 2020, the Land Title Act 1994, the Petroleum Act 1923, the Petroleum and Gas (Production and Safety) Act 2004, the Place Names Act 1994, the Recreation Areas Management Act 2006 and the legislation mentioned in schedule 1 for particular purposes

A bill for an Act to amend the Acquisition of Land Act 1967, the Economic Development Act 2012, the Environmental Offsets Act 2014, the Planning Act 2016, the Planning and Environment Court Act 2016 and the legislation mentioned in schedule 1 for particular purposes

A bill for an Act to amend the Architects Act 2002, the Building Act 1975, the Building Industry Fairness (Security of Payment) Act 2017, the Plumbing and Drainage Act 2018, the Professional Engineers Act 2002 and the Queensland Building and Construction Commission Act 1991 for particular purposes

A bill for an Act to transform the energy sector in Queensland by facilitating the increased generation of electricity from renewable energy sources and supporting affected workers and communities, and to amend this Act, the Electricity Act 1994, the Electricity—National Scheme (Queensland) Act 1997, the National Energy Retail Law (Queensland) Act 2014 and the Petroleum and Gas (Production and Safety) Act 2004 for particular purposes

A bill for an Act to provide for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions in Queensland by stating emissions reduction targets and for related purposes

A bill for an Act to amend the Agricultural Chemicals Distribution Control Act 1966, the Animal Care and Protection Act 2001, the Animal Management (Cats and Dogs) Act 2008, the Biosecurity Act 2014, the Chemical Usage (Agricultural and Veterinary) Control Act 1988, the Drugs Misuse Act 1986, the Exhibited Animals Act 2015, the Farm Business Debt Mediation Act 2017, the Fisheries Act 1994, the Forestry Act 1959, the Nature Conservation Act 1992, the Sugar Industry Act 1999, the Veterinary Surgeons Act 1936 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

26 April 2024

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 26 April 2024, from Her Excellency the Governor to the Speaker advising of assent to certain bills on 26 April 2024 [703].

PRIVILEGE

Speaker's Rulings, Alleged Deliberate Misleading of the House

 **Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, on 19 April 2024 I tabled a ruling regarding a matter of privilege relating to a complaint by the Manager of Opposition Business and member for Glass House alleging that the then minister for state development, local government, infrastructure and planning and minister assisting the premier on Olympic and Paralympic infrastructure deliberately misled the House on 28 November 2023 during question time.

On 19 April 2024 I also tabled a ruling regarding a matter of privilege relating to a complaint by the member for Burdekin alleging that the Minister for Fire and Disaster Recovery and Minister for Corrective Services deliberately misled the House on 21 March 2024 during a private member's statement.

On 19 April 2024 I also tabled a ruling regarding a matter of privilege relating to a complaint by the member for Clayfield alleging that the Premier deliberately misled the House on 14 February 2024 during question time.

On 19 April 2024 I also tabled a ruling regarding a matter of privilege relating to a complaint by the Minister for Health, Mental Health and Ambulance Services and Minister for Women that the member for Mudgeeraba deliberately misled the House on 20 March 2024 in the preamble to a question without notice.

I ruled that these matters did not warrant the further attention of the House via the Ethics Committee. I now refer to these matters so that if any member wishes to exercise their rights in respect of these matters under the standing orders they should do so immediately.

SPEAKER'S STATEMENTS

Error in Question on Notice

 **Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I am advised by the Table Office that a typographical error was made in question on notice No. 304 of 2024. The question as published in the *Notice Paper* and the questions on notice database made reference to costs of \$1 billion, instead of \$12 billion as asked by the member for Kawana. In order to ensure the member is not disadvantaged by this error, I have ordered that this question on notice be corrected and resubmitted to the minister for response within 30 days.

Tabled Paper, Out of Order

 **Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, whilst the record is not exactly clear, it appears that during the adjournment debate on Thursday last, the member for Ninderry attempted to table draft minutes of the Youth Justice Reform Select Committee for its meeting on 4 April 2024. In any event, such draft minutes were referred to and provided to parliamentary attendants, presumably for tabling. The clerks at the table, in accordance with previous Speakers' rulings, declined to table the draft minutes as to do so would breach standing order 211 as the minutes were not ordered for publication by the committee. The decision by the clerks at the table is endorsed by me and I remind all members of their obligations under standing order 211.

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: Rochedale State School in the electorate of Mansfield; Padua College, Kedron, in the electorate of Stafford; and John Paul College, Daisy Hill, in the electorate of Springwood.

PETITIONS

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

Great Artesian Basin

Mr Katter, from 12,204 petitioners, requesting the House to protect the Great Artesian Basin from any injection of carbon emissions by putting in place regulation prohibiting carbon capture and storage in the Great Artesian Basin [\[689\]](#) [\[690\]](#).

The Clerk presented the following e-petitions, sponsored by the honourable members indicated—

Rockhampton Base Hospital, PET Scan Facilities

Mr Andrew, from 513 petitioners, requesting the House to allocate funding for Positron Emission Tomography (PET) scan facilities at the Rockhampton Base Hospital [691].

Coomera Connector; Road Infrastructure

Mr Crandon, from 1,683 petitioners, requesting the House to include funding in the state budget due to be handed down in June for the next two stages of the Coomera Connector and the construction of an east west connecting road to ease traffic congestion [692].

M1, Exit 45

Mr Crandon, from 1,251 petitioners, requesting the House to undertake the completion of a full upgrade of Exit 45 of the M1 [693].

M1, Exit 38

Mr Crandon, from 477 petitioners, requesting the House to ensure the upgrade and improvements to the operation of Exit 38 of the M1 [694].

Beenleigh Railway Station and Ormeau Railway Station, Bus Services

Mr Crandon, from 179 petitioners, requesting the House to implement the upgrade of the 728 and 729 bus services between Beenleigh and Ormeau railway stations [695].

Northern Gold Coast, TAFE Capital Investment

Mr Crandon, from 663 petitioners, requesting the House to include the northern Gold Coast in the TAFE Capital Investment plans for the emerging massive increase in personnel for the health industry [696].

TAFE Marine Centre of Excellence

Mr Crandon, from 343 petitioners, requesting the House to provide additional capacity to develop sustainable manufacturing expertise and ensure that the TAFE Marine Centre of Excellence at Coomera stands as a hub of opportunity and excellence [697].

Ormeau Railway Station and Pimpama Shopping Precinct, Bus Services

Mr Crandon, from 261 petitioners, requesting the House to provide a regular daily bus service to enable people to connect to the transport hub of Ormeau train station and the nearby Pimpama shopping precinct [698].

Coomera Connector Extension, Funding

Mr Crandon, from 741 petitioners, requesting the House to secure the funding required for the Coomera Connector's extension between Shipper Drive, Coomera and Eggersdorf Road, Ormeau [699].

Mossman Mill

Ms Lui, from 5,089 petitioners, requesting the House to keep the Mossman Mill operational and/or harvest the current crop for the 2024 season [700].

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

Speed Limits, Built-Up Areas

630 petitioners, requesting the House to reduce the length of all low-speed zones (60 km/h or less) around small towns to less than 100 metres both before and after the built up areas and to require all camera detected offenses be emailed to the alleged offender within 24 hours season [701].

Petitions received.

Mr SPEAKER: That has to be some kind of record, member for Coomera. You have been a busy bee.

TABLED PAPERS

PAPERS TABLED DURING THE RECESS (SO 31)

The Clerk informed the House that the following papers, received during the recess, were tabled on the dates indicated—

19 April 2024—

[633](#) Response from the Minister for Fire and Disaster Recovery and Minister for Corrective Services (Hon. Boyd), to an ePetition (4035-24) sponsored by the member for Burnett, Mr Bennett, from 1,532 petitioners, requesting the House to reject the draft amendments to the *Fire Service Act 1990*

- [634](#) Education, Employment, Training and Skills Committee: Report No. 5, 57th Parliament—Education (General Provisions) (Extension of Primary Schools in Remote Areas) Amendment Bill 2023
- [635](#) Education, Employment, Training and Skills Committee: Report No. 6, 57th Parliament—Education (General Provisions) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024
- [636](#) Community Safety and Legal Affairs Committee: Report No. 8, 57th Parliament—Disaster Management and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024
- [637](#) Community Safety and Legal Affairs Committee: Report No. 9, 57th Parliament—Victims' Commissioner and Sexual Violence Review Board Bill 2024
- [638](#) Response from the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence (Hon. D'Ath), to an ePetition (4010-23) sponsored by the member for Mirani, Mr Andrew, from 1,823 petitioners, requesting the House to do all within its power to ensure various prohibitions around sexually explicit publications
- [639](#) Ruling by the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, Hon. Curtis Pitt—Alleged contempt of Parliament by the former Deputy Premier and Minister for State Development, Local Government, Infrastructure and Planning and Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympic and Paralympic Infrastructure and Member for Murrumba
- [640](#) Ruling by the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, Hon. Curtis Pitt—Alleged contempt of Parliament by the Minister for Fire and Disaster Recovery and Minister for Corrective Services and Member for Pine Rivers
- [641](#) Ruling by the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, Hon. Curtis Pitt—Alleged contempt of Parliament by the Premier and Member for Murrumba
- [642](#) Ruling by the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, Hon. Curtis Pitt—Alleged contempt of Parliament by the Member for Mudgeeraba
- [643](#) Response from the Minister for Police and Community Safety (Hon. Ryan), to a paper petition (4046-24) presented by the member for Burdekin, Mr Last, and an ePetition (4024-24) sponsored by the member for Burdekin, Mr Last, from 2,666 and 896 petitioners respectively, 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

22 April 2024—

- [644](#) Clean Economy Jobs, Resources and Transport Committee: Report No. 5, 57th Parliament—Subordinate legislation tabled between 19 March 2024 and 10 April 2024
- [645](#) Letter, dated 19 April 2024, from the Minister for Energy and Clean Economy Jobs and Leader of the House, Hon. Mick de Brenni, to the Clerk of the Parliament, Mr Neil Laurie, regarding an updated response to Question on Notice No. 10 of 2024
- [646](#) Answer to question on notice No. 2024-10 asked on 13 February 2024, revised response
- [647](#) Letter, dated 19 April 2024, from the Minister for Education and Minister for Youth Justice, Hon. Di Farmer, to the Clerk of the Parliament, Mr Neil Laurie, regarding further information about asbestos at Rochedale State School

23 April 2024—

- [648](#) Central Queensland University—Annual Report 2023
- [649](#) University of Southern Queensland—Annual Report 2023
- [650](#) University of Sunshine Coast—Annual Report 2023
- [651](#) Queensland University of Technology—Annual Report 2023
- [652](#) Cost of Living and Economics Committee: Report No. 3, 57th Parliament—Subordinate legislation tabled between 29 November 2023 and 13 February 2024

24 April 2024—

- [653](#) Housing, Big Build and Manufacturing Committee: Report No. 5, 57th Parliament—Subordinate legislation tabled between 15 November 2023 and 13 February 2024

29 April 2024—

- [654](#) Queensland Health Departmental Standard: Monitored medicines—version 2, 1 July 2024
- [655](#) Medicines and Poisons Act 2019: Extended Practice Authority 'Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health practitioners' (Version 4)
- [656](#) Medicines and Poisons Act 2019: Extended Practice Authority 'Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health workers' (Version 2)
- [657](#) Medicines and Poisons Act 2019: Extended Practice Authority 'Indigenous health workers' (Version 3)
- [658](#) Medicines and Poisons Act 2019: Extended Practice Authority 'Midwives' (Version 3)
- [659](#) Medicines and Poisons Act 2019: Extended Practice Authority 'Pharmacists' (Version 5)
- [660](#) Medicines and Poisons Act 2019: Extended Practice Authority 'Registered Nurses' (Version 4)
- [661](#) Coroners Court of Queensland—Annual Report 2022-23

TABLING OF DOCUMENTS (SO 32)

STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

The following statutory instruments were tabled by the Clerk—

Lotteries Act 1997:

- [662](#) Lotteries Amendment Regulation 2024, No. 37
- [663](#) Lotteries Amendment Regulation 2024, No. 37, explanatory notes
- [664](#) Lotteries Amendment Regulation 2024, No. 37, human rights certificate

Water Act 2000:

- [665](#) Water Plan (Burnett Basin) (Postponement of Expiry) Notice 2024, No. 38
- [666](#) Water Plan (Burnett Basin) (Postponement of Expiry) Notice 2024, No. 38, explanatory notes
- [667](#) Water Plan (Burnett Basin) (Postponement of Expiry) Notice 2024, No. 38, human rights certificate

Criminal Code Act 1899:

- [668](#) Criminal Code (Prohibited Symbols) Regulation 2024, No. 39
- [669](#) Criminal Code (Prohibited Symbols) Regulation 2024, No. 39, explanatory notes
- [670](#) Criminal Code (Prohibited Symbols) Regulation 2024, No. 39, human rights certificate

Body Corporate and Community Management Act 1997:

- [671](#) Body Corporate and Community Management Legislation Amendment Regulation 2024, No. 40
- [672](#) Body Corporate and Community Management Legislation Amendment Regulation 2024, No. 40, explanatory notes
- [673](#) Body Corporate and Community Management Legislation Amendment Regulation 2024, No. 40, human rights certificate

Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000:

- [674](#) Police Powers and Responsibilities (Minor Drugs Offence) Amendment Regulation 2024, No. 41
- [675](#) Police Powers and Responsibilities (Minor Drugs Offence) Amendment Regulation 2024, No. 41, explanatory notes
- [676](#) Police Powers and Responsibilities (Minor Drugs Offence) Amendment Regulation 2024, No. 41, human rights certificate

Path to Treaty Act 2023:

- [677](#) Proclamation commencing remaining provisions, No. 42
- [678](#) Proclamation commencing remaining provisions, No. 42, explanatory notes
- [679](#) Proclamation commencing remaining provisions, No. 42, human rights certificate

Plumbing and Drainage Act 2018:

- [680](#) Plumbing and Drainage Amendment Regulation 2024, No. 43
- [681](#) Plumbing and Drainage Amendment Regulation 2024, No. 43, explanatory notes
- [682](#) Plumbing and Drainage Amendment Regulation 2024, No. 43, human rights certificate

Medicines and Poisons Act 2019:

- [683](#) Medicines and Poisons (Medicines) Amendment Regulation 2024, No. 44
- [684](#) Medicines and Poisons (Medicines) Amendment Regulation 2024, No. 44, explanatory notes
- [685](#) Medicines and Poisons (Medicines) Amendment Regulation 2024, No. 44, human rights certificate

Legal Profession Act 2007:

- [686](#) Legal Profession (Society Rules) Amendment Notice (No. 2) 2024, No. 45
- [687](#) Legal Profession (Society Rules) Amendment Notice (No. 2) 2024, No. 45, explanatory notes
- [688](#) Legal Profession (Society Rules) Amendment Notice (No. 2) 2024, No. 45, human rights certificate

REPORT BY THE CLERK

The following report was tabled by the Clerk—

- [702](#) 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—

Energy (Renewable Transformation and Jobs) Bill 2023

Amendments made to Bill

Short title and consequential references to short title—

Omit—

'Energy (Renewable Transformation and Jobs) Bill 2023'

Insert—

'Energy (Renewable Transformation and Jobs) Bill 2024'

Agriculture and Fisheries and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023

Amendments made to Bill

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

'Agriculture and Fisheries and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023'

Insert—

'Agriculture and Fisheries and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024'

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS**Community Safety**

 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Murrumba—ALP) (Premier) (9.38 am): Every Queenslanders deserves to be safe and to feel safe—in their homes, in their communities or at the shops. To me, community safety comes first. I know from travelling the state and listening to Queenslanders that more needs to be done. That is why today I am releasing the Community Safety Plan for Queensland. It is our plan to support victims, deliver for the front line, detain offenders to protect the community, intervene early and prevent crime before it occurs. The plan has been informed by my travels around the state alongside the police minister and Police Commissioner, of meeting with—

Opposition members interjected.**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! Members to my left.

Mr MILES: The plan has been informed by my travels around the state alongside the police minister and Police Commissioner, of meeting with frontline police and youth support workers and victims of crime, and engaging—

Opposition members interjected.**Mr SPEAKER:** Sorry, Premier.

Mr MILES: The plan has been informed by my travels around the state, alongside the police minister and Police Commissioner, of meeting with frontline police and youth support workers and victims of crime, and engaging with the experts. This is our plan to chart a path towards a safer Queensland, grounded in decisive action, and it is backed by \$1.28 billion in new evidence-based, whole-of-government initiatives. We will invest in 900 extra police personnel, on top of the existing—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Sorry, Premier. Members to my left, I need to hear the ministerial statement. I ask you to cease your interjections. I will start naming members.

Mr MILES: We will invest in 900 extra police personnel, on top of the existing commitment to boost the front line by 2025. It includes more support for victims of crime response organisations, including the office of the Victims' Commissioner. We are providing more funding for the Queensland Homicide Victims' Support Group, Crime Stoppers Queensland, Neighbourhood Watch Queensland and the Stop the Coward Punch Campaign. We are extending and expanding the successful youth co-responder team program. The plan also includes a commitment to make the youth justice taskforce a permanent capability of the Queensland Police. New legislation will make ramming an emergency vehicle an offence, as well as new dangerous driving offences.

We have announced new Polair capabilities for Cairns, Sunshine Coast and Wide Bay; new and upgraded police resources like police stations and a bigger, better Townsville Police Academy; and a boost to domestic and family violence support services funding by 20 per cent.

Today, I can announce we will deliver a new PCYC in the growing Caloundra region and continue our investment in successful PCYC programs. We are investing in supports to keep students engaged in school and gain skills, education and qualifications to enter the workforce. We will leverage our existing Better Care Together plan to invest in mental health, alcohol and other drug services to divert people away from drug and alcohol use because our comprehensive Community Safety Plan does not just respond to crime when it occurs, it also addresses the root causes to stop crime happening in the first place. Sadly, we know that most young offenders have complex backgrounds rooted in generational disadvantage: 53 per cent are impacted by domestic and family violence; 48 per cent are not enrolled in education, training or employment; 44 per cent have one or more disabilities; 38 per cent of youths in custody have used ice or methamphetamine in the past; and 26 per cent have a parent who has been in custody.

Our Community Safety Plan for Queensland brings together education, health, sport, housing, community services, domestic violence and child protection services to deliver wraparound prevention, intervention and detention supports. This is a comprehensive plan rooted in decisive action, not just a slick slogan. It is informed by genuine consultation with experts, frontline workers and communities that puts victims and their experiences at the centre and backed by significant investments. This year, thanks largely to the efforts of our police, we have already seen a 10.7 per cent decrease in overall offences committed by young people. While it is early days, I want to see this trend continue. We will measure and evaluate the success of our efforts to ensure our plan works and that we build safer communities for Queensland. Together, we will make a change for the better.

Police Resources, Community Safety

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment) (9.44 am): As the Premier has made clear this morning, our government understands how important it is for Queenslanders to be safe—safe in their homes and safe on the streets. That is why our government is delivering more funding for the resources our police tell us will make a real difference—more boots on the ground, more eyes in the sky and more opportunities to turn young offenders away from a life of crime. I have long made it clear that if our police asked for more resources to make our communities safer, we would deliver those resources.

That is why today the Miles Labor government is doing exactly that, through nearly \$1.3 billion in additional investments as part of our Community Safety Plan for Queensland. We have committed half a billion dollars to deliver an additional 500 sworn police officers and 400 unsworn police personnel. That is on top of our commitment of an additional 2,025 personnel by 2025. Following on from the success of the police chopper in Townsville, we will fund police helicopters for Cairns and the Far North—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr DICK: The members opposite may laugh at and mock community safety and the police. Our government will not—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order, members!

Mr DICK: Following on from the success of the police helicopter in Townsville, we will fund police helicopters to service Cairns, the Far North, the Sunshine Coast and Wide Bay. I was pleased to join Deputy Police Commissioner Cameron Harsley and the members for Caloundra and Nicklin to announce funding for the new Sunshine Coast helicopter last Friday. We made that announcement at the new \$30 million Caloundra South emergency services precinct, a precinct promised and being delivered by our Labor government.

In addition to more personnel and more Polair, our government is backing more of the programs that will divert young offenders away from crime. We will invest over \$13 million to extend our youth co-responder teams through to 2027. Acting Assistant Commissioner Andrew Massingham says this model is the envy of other jurisdictions in the flexible approach it provides for at-risk youth.

Finally, we have made our Youth Crime Taskforce a permanent feature of Queensland's policing landscape. In doing so, we will give senior officers the confidence to plan future strategies and operations that will make our streets safer.

Our Community Safety Plan for Queensland supports victims of crime, delivers for our front line, will see offenders detained to protect the community, provides for early intervention and will prevent crime before it can occur. This is a real plan, backed by real actions and, very importantly, real funding, and it is something only a Labor government can deliver for Queensland.

Community Safety

 **Hon. MT RYAN** (Morayfield—ALP) (Minister for Police and Community Safety) (9.47 am): Community safety is at the forefront of what the Miles government does. We will today announce the Community Safety Plan for Queensland. It will mean more police, more resources, more intervention, more prevention, more victim support and stronger laws. We will deliver stronger laws. We will deliver record investments in police. We will lead the nation in police recruitment.

Mr Purdie interjected.

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

Mr RYAN: Importantly, we are providing police with the tools they need to support communities right across Queensland. Our Community Safety Plan for Queensland is about supporting victims, delivering for the front line, detaining offenders, intervening when people offend and preventing crime before it occurs. Our plan is about making Queensland a safer place.

We have seen how effective the Polair aerial capability is in South-East Queensland, and since establishing Polair in Townsville, we have seen how effective it is at assisting regional police operations also.

Mr Watts interjected.

Mr Nicholls interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Toowoomba North and member for Clayfield.

Mr RYAN: Based on advice from police and the strong advocacy of government MPs across the state, the government is providing police with funding to expand Polair to other regional areas of Queensland. A Polair capability will be established in Cairns and the Far North. This will enhance police operations in that region. In addition, Polair capability will be established to assist police on the Sunshine Coast and in the Wide Bay region, and police advise that this Polair capability will continue to significantly enhance police operations in those regional areas.

These Polair helicopters will deliver advanced camera, thermal imaging and night-vision capability. The aircraft will be deployed when police need them to assist police operations, including tracking offenders, surveillance operations and search and rescue missions. These historic investments in community safety and the Queensland Police Service build on the government's strong record.

Last week in Townsville we heard firsthand from police how the Polair's capability has assisted them greatly when it comes to tracking and arresting offenders. The footage that is captured by Polair's systems is used as evidence in court to prosecute offenders. Its capability also enhances the safety of officers on the ground and the broader community.

I acknowledge the advocacy of government MPs in Cairns, in the Far North, on the Sunshine Coast and in the Wide Bay. Their strong advocacy on behalf of their local communities has helped to deliver Polair capability to their local communities and for their local police. This investment in regional Polair capability is a watershed moment in Queensland history. It will forever deliver enhanced police operations right across our large state. I want to thank police; we are always guided by their advice. I acknowledge the Queensland Police Service's constant pursuit of enhanced strategies to support community safety. The expansion of Polair to regional locations is yet another example of the Police Service's commitment to the communities they serve and another example of how this government will always back the police.

Mr Nicholls interjected.

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

Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence) (9.51 am): On the weekend women, men and children around the country rallied together to say enough is enough. The Premier and I joined the march in Brisbane organised by What Were You Wearing? and we listened to the stories of survivors. But we are not just listening; we are taking action to tackle domestic, family and sexual violence in Queensland. Yesterday I was very proud to stand with the Premier, the Police Commissioner and our stakeholders as we announced a 20 per cent funding boost to domestic, family and sexual violence services totalling \$36 million. This new funding will further support victim-survivors to access the specialist support they need to escape harm, recover and rebuild their lives.

Today, the Miles government has released our Community Safety Plan for Queensland. We know that in 2023 some 53 per cent of young people in the youth justice system were impacted by domestic and family violence. As we head into Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Month it is important to note when we talk about victims of crime that over half of reported assaults in 2022-23 related to domestic violence, making one of our largest cohorts of victims women and girls at the hands of men to domestic, family and sexual violence. That is why it is so important that we invest in not only our hardworking frontline service providers but also evidence-based prevention initiatives to stop violence before it occurs. This will not only keep the community safer but also help prevent our young people from continuing the cycle of abuse.

The Miles government is committed to tackling domestic, family and sexual violence at its roots. We recently released *Queensland's plan for the primary prevention of violence against women*, our blueprint for the next five years to stop violence occurring in the first place. Primary prevention takes a whole-of-society approach to address the system, structures, norms, attitudes, practices and power imbalances that drive this violence. We are also the first in the country to be developing a perpetrator strategy. We will continue to work with our frontline domestic, family and sexual violence service providers as well as victim-survivors and the broader community because the Miles government wants to see a society where we all feel safer in our community.

Community Safety

 **Hon. DE FARMER** (Bulimba—ALP) (Minister for Education and Minister for Youth Justice) (9.53 am): The Miles government knows that community safety is an issue that is top of mind for many Queenslanders. Every Queenslander deserves to be safe and to feel safe. This is why I am so proud to back the Premier in his announcement this morning of the Miles government's \$1.28 billion Community Safety Plan for Queensland. It is our roadmap for tackling crime and its causes in Queensland. Our government does not just talk slogans about community safety; we talk real actions, we talk detail and we talk evidence. We took advice from experts, from frontline workers and from victims because that is our job, and that is what victims deserve.

If a young person is a threat to community safety or at risk of reoffending, our laws clearly state that that young person needs to be detained. Last year, we introduced some of the strongest laws in the country and we now have more young people in detention than in any other state or territory aside from the Northern Territory. We have announced that we are building new detention centres in Woodford and Cairns, and the new remand centre at Wacol will be operating by the end of the year. These will be therapeutic centres because we do not want to see those young people come back again. We want to know that we have broken the cycle of crime. This goes to the heart of our actions on community safety. We know that the best way to tackle youth crime is by intervening early, by preventing crime from happening in the first place and by tackling the root causes of crime. This requires a whole-of-government approach and is why our plan boosts investment in housing, education, jobs, family support, mental health and sport. It is why it boosts investment in targeted interventions to stop young people from entering the system in the first place, but if they do to stop them reoffending.

In last year's budget we made a \$267.5 million investment to tackle the complex causes of crime. We are already seeing the results of those programs which is why we are boosting investment in our new plan by an additional \$446.6 million. Our intensive case management program has seen a 71 per cent reduction in offending against a person. We are extending that program from 16 to 23 locations.

Our youth co-responder program has seen our police youth justice teams engage with around 90,000 young people who are at risk of offending. We are expanding that program to the Sunshine Coast and the south-west, and our programs in Cairns, Gold Coast and South Brisbane are being expanded. We are expanding electronic monitoring. A new on-country program will see new programs operating early in the new financial year. We are expanding extensive bail initiatives from eight to 13 locations. We are expanding screening services across mental, cognitive disability and physical health in youth detention centres to ensure the underlying factors that are causing crime are being addressed. We will partner with non-government organisations to provide after-hours support for young people to assist them into accommodation and other support services. We are establishing a youth justice peak body to act as a coordinating point for youth justice service providers in Queensland.

We work to prevent crime before it occurs. By tackling the root causes, we can give young Queenslanders the best start in life and deliver a safer community. At-risk young people have access to early intervention programs and supports that work to divert them—programs such as the Townsville Street University, the Youth Development Partnership Fund, early action groups and the JT Academy. We are developing the Putting Queensland Kids First plan to guide our early engagement approach, starting from conception. Our Community Safety Plan is here for all of Queensland to see. It is now up to the opposition to make clear what their plans are—not slogans, but now the detail; to show Queensland that they are serious about community safety.

Community Safety

 **Hon. N BOYD** (Pine Rivers—ALP) (Minister for Fire and Disaster Recovery and Minister for Corrective Services) (9.57 am): Community safety is of paramount importance to Queenslanders and to the Miles government. We are investing in more beds in our correctional centres, more corrective

services officers and more rehabilitation programs. Focusing on community safety means supporting victims and having programs to rehabilitate offenders. That is what this package announced by the Premier today does. It goes beyond slogans and outlines a real plan for action.

The plan highlights additional investment to support the Queensland Homicide Victims' Support Group, funding for victim liaison officers, our Big Build to deliver a new 1,500-bed facility at Lockyer Valley and more frontline corrective services officers. I am advised that this year alone we have already trained 212 recruits, growing the capacity of corrective services. A further 213 are currently being trained as we keep preparing for the future. In massive news, a further 838 will be trained and graduated before the end of this year. This will add to our 4,500 corrective services officers. This is what happens when you take a hardline approach to crime and its causes. More prisoners are incarcerated to keep the community safe from their offending while targeted rehabilitation is delivered. Therefore, we need more correctional centres and we need more corrective services officers to prepare for that.

This facility at Lockyer Valley will begin commissioning at the end of the year and will hold more than 1,500 prisoners. It is a correctional centre specifically designed with rehabilitation in focus and will have specialised programs to help reduce reoffending rates. More than 800 people will be needed to run the centre including psychologists, occupational therapists and social workers as well as education and administration officers. Make no mistake: it is a jail with more than 11 kilometres of fencing that will secure the site, more than 34 kilometres of razor wire and more than 1,830 secure doors.

The Miles government will look for new ways to tackle crime and its causes because it is an area where we can never rest. We listen to the community and we listen to experts and we will take action. That is what the community expects, not meaningless slogans with no real intent other than getting a sound bite for political gain.

Community Safety

 **Hon. MAJ SCANLON** (Gaven—ALP) (Minister for Housing, Local Government and Planning and Minister for Public Works) (10.00 am): Our government and new Premier are putting Queensland's safety first. Our Community Safety Plan is investing heavily in prevention and deterrence measures. One of the groups in our community who at times can feel the most vulnerable is older Queenslanders. That is why our government funds a program to help seniors secure their home and the Home Assist Secure program. Our record investment provides a helping hand and a blanket of safety.

In last year's budget we increased funding for Home Assist Secure with \$140 million for another five years to help older Queenslanders and people with a disability carry out things like home maintenance, repairs, minor modifications, and safety and security upgrades to their homes. Now we are boosting funding for another program we have been trialling that helps seniors secure their homes. We will inject another \$40 million on top of the \$30 million already invested to boost this program in Townsville, Mount Isa, the far north and Toowoomba until the end of the year. The program will help seniors install practical and simple home security solutions that some struggle to afford to install without that help. It includes simple solutions such as strengthening window locks, security screens and doors and installing security lighting. In just over a year we have helped more than 3,200 seniors improve home security, including 188 in Mount Isa, 762 in Townsville, 1,290 in Cairns, 813 in Toowoomba and 217 in greater Cairns.

Together with Home Assist Secure our community safety programs are a critical part of our government's commitment to community safety. These are measures we are taking to ensure older Queenslanders have peace of mind. On this side of the chamber we have a comprehensive plan to make our communities safer and support victims, deliver for our front line and invest in preventing crime before it occurs. It is a whole-of-government approach to bring together education, health, sport, housing, community services, domestic violence and child protection services. It is a real plan, not just slick slogans.

Community Safety

 **Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for State Development and Infrastructure, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing) (10.03 am): The Miles government has a strong Community Safety Plan building on current initiatives. We are committed to keeping our community safe, actively tackling the complex causes of youth crime, targeting serious repeat offenders, increasing our front line and, importantly, supporting victims and their families. As part of this multifaceted approach the Miles government is committed to building the necessary infrastructure such as a new youth detention centre in Cairns.

Youth detention centres play a crucial role in the management, rehabilitation and reintegration of young offenders into learning, earning or training. This new centre in Cairns will include therapeutic design elements such as cultural, educational and mental health support which aim to provide rehabilitation for young people and improve community safety. Potential locations for the centre in Cairns are currently being explored, including undertaking appropriate due diligence and site investigations with careful consideration for community input and guidance from local traditional owners. The objective is to choose a site that best serves the community and environment, minimising any potential impact on nearby areas.

As part of the initial investigations the department of youth justice is working with my department through the Coordinator-General providing assistance in the project which will be further informed once a decision has been made on the preferred site. By taking a coordinated approach across government, we are harnessing all levers to determine the most effective and efficient approval pathway to ensure project construction and delivery time frames.

Cairns is already home to a range of programs and services dedicated to supporting young people and addressing the root causes of offending behaviour. The new 40-bed detention centre will complement these existing efforts, providing an additional layer of support and intervention, contributing to positive outcomes for young people and the broader community closer to home.

The construction and operation of the detention centre will also bring a significant economic boost to Cairns by creating jobs during the construction phase. In addition, the operation of the centre will provide employment opportunities across various sectors including health care and education as well as cultural programs partnered with First Nations people. As part of a commitment to maximising benefits for the local community, sourcing goods and services locally will be prioritised, further bolstering the regional economy.

We are committed to doing all we can to keep the community safe and this project is a key part of this commitment. Our Community Safety Plan is a \$1.28 billion holistic, evidence-based approach to these complex issues by providing support to victims, delivering for our front line, intervening when people offend, detaining offenders and preventing crime before it occurs.

Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence

 **Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (Minister for Health, Mental Health and Ambulance Services and Minister for Women) (10.06 am): This year we have seen one woman killed every four days at the hands of a man. We are not even five months into 2024 and already the number of women who have lost their lives is almost twice as many as this time last year. That is dozens of women who are no longer with us today because of a man, fuelled by disrespect, entitlement and an all too often normalised rage, who made the decision that she did not deserve to live. This cannot go on.

On Sunday, tens of thousands of people took to the streets across the country to call for an end to men's violence against women. Whilst it is heartening to see so many people step up and advocate for women's safety, it is also the case that rallies like this should not have to happen. Women in this country should not be accustomed to looking over their shoulder or crossing to the other side of the road when walking home. They should not be used to having to ask their friends to text them when they get home safely or share their location when they are on a first date. They should not have to instinctively grip their keys between their fingers whilst walking to their car at night. Women should not have to ask men to stop killing them, yet here we find ourselves—just days after another man was charged with murdering a woman in Western Australia—with women having to assert their basic right to feel safe in their own community.

All too often it does fall to women to have to make this simple argument and all too often we hear men shy away from their responsibility to have difficult conversations with themselves and their friends, instead hiding behind the chant of 'not all men'. Obviously not all men commit violence—and that has never been asserted by those calling for an end to men's violence against women—but men absolutely have a huge role to play. It is a role that may not always be easy or comfortable. Men have a role to play in assessing how they view and speak about women, how their friends and their sons and their brothers view and speak about women because, fundamentally, at the heart of gender-based violence is a lack of respect, and that is something men must address.

Our government is doing our part too. We have invested more than \$1.75 billion towards ending domestic, family and sexual violence and keeping women safe. We established the Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce. We have criminalised coercive control. We established a commission of inquiry

into police responses to domestic and family violence, resulting in widespread changes across the QPS. We are building more crisis shelters, investing in men's behavioural change programs and enacting tougher penalties for DVO breaches.

Just yesterday the Premier and the Attorney-General announced \$36 million more for our hardworking frontline domestic, family and sexual assault services. However, unless men step up and play their part and help to build a safer, more respectful community, all of that could be in vain. I am asking every single member of this House, as leaders in their local communities, to do everything we can every day to tackle the causes of violence, because together and only together can we end men's violence against women.

Public Transport

 **Hon. BJ MELLISH** (Aspley—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads and Minister for Digital Services) (10.09 am): We want to make sure that Queenslanders can get to where they need to go quickly and, importantly, safely. That is why the Miles government invests significantly in public transport. Everyone needs to access appointments, do their work commute and visit family and friends safely. That is why, in particular, we are upgrading train stations and why we make safety on our rail lines a priority.

Queensland Rail has worked with the Queensland Police Service on over 700 joint operations to ensure the safety and security of passengers on our rail network. The safety and security of our customers and employees is always our priority. Queensland Rail's partnership with the police, through the 90-strong QPS Railway Squad, authorised officers, security guards and our mobile security dog teams, continues to deliver safe and secure rail travel.

The Railway Squad is a highly visible uniformed presence on the rail network to deter, detect, investigate and charge offenders for criminal and antisocial behaviour. They undertake regular patrols based on intelligence and coordinate their responses out of eight purpose-built, strategically located outposts on the rail network. In addition, two police hubs have been built at Kippa-Ring and Helensvale railway stations for both the Railway Squad and local police. Those operations are supported by QR's 24-hour security monitoring crew, which feeds police intelligence and information via more than 12,000 CCTV cameras on the rail network. As a result of those initiatives, serious crime on the network remains low with just over three recorded customer assaults per one million passenger journeys.

To complement this highly visible and effective presence at our rail stations, we are also rolling out upgrades right across the network to make our stations safer, more accessible and easier to navigate. Since 2015, the government has committed more than \$700 million to upgrade stations to improve accessibility across the South-East Queensland network. Under our Station Accessibility Upgrade Program, 12 stations—Alderley, Newmarket, Graceville, Nambour, Dinmore, Morayfield, Boondall, Strathpine, East Ipswich, Dakabin, Cannon Hill and Auchenflower—have been completed, as well as platform 1 at South Bank station. We are undertaking upgrades at Banyo, Buranda, Bundamba, Burpengary, Lindum and Morningside at the moment. While the project scope varies for each station, the upgrades generally include the addition of lift-accessible footbridges and full-length raised platforms. Other safety upgrades include accessible pathways and toilets, improved facilities for hearing and vision-impaired passengers, lighting and, importantly, CCTV upgrades, wayfinding signage and new bicycle enclosures to encourage active and safe transport. I am proud to be part of a government that prioritises safety and invests in public transport for all Queenslanders.

Seniors

 **Hon. C MULLEN** (Jordan—ALP) (Minister for Child Safety, Minister for Seniors and Disability Services and Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (10.12 am): Queensland's population is aging. Around 17 per cent of our population is aged 65 and over and it is estimated this will rise to more than 20 per cent by 2050. As these changes occur, we are more committed than ever to looking after our seniors and ensuring our state is a safe place for them.

Seniors have the right to feel safe and to be safe at home and in their communities. They need more than slogans. That is why we are helping eligible seniors aged 60 and over in Townsville, Mount Isa, Cairns, Toowoomba, Tablelands and Mareeba to secure their homes. I am pleased to see that, through the release of our Community Safety Plan, this trial program is expanding. Grants of up to \$10,000 can help subsidise practical home security improvements, which are particularly important right now given that many seniors are experiencing cost-of-living pressures. They can strengthen window locks and shutters, install CCTV cameras and address other security weaknesses around their homes.

We also want to make sure our older Queenslanders are living with dignity and have trust and respect in their relationships. Sadly, we know that is not always the case. Elder abuse is abhorrent. That is why we are investing \$8.6 million in 2023-24 on elder abuse prevention and intervention services. This includes more than \$769,000 to deliver the Elder Abuse Prevention Unit and helpline. The helpline provides information and advice about the many types of elder abuse, which can include coercive control, physical abuse, abandonment, emotional abuse and financial abuse. The helpline also offers referral and community support to respond to that type of abuse. It also includes \$7.2 million for seniors' legal and support services in 16 locations across our state.

I have had the opportunity to visit a number of amazing services that we fund across Queensland. I have spent time with the fantastic team at TASC Legal and Social Justice Services in Toowoomba, who shared with me examples of the client cases they are working on. I visited the hardworking Cairns Community Legal Centre team, who spoke with me about the additional challenges of distance for older Queenslanders living in the Far North and on the cape and the work they are doing with regular visits to those areas. I also dropped in to meet with the Relationships Australia team on the Sunshine Coast, who have seen their work sadly grow when it comes to supporting seniors with legal and financial support.

I encourage any senior who needs help to reach out and find out how we can assist, whether it be with security measures around the home or taking back control in their relationships. Seniors contribute so much to our state and we remain committed to doing all we can to keep them safe.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Mr SPEAKER: Members, today question time will conclude at 11.15 am.

Youth Crime

 **Mr CRISAFULLI** (10.15 am): My question is to the Premier. I refer to media reports that the Labor government will not remove detention as a last resort from the Youth Justice Act. Why won't the government admit they got it wrong and remove detention as a last resort?

Mr MILES: I thank the Leader of the Opposition for his question because it underlines the problem for the Leader of the Opposition, which is that all he has is one slick slogan. All he has is five words. What Queenslanders know is that his slick slogan might be good for his ambitions, might be good for his ego and might be good for the politics, but it will not do a single thing to keep Queenslanders safe. On that side of the House they might see crime as a vehicle to get themselves elected but on this side of the House we take community safety seriously. We take ensuring the safety of Queenslanders seriously. It is too important for petty politics. It is too important for slick focus group slogans. It is too important for sensationalisation and politicisation.

On this side of the House, we have a comprehensive plan for the safety of Queenslanders that is informed by the police, informed by listening to Queenslanders and informed by hearing the voices of victims. It is a plan to deliver more of the programs that we know are working and more of the programs that have seen youth crime turn around in the first quarter of this year. There are good, positive early signs and this plan builds on those initiatives. It is a plan informed by the insights of our new Police Commissioner. I was very pleased to spend a week touring regional Queensland alongside the commissioner, hearing from Queenslanders about what they want to see in the Community Safety Plan and announcing initiatives in the plan designed to contribute in those regions. There will be 900 more police. Every time those opposite get the chance they cut police numbers, but we are delivering more police and better police equipment. Those opposite made them pay for their own equipment. On this side of the House, we will pay for their equipment because only we have a comprehensive plan to ensure the safety of Queenslanders.

Youth Crime

Mr CRISAFULLI: My question is to the Premier. Across Queensland victims are marching in the streets, demanding the Labor government remove detention as a last resort. Why will the Premier not listen to victims and remove detention as a last resort?

Mr MILES: Further evidence he is now down to just the one slogan. I am looking forward to meeting with a delegation from the protest that will be outside of the parliament today and talking with them about our Community Safety Plan and hearing from them what more they want us to do. I will always do that. I will do that every single day I have the opportunity. I will do that in Brisbane, in Cairns,

in Townsville, in Mackay, in Rockhampton, in Bundaberg, in Hervey Bay, in Maryborough, on the Gold Coast and the Sunshine Coast—right across this great state—because every single Queenslander should be listened to by their government, and that is what I will do. In response we will deliver comprehensive initiatives based on the evidence of what is working, because slick slogans will do nothing to keep people safe

Mr POWELL: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order on relevance. It was a very specific question: victims have asked for it, so why will the Premier not deliver it?

Mr SPEAKER: There are two parts to the question. I believe the Premier is addressing one aspect of the question. I would ask him to come back to the core of the question.

Mr MILES: The Manager of Opposition Business is right: it was a question very specifically about the LNP's slick slogan and I will continue to answer. What is important here is a comprehensive plan. The Leader of the Opposition might even be deluded enough to think his slick slogan is the solution, but I do not know. I know that he thinks he will go from calling himself the premier-elect to being the Premier, but being the Premier requires plans, not slogans. The difference between those of us sitting on this side of the House and those of you sitting over there is that you think this is all about politics. You think this is all about your campaign slogans.

Mr SPEAKER: Premier, I ask you to direct your comments through the chair.

Mr MILES: They think this is all about their political ambitions, that this is all about getting their campaign slogans ready. On this side of the House I have made very clear that for us this is about having a comprehensive Community Safety Plan. This is about delivering 900 more police on the ground, delivering more helicopters in the air, supporting the programs that we know are working to prevent crime and to intervene early while also resourcing our detention capacity for those who need to be detained to keep the community safe.

Community Safety

Mr HARPER: My question is to the Premier. Can the Premier outline how our Labor government is listening and delivering for Queenslanders, including delivering our Community Safety Plan for Queensland, and is the Premier aware of any risky alternative for Queenslanders?

Mr MILES: I thank the member for Thuringowa for his question. I know that, like everyone on this side of the House, he is focused on keeping Queenslanders safe and not on slick slogans. I have said from the first day I became Premier of Queensland that I would listen to Queenslanders and deliver for them. In those nearly five months I have travelled around the state and heard from Queenslanders. They tell me that they want their government to deliver an economy that creates good, secure jobs; that they want a focus on core services like health and education; that they want to see housing become more affordable; and that they want their communities to be safe. Every Queenslander deserves to be safe and to feel safe, and that is the aspiration at the heart of our Community Safety Plan. It is a plan to ensure that Queenslanders feel safe and are safe. It is a comprehensive plan to reduce crime based on the advice of police, of victims and of experts. It is a plan to support victims, to deliver to our frontline services, including resourcing our police, to detain offenders where that is necessary for community safety, to intervene early, and to prevent crime before it occurs. It is a plan based on the last five months of listening to Queenslanders and delivering on what they tell me they want to see, including, alongside the police minister and the new Police Commissioner, 900 extra officers, more helicopters and better support for our domestic, sexual and family violence services, and I am looking forward to discussing that with other leaders at national cabinet tomorrow.

It is a plan; it is not a slogan. It is not political rhetoric, because we know that political rhetoric might make the news but it will not make Queenslanders safe. We know any time those opposite get the chance they will cut the number of police and make police pay for their own equipment like their body worn cameras, but we on this side of the House will deliver more police, we will fund their equipment and we will back them to do their job because our priority is to keep Queenslanders safe.

Youth Crime

Mr BLEIJIE: My question is to the Premier. Since 2020 the Labor government has rolled out a 10-point plan, a five-point plan, a four-point plan, a three-point plan and today an 11-point plan. How can Queenslanders believe this decade-old Labor government has a plan to deal with the youth crime crisis when it has no plans to remove detention as a last resort?

Mr MILES: The member for Kawana outlined what he perceives we have when all he has is five words—one slogan, one slick slogan that obviously their focus groups told them to keep saying. In just five months I have delivered a comprehensive plan for community safety, a plan based on what Queenslanders tell us wherever we go right across the state, a plan based on what the police tell us will help them to keep Queenslanders safe, a plan designed to ensure that we have the capability to detain offenders where that is necessary for community safety but also a plan that ensures we invest appropriately into intervening early and into preventing crime before it occurs. Our plan hears the voices of victims and it puts at its heart programs to support victims.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr MILES: It is a plan informed by police and delivers the extra resources that they need, including 900 more police. One thing Queenslanders can know for sure is that there will always be more police under this government because we support them, we back them. We do not make them pay for their own resources. We make sure they have the tools and the resources that they need, including aerial capability. We heard from police in Townsville that they thought they could use aerial capability like we have in the south-east and we gave it to the police in Townsville. Then the police in Cairns said that they had seen how effective it was in Townsville and they thought it would help in Cairns, and so we are delivering Polair for Cairns. That is what we on this side of the House do.

Mr Mander interjected.

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

Mr MILES: Those opposite come in here and question us about their own five-word slogan—

Mr BLEIJIE: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order under 118(b). Why will the Premier not listen to victims and remove detention as a last resort? That is what my question was and I ask that the member answer the question.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Kawana, you have every right to make a point of order. You do not have any right to totally restate the question and grandstand. The Premier is, as I hear it, still being relevant to the question. Premier, you have 29 seconds remaining. Do you need additional time?

Mr MILES: Yes, I do. I think the Speaker hit the nail on the head: what we have from those opposite is grandstanding. All they know is how to grandstand when we on this side of the House are talking about a more than \$1.2 billion investment into the safety of the Queensland community. All those opposite have is grandstanding.

Community Safety

Mr SKELTON: My question is to the Deputy Premier and Treasurer. Can the Deputy Premier outline how the Miles Labor government is strengthening community safety through new measures, and is the Deputy Premier aware of the risk of alternative approaches?

Mr DICK: I thank the member for Nicklin for his question. As he heard in my ministerial statement today, through our Community Safety Plan for Queensland our government will deliver more police boots on the ground and more police helicopters in the sky. We are making the Youth Crime Taskforce permanent. We are providing more police and more community safety resources for our growing state, and that is what I saw at Caloundra South last Friday with the members for Nicklin and Caloundra. At Caloundra South we are building a new integrated police, fire and emergency station. It is a state-of-the-art facility because modern police stations matter. They make policing more efficient and more effective.

At least that is the position under our government. Under the LNP there will not be any more police stations. That is what we learnt last week from Bree Watson, the LNP candidate for Bundaberg. Bree Watson said that the \$20 million upgrade to the Bundaberg police station was 'just another shiny distraction for voters'. What an insult to the hardworking frontline police officers who deserve the very best. I do not think a \$20 million upgrade for a police station is a 'shiny distraction'. I do not think more police officers are a 'shiny distraction' as espoused by the LNP candidate for Bundaberg. The \$20 million to be spent in her community supporting local tradies, Bree Watson, the LNP candidate for Bundaberg, said was 'throwing money at the problem'. This is \$20 million to be invested in her community, supporting the construction industry and providing an upgrade to the police station. She ought to be ashamed and so should the Leader of the Opposition who supports that candidate.

If the Leader of the Opposition will not spend \$20 million upgrading a police station, he sure will not be spending half a billion dollars supporting 900 new police personnel. He will not be spending \$1.3 billion on a real action plan for crime in Queensland because the Leader of the Opposition's plan is to lower taxes, reduce debt, privatise energy and blow a \$6.6 billion hole in the budget for his train

line to Maroochydore by 2032. That leaves him with nowhere else to run and nowhere else to hide but to cut. Now is the time for the LNP leader to give up the three-word slick slogans and to tell Queenslanders what he would actually do to fulfil his guarantee that all crime will be lower in Queensland. What is his plan to do that? Now is the time for the Leader of the Opposition to tell Queenslanders what he will cut from the police budget as he slashes revenue and lowers debt.

Youth Crime

Mrs GERBER: My question is to the Premier. I refer to media reports that the government will not remove detention as a last resort and instead will prioritise community safety when sentencing. Community safety is already given primary regard in section 150A of the Youth Justice Act, the charter of youth justice principles and the sentencing guidelines. Is this announcement not just more of the same from a decade-old Labor government which will not listen to victims and remove detention as a last resort?

Mr SPEAKER: Member, that is skating very close to having too lengthy a preamble. I will allow the question, but I will give the Premier latitude in terms of his response.

Mr MILES: A long question deserves a short answer: no.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: The House will come to order!

Mrs Gerber interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Currumbin, do you know what the waxing gibbous is? It is when it is almost a full moon. You almost got away with that interjection. You are warned under the standing orders.

Community Safety

Mr WALKER: My question is of the Minister for Police and Community Safety. Can the minister update the House and Queenslanders, including my community of Mundingburra, on the government's new investment in police capabilities, and is the minister aware of any risky alternative approaches?

Mr RYAN: I thank the member for Mundingburra for the question—the best member for Mundingburra that the Queensland parliament has ever seen. It was an outstanding question and he is an outstanding advocate for his community. He is a member of this House who knows that, when the government listens to police about the equipment that they need and backs them in, we deliver outstanding community safety resources and responses. Late last year, when the Queensland Police Service for the first time asked for a helicopter in Townsville, we delivered it within days. That capability is already delivering results in Townsville and has proven the case for regional Polair capability. Now, when the police ask for and our local members advocate for Polair capability in Cairns, on the Sunshine Coast and in the Wide Bay we deliver a significant investment in the Queensland Police Service capability, fully funded by the government. That is important because when we back the police we mean it.

We put the money on the table and say, 'Here is the financing—the funding—for the resources that you need,' which is unlike those opposite who, when in government, cut, shaved and trashed the Queensland Police Service budget. They did it with Polair in South-East Queensland. It is in their budget documents: Budget Measures 2012-13, page 90, 'police helicopters ..' Do you know what that means, Mr Speaker? You used to be the treasurer. Dot dot means zero. It was dot dot in 2012, dot dot in 2013, dot dot in 2014, dot dot in 2015, dot dot in 2016. Here is the little killer: they said, 'The government requested that the funding be internally reallocated.' That means no extra money from David Crisafulli when he was a minister sitting around the cabinet—

Mr SPEAKER: The minister will use correct titles.

Mr RYAN: That means no extra money from the Leader of the Opposition when he was sitting around the cabinet table. There was no extra money. They went further. They said, 'The police had to find the money themselves internally.' They did not fool anyone because, of course, media, particularly those on the Gold Coast, discovered the shambles that they were when it came to the police budget. A media article stated—

Funding Chop. The Gold Coast new police helicopter will be without the most basic safety equipment as the state government moves to cut law and order costs.

We always back the Queensland Police Service. We provide the funding they need. They do not; they cut.

Youth Crime

Mr NICHOLLS: My question is to the Premier. When reinserting detention as a last resort into the Youth Justice Act in 2016, the Attorney-General said that the Labor government's changes reflect evidence on what works to reduce youth offending. Given the percentage of repeat youth offenders has doubled since then, why did the Premier reappoint the Attorney-General?

Mr MILES: I thank the member for Clayfield for the question. It was fortuitous that he had the next opposition question because, of course, he was the bloke who put 'dot dot' next to all of those police helicopter allocations. He was the bloke who told the Police Service they had to cut back on safety features in the police helicopters. He is the bloke who has no credibility whatsoever when he comes in here—

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

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Premier, please resume your seat. I will take the point of order first.

Mr NICHOLLS: I have two points of order: one is I take personal offence at the Premier's comments and I ask that he withdraw; and, secondly, relevance under standing order 118(b).

Mr SPEAKER: I will deal with both of those. There is still two minutes and 30 seconds on the clock, so I will allow the Premier to continue his response. I will ask the Premier to not refer to members as 'blokes' in the House. We would like to keep this civil. I call the Premier.

Mr MILES: Thank you, Mr Speaker.

Mr SPEAKER: Apologies, Premier. Manager of Opposition Business, did you have a point of order?

Mr POWELL: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I understand the member for Clayfield also raised personal offence.

Mr SPEAKER: Yes. Premier, will you withdraw?

Mr MILES: I withdraw, Mr Speaker. We on this side of the House think that decisions to fund the police are very, very relevant. The member for Clayfield might protest that his funding decisions are not relevant, but we on this side know that they are.

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

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Resume your seat. What is your point of order?

Mr NICHOLLS: I take personal offence and ask the Premier to withdraw. He referred to 'his' decisions.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you, member. As is convention, I ask the Premier to withdraw.

Mr MILES: I withdraw, Mr Speaker. Funding decisions announced by the member for Clayfield, presumably representing decisions from a committee that he was a member of, are very, very relevant. Those opposite have this view that their record is irrelevant, that what they did in government should not be relevant just because it has been 10 years since Queenslanders trusted them to be in government. The problem for them is that they are the same people so they retain the same record.

The member for Clayfield might be trying to say that he is a different treasurer—that he is a different person to the person who was the treasurer and made those decisions—but he is the same person. He is the same person who cut safety funding from police helicopters, who did not fund helicopters for our police. On this side of the House not only do we fund them—

Mr POWELL: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order on relevance under standing order 118(b). With little more than a minute left, the question was about the comments of the Attorney-General and her reappointment.

Mr SPEAKER: Premier, I will ask you to come back to the question as asked. There was a particular element that I do not believe you have addressed.

Mr MILES: Mr Speaker, I am very comfortable addressing that specific element because we have an excellent Attorney-General who is doing a very good job and who supports our comprehensive Community Safety Plan, who supports funding our police, including the extra 900 that we are announcing today, who supports funding safety features in our helicopters and who supports paying for the body worn cameras that keep our police and the community safe, the very same body worn cameras—and I will be careful here, member for Clayfield—that police had to pay for themselves as a result of decisions made by a committee that the member for Clayfield was a member of but is now trying to say he was not responsible for the decisions that he announced—

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

Mr MILES:—and takes offence—

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. I think I know where this is going, member for Clayfield. What is your point of order?

Mr NICHOLLS: Indeed. I take personal offence and I ask that the Premier withdraw.

Mr SPEAKER: Premier, the member has taken personal offence to those comments. Will you withdraw?

Mr MILES: I withdraw.

Victims of Crime, Support

Ms NIGHTINGALE: My question is of the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence. Can the Attorney-General advise how the Miles Labor government is supporting new victims' support measures, and is the Attorney-General aware of any risks?

Mrs D'ATH: I thank the member for Inala for her question. Mr Speaker, I am very proud to be the Attorney-General of Queensland. I will tell you why those opposite did not want me reappointed as Attorney-General. It is because I spent six years pointing out their failings when they were in government and how bad their attorney-general was.

Mr Bleijie interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Kawana!

Mrs D'ATH: The legal profession have not forgotten.

Ms Camm interjected.

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

Mrs D'ATH: The judiciary have not forgotten and the community have not forgotten how bad their attorney-general was, and they hate us reminding them of that fact.

I am very proud of the Community Safety Plan that the Miles government has announced today. We are putting more money into the Victims of Crime Community Response to expand this program. This is a nation-leading program. It is not done anywhere else in the country. We have seen how important that response team was in Redbank Plains with the sad death of Vyleen White. Over 2,000 people had contact with that response team.

I am so proud that we are investing more money to further support and expand this service. We are enhancing the victim liaison service with the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions. We are making sure that the Victims' Commissioner and the office has the funding it needs to support victims. We are supporting the Independent Ministerial Advisory Council that we set up, and we are opening up the Childrens Court to victims' families of homicide and to the media. We have established a Justice Reform Office that is working in a holistic way to look at crime.

Mr Bleijie interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Kawana!

Mrs D'ATH: I am also asked: what are the risks? As those opposite like to talk about the Queensland Sentencing Advisory Council and people with lived experience—

Mr Bleijie interjected.

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

Mrs D'ATH:—in 2012 when they came into government they scrapped QSAC. In 2016 when we brought it back the member for Burleigh said—

Let us keep this simple: this is a waste of \$1.8 million and that is why we oppose the bill.

The member for Moggill said—

The simple question is: is it worth it? We on this side of the House have the clear view that it is not worth it ...

They supported it before 2012; they scrapped it after 2012. In 2016 they opposed it again; now they support it again. It is typical LNP: they do not know what they stand for. All they have is slogans. That is all they have to offer—no substance, no funding. They cannot explain their policies and what they actually do. More importantly, they cannot explain where the funding is coming from to fund what they say they are going to do. Show us where the money is coming from.

CFMEU

Mr MINNIKIN: My question is to the Minister for Transport. Former premier Palaszczuk and former transport minister Bailey would not meet with the CFMEU following the storming of a government building in August 2022. After union involvement in installing Premier Miles in the top job, diaries show the Premier and the transport minister separately met with the CFMEU this year. Given reports of CFMEU thuggery on government job sites, why is the Labor government opening the door to the CFMEU again?

Mr MELLISH: I thank the member for the question. I note this question is likely brought about by media coverage today about Cross River Rail and actions being taken on that project. It is of note that the opposition always like to ask about Cross River Rail—a project they never supported, a project they cut, a project they never wanted to come to light. It is pretty rich of the opposition. It is pretty easy to have no action on sites—it is pretty easy to have perfect industrial harmony—when you do not build anything. When you do not build any projects of course there will be no issues between contractors and relevant unions.

I am regularly meeting with relevant contractors and relevant unions. As transport minister, they are important stakeholders in the transport industry. I will not apologise for meeting with contractors and relevant unions when it comes to our Big Build, when it comes to the significant infrastructure projects we have right across the state. Those opposite still have not said what they will do for the future of rail in Queensland. We know they wanted to cut Cross River Rail. We do not know what they want to do with Logan and Gold Coast Faster Rail.

Mr POWELL: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order on relevance under standing order 118(b). The question was why this government has lifted the ban on meeting with the CFMEU.

Mr SPEAKER: Minister, there are specific elements to the question that you do need to address. I will give some guidance to the opposition though, too. The preamble to some of these questions is getting quite lengthy. I wish to ensure that experienced members of the House are aware that I may not accept certain questions if that continues.

Mr MELLISH: Meeting with relevant stakeholders in the transport industry is an important part of being the transport minister. When we are trying to get these projects built—when we want to see these projects come to fruition—that is an important part of the job.

I go back to some of these projects that we are talking about. They wanted to cut Cross River Rail. We do not know what they want to do with the Logan and Gold Coast Faster Rail. They have a \$6 billion funding hole with the Sunshine Coast direct rail. They have not said what they will do there. The LNP cannot be trusted to deliver transport projects. They want to cut transport projects. They want to cut transport jobs. We know they want to prune. The Leader of the Opposition makes a lot of noise. All he has to say is 'productivity'. He mentioned it about 10 times in an interview a few weeks ago when it came to some of these matters to do with contractors and relevant unions—'productivity'. We all know what that means. That is code for cuts. That is code for pruning. That is code for the LNP does not know how to deliver major transport—

Mr MINNIKIN: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order under 118(b) on relevance. The question was very specific in relation to the CFMEU and this is outside—

Mr SPEAKER: Member, I appreciate the point of order. I do not wish to be informed continually after I have already ruled on relevance. The minister has actually come back to that element of the question. It may not be the answer you were seeking, but he is being relevant.

Mr MELLISH: We are very proud to be delivering transport projects right across the state. We will be delivering them in partnership with the industry. We have our Big Build. We have some fantastic projects right across the state in South-East Queensland and Queensland. Those opposite do not know how to deliver infrastructure. They delivered a building across the road. They talk about the CFMEU: Cbus half owns the building. They built a building and it is partly owned by CFMEU superannuation, so perhaps they should have thought about that a bit better.

Community Safety

Ms BUSH: My question is to the Minister for Education and Minister for Youth Justice. Can the minister outline how the Miles Labor government is listening and delivering for Queenslanders and any new measures to support community safety, and is the minister aware of any risky alternative approaches?

Ms FARMER: I thank the member for her question. The member is a victim herself, and I want to acknowledge the longstanding advocacy the member has made over many years both inside and outside of this House. I also want to praise the member for her role as the deputy chair of the Youth Justice Reform Select Committee. To be honest, I do not know how she managed to stay so gracious and focused over that period. She was hearing from many victims; so many people came forward across Queensland. I do not know how she maintained that level of grace and civility in the presence of so much politicisation of that whole process, the lack of any formal proposals from the LNP, the lack of any commitment to—

Mr McDonald interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Lockyer.

Ms FARMER:—reach a bipartisan approach. I was speaking to the member yesterday about what is in our Community Safety Plan, and I know how pleased she is about it because it is detailed. It is evidence-based. It is based on advice from experts, frontline workers—

Mr McDonald interjected.

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

Ms FARMER:—and victims. We have already got runs on the board from the many programs we are expanding. It just brings into even sharper focus the fact that we just literally do not know what the LNP is going to do about youth crime if they come into government. They did have three slogans, 13 words, but I guess they have realised it is a bit embarrassing because one of them is about rolled gold early intervention. They kind of slicked that one because they do not know what they are going to do. I notice that the Leader of the Opposition was on a radio station last week, 106.3 in Townsville. Dannii, the breakfast show announcer, joined a long line of journalists to say, 'You want to start creating something called gold standard intervention. What's that all about?' That was a good question. He said, 'Removing kids from where they are and giving them structure.' It was more detailed than we have ever heard before, but still there was nothing more than that.

What must have really hurt was when the opposition leader's old mate Campbell Newman said what everybody is thinking: 'The LNP today have no platform. They can tell you what's wrong but they can't tell you what they're going to do. Small target is a strategy. Is it honest? Is it open? I want to hear what the policies are so I can judge. To do otherwise is frankly deceitful.' Do not play with the emotions of victims by using slogans and making it all sound good and claiming crime is going down. Now is the time. Everyone wants to know the detail. What are you going to do? What is the evidence? Show us the plans.

Miles Labor Government, Travel Expenses

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: My question is to the Premier. Can the Premier tell Queenslanders how much this third-term government spent on two luxurious jets going one after each other last week?

Mr MILES: I thank the member for Nanango for her question. I can assure the House and those opposite that I will never shy away from spending time in regional Queensland. In fact, it is important that regional Queensland has representation. Those are not my words; that is what Jeff Seeney said when he was asked how much he was spending on chartered jets.

Mrs Frecklington interjected.

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

Mr MILES: As the opposition would be aware, the cost of airfares for the plane is booked by my office and managed by QGAir. Those expenses will be published in the public record of ministerial expenses. I can assure the House that the Premier of Queensland spending time in regional Queensland is not only good value; it is incredibly important. Last week in Townsville I was able to speak with the Red Cross about the intervention programs they deliver that are working in Townsville. In Cairns I was able to announce an expansion of the successful—

Mr POWELL: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order on relevance under standing order 118(b). It was a short, simple question: what was the cost of not one but two private jets?

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you, Manager of Opposition Business. I have been listening to the Premier's response. He has indicated that he will reveal the cost at a particular point in time, which is addressing the question asked. It may not be the answer you are seeking, but it is the answer he has given. Premier, you have one minute and 19 seconds remaining.

Mr MILES: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Also in Cairns we were able to announce that there will be a new Polair helicopter based in Cairns, expanding the success of the Townsville regional helicopter. In Hervey Bay I was pleased to meet with police to talk about the station upgrade that the member for Hervey Bay has been passionately advocating for. Also in Townsville we heard from police about the need for new training facilities, so we announced our investment in the Townsville Police Academy. That is going to be incredibly important to deliver all of those extra police we have committed to. In Mackay I went out for the afternoon with the co-responder team doing important work engaging with young people. I think it was important that I got to see firsthand how those co-responders do their work. I want to thank Brooke and Tracy, who are the co-responder team in Mackay. It is a great program that we are expanding. While those opposite might want to criticise me for spending time in regional Queensland, I will keep doing it.

Community Safety

Ms HOWARD: My question is of the Minister for Corrective Services. Can the minister update the House on how the Miles Labor government is delivering new community safety measures for Queenslanders, and is the minister aware of any risky alternative approaches?

Ms BOYD: I thank the member for the question. I know what a big supporter she is of our men and women on the front line right across Queensland who keep our community safe. I know what a big fan she is of those 'switch locals' who work in our correctional facilities right across the Ipswich area, particularly in places like Wacol. When it comes to looking at how we can strengthen our community safety, we can never rest. We have already made it harder for people to get parole when they have murdered a child or when they have committed multiple murders. Our organised crime laws that target bikies are nation-leading. Best of all, unlike those opposite, our laws work. We also have our domestic and family violence response.

Opposition members interjected.

Ms BOYD: They are not locking up librarians, Mr Speaker; they are actually working. Our domestic and family violence response, which includes new custodial options for the worst offenders, is putting dangerous perpetrators behind bars. As a result of all of that, right now we have 10,800 adults behind bars because we have invested in community safety. We have made it a priority, and we will continue to do that in the future.

The member for Ipswich asked about any risks associated with this plan. If members want to look at risks, they need look no further than the LNP's record on this—and I know today we have already seen much opposition from the opposition around their past record. When we look at corrective services, we see that, in the last 20 years, the LNP have shut down more prisons than they have opened in Queensland. They shut down the Borallon correctional centre because they have a soft approach to crime. We have reopened that centre in Borallon because our tough new laws need that extra capacity. The LNP sold off correctional facilities in the Darling Downs. We did not need it, apparently. Right now we are constructing a 1,500-bed facility in the Lockyer Valley, just down the road from the centre that the LNP closed down. This is a shameful insight into the LNP's approach to community safety. It is entirely shameful. Under the LNP, nearly 200 corrections staff lost their jobs—not needed under the LNP's approach to crime. The LNP closed prisons, staff lost their jobs and they will do it again.

Electricity Prices

Mr DAMETTO: My question is to the Minister for Energy and Clean Economy Jobs. Average wholesale electricity prices are three times cheaper than two years ago, yet Ergon Energy customers are reporting record high electricity bills, making electricity unaffordable for many North Queenslanders. Will the minister explain the recent price spike and when end users can expect their power bills to drop?

Mr de BRENNI: I thank the member for the question. The fact is that, on this side of the House, we have done more to support Queenslanders manage the cost of living than any other jurisdiction in the nation. Queenslanders in regional Queensland—in Hinchinbrook, in Cairns, in Bundaberg, in Mackay and in Western Queensland—remember what the LNP chose not to do. They chose not to provide any cost-of-living support for regional Queenslanders when power went up 43 per cent under those opposite—43 per cent and zero action. That is the sort of slick slogan, structural cost-of-living response that we see in their plan—no support for those Queensland households. The fact is that we on this side of the House have supported regional households to have the equivalent power bills as those in South-East Queensland. It is vastly more expensive to deliver power to some of the most

remote regions in Queensland. That is just a fact. On the equivalent consumption basis in regional and remote Queensland, those households and small businesses pay the same as those in South-East Queensland.

Mr Dametto: And bills are still going up.

Mr de BRENNI: It is this Miles government that has delivered the nation-leading, cost-of-living relief—\$1,072 to every one of those vulnerable households.

Mr Dametto: What about businesses? Power prices are still going up for the end user.

Mr de BRENNI: Every household received a \$550 rebate. I want to take a moment to respond to the member's question in respect of—

Mr Dametto: Please.

Mr de BRENNI:—our long-term approach to putting downward pressure on power prices. All of the evidence shows that more renewables into an energy system drives down wholesale power prices. This side of the House brought in more renewables delivered through the renewable energy transformation bill.

Mr Dametto interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Member for Hinchinbrook.

Mr de BRENNI: We delivered a pathway to a coordinated transition to low-emissions, clean, affordable power. The assets are publicly owned by the residents of Hinchinbrook so that profits are not going offshore.

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

Mr de BRENNI: On this side of the House that was supported, but those on the opposite side of the House voted repeatedly against public ownership of energy assets—the poles and wires that the people of Hinchinbrook own. Those opposite voted to sell them off. Those opposite voted against renewable energy targets. With regard to the thousands of Ergon workers who secure the supply to households in Hinchinbrook, those opposite voted to privatise their jobs. The residents of Hinchinbrook know that those opposite will always vote to sell off their power assets.

(Time expired)

Community Safety

Mrs McMAHON: My question is of the Minister for Health, Mental Health and Ambulance Services and Minister for Women. Can the minister outline how the Miles Labor government is supporting community safety, in particular the safety of women and girls, and is the minister aware of any risky alternative approaches?

Ms FENTIMAN: I thank the member for Macalister for her question. Not only is she a tremendous advocate in her local community for ending violence against women and girls; in her former career as a member of the Queensland Police Service she worked on the front line supporting women and children escaping violence, and I want to thank her for all of her service.

I was so proud to stand with members of the government on Sunday, including the Premier and the Attorney-General, to demand an end to men's violence against women. As the Minister for Women, I am so proud that our government has invested \$1.75 billion to end domestic, family and sexual violence. That means more safe accommodation, more community prevention, more crisis support and, more critically, more programs to change the behaviour of men who choose to use violence. Because our services are facing unprecedented demand, yesterday we announced as part of our Community Safety Plan that we are increasing funding by 20 per cent. That is an extra \$36 million to support the hardworking frontline services that work day in and day out with women and children escaping violence.

I was also very pleased to see the Leader of the Opposition at the rally on Sunday. His presence sent an important message, because we all have a role to play in ending violence against women. I do have to say, though, that it is disappointing that we still have not heard one policy or plan from the opposition about what they would do to end men's violence against women—no comprehensive plan of what they would do to tackle domestic, family and sexual violence. We have not heard what they might do differently. Again we have not heard whether they would work to end domestic and family violence and whether they support the huge reforms that we have underway.

Once again, it is simply not good enough for the LNP to just have slick slogans on community safety, including ending violence against women, and to not be actually talking to the community about a plan. I really hope that the Leader of the Opposition's presence at the rally has signalled a complete change from those opposite and a complete change from the Leader of the Opposition. When the Leader of the Opposition was a cabinet minister, those hardworking frontline services to which we have just delivered a funding boost still remember how their funding was cut. Not one member of the opposition who sat around that cabinet table—and there are many of them—has apologised to those DV services for those days. They still remember that time. When I was secretary of the Centre Against Sexual Violence in Logan, I remember when our funding was cut. Not only were there funding cuts to the hardworking frontline services doing the hardest work; they were gagged from speaking out about it, so I really hope that we have seen a change from those opposite.

(Time expired)

Clairview Rural Fire Brigade

Mr ANDREW: My question without notice is to the Minister for Fire and Disaster Recovery and Minister for Corrective Services. The full complement of volunteers at Clairview Rural Fire Brigade have expressed an intention to resign, leaving local residents and the 26,000-odd vehicles that pass through the area each week without a dedicated fire service. What alternative approach will the minister be taking to ensure that Clairview and other remote towns like it continue to receive a 24-hour, onsite fire response service should any mass exodus of volunteers happen in the future?

Ms BOYD: I thank the member for the question. I might start by answering the last part of that question first and then go back to Clairview. This gives me a good opportunity to talk about QFES's recruitment strategy in terms of volunteerism that we launched in 2018. We have already seen that make a tremendous difference in terms of the volunteers that we have in place. One of the really important parts of that strategy is the ability to have targeted recruitment in specific areas where we need to attract new members, so we are definitely doing that and we are seeing it working right across the state.

In terms of the Rural Fire Service, right now we have 27,200 volunteers making up the volunteer workforce across our 1,400 rural fire brigades as of 29 February this year. We are supporting those volunteers on the front line with a funding injection in this last budget alone of a 40 per cent uplift for those volunteers. I am not sure of the specifics that are going on in the brigade that the member for Mirani has mentioned here today—it is certainly not something he has mentioned to me in the past—but I am more than eager to talk to him about what those specifics are so we can work together with those volunteers into the future.

One of the things that the Miles government does is we value the contribution that those volunteers make to their communities each and every day. They are on call 24/7. They are the first line of defence for their communities. They do an outstanding job. We are going to continue to invest in them today and into the future. If there is anything going on within that brigade, which I suspect may be the case, I am happy as the minister to meet with them and their local MP and work through those issues specifically.

We are not only ensuring that we are growing our volunteer base in rural fire but also ensuring that we are giving them the funding, the support, the training and the equipment they need to be able to provide the best service to their community. Whether it is educating their community around the risks that are associated with bushfires, working with landholders around that mitigation burning or fighting those really dangerous fires on the ground, we are keen to continue to invest in our volunteers and support them into the future because we know that our community needs it. We are a government that is committed to ensuring that our community is kept safe right across the state of Queensland.

We will continue to work with the member. I am happy to meet with him today. If he wants to meet with me today, I will make that time available to talk about that brigade specifically. We will continue to ensure that rural fire brigades right across our state have the funding and support they need into the future.

Police Resources

Mr SMITH: My question is of the Minister for Police and Community Safety. Can the minister please update the House on the Miles Labor government's new investments in police infrastructure, including in regional Queensland? Is the minister aware of any risky alternative approaches?

Mr RYAN: I thank the member for the question. I like Jack Dempsey—he is a mate of mine—but this member for Bundaberg is the best member for Bundaberg that the Queensland parliament has ever seen. He is the best member because he is a strong advocate for his community and he delivers. It was only last week that we were in his community. As a reflection of his strong advocacy and support for police and community safety in Bundaberg, we were able to announce a \$20 million upgrade for the Bundaberg Police Station. That is a significant investment in policing infrastructure to support the front line do what they do best, which is keep the community safe. Member for Bundaberg, thank you for that advocacy. You backed in the police, just like the Miles government does every day. It reflects our Community Safety Plan for Queensland—supporting victims, delivering for the front line, detaining offenders, intervening and preventing to ensure a safer Queensland community. It is backed in with real money and a real comprehensive plan.

Those opposite have a very poor record when it comes to investing in police infrastructure. Already the LNP is talking down the investment in the Bundaberg Police Station. As the Treasurer noted, the LNP spokesperson in Bundaberg said that this is just a shiny distraction for voters. If that is the LNP's position, that is code for cutting that investment in policing in Bundaberg. If it is not the LNP's position, then the Leader of the Opposition has to tear up the social media licence for his spokesperson in Bundaberg and pull that spokesperson into line. We will always invest in policing infrastructure. We will always invest in the Queensland Police Service.

Those opposite do have form when it comes to policing infrastructure. I will go back to the budget documents of 2012. I spoke before about the 'dot, dot'. Mr Speaker, as a former treasurer, you would know that, if a number is in brackets, that is worse than a dot, dot; that is a cut. Page 126 says that the government has reduced equity funding to the police department: for 2012, it has \$21 million in brackets; for 2013, it has \$70 million in brackets; for 2014, it has \$73 million in brackets; and for 2015, it has \$42 million in brackets. Over the forward estimates, the LNP government reduced police infrastructure spending by over \$205 million. Mr Speaker, you never, ever make that up. When they say that that was 10 years ago, you never, ever make up a cut like that. They will always cut the police.

Youth Crime

Ms CAMM: My question is to the Premier. Angus Beaumont's killer was reported to Child Safety over and over again. What responsibility does the Premier take for the failure of the child safety system adding to the youth crime crisis?

Mr SPEAKER: The period for question time has expired.

MOTION

Business Program



Hon. MC de BRENNI (Springwood—ALP) (Leader of the House) (11.15 am): I move—

1. That, in accordance with standing order 172, the Emergency Services Reform Amendment Bill, the State Emergency Service Bill, the Marine Rescue Queensland Bill and the Disaster Management and Other Legislation Amendment Bill be treated as cognate bills for their remaining stages, as follows:
 - (a) second reading debate, with separate questions being put in regard to the second readings;
 - (b) the consideration of the bills in detail together; and
 - (c) separate questions being put for the third readings and long titles.
2. The following business will be considered this sitting week, with the nominated maximum times as specified:
 - (a) the Victims' Commissioner and Sexual Violence Review Board Bill, a maximum of 3½ hours;
 - (b) the Emergency Services Reform Amendment Bill, the State Emergency Service Bill, the Marine Rescue Queensland Bill and the Disaster Management and Other Legislation Amendment Bill (cognate debate), a maximum of 5 hours; and
 - (c) the Criminal Code (Decriminalising Sex Work) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill, a maximum of 3 hours.
3. The following time limits for the bills listed in 2. apply:
 - (a) the minister to be called on in reply:
 - i. for the Victims' Commissioner and Sexual Violence Review Board Bill, 40 minutes before the expiry of the maximum hours for that debate;

- ii. for the Emergency Services Reform Amendment Bill, the State Emergency Service Bill, the Marine Rescue Queensland Bill and the Disaster Management and Other Legislation Amendment Bill (cognate debate), 1 hour before the expiry of the maximum hours for that debate; and
 - iii. for the Criminal Code (Decriminalising Sex Work) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill, 1 hour before the expiry of the maximum hours for that debate.
4. If the nominated stage of each bill listed above has not been completed by 5.55 pm on Thursday, 2 May 2024, Mr Speaker:
- (a) shall call on a minister to table any explanatory notes to their circulated amendments, any statement of compatibility with human rights or any statement relating to an override declaration
 - (b) shall put all remaining questions necessary to either pass that stage or pass the bill without further debate
 - (c) may interrupt non-specified business or debate on a bill or motion to complete the requirements of the motion
 - (d) will complete all stages required by this motion notwithstanding anything contained in standing and sessional orders.

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

AYES, 48:

ALP, 48—Bailey, Boyd, Brown, Bush, Butcher, Crawford, D'Ath, de Brenni, Dick, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Furner, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Healy, Hinchliffe, Howard, Kelly, A. King, S. King, Linard, Lui, Martin, McCallum, McMahan, McMillan, Mellish, Miles, Mullen, Nightingale, O'Rourke, Pease, Power, Pugh, Richards, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Scanlon, Skelton, Smith, Stewart, Sullivan, Tantari, Walker, Whiting.

NOES, 40:

LNP, 33—Bates, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Camm, Crisafulli, Frecklington, Gerber, Hart, Head, Janetzki, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Lister, Mander, McDonald, Mickelberg, Millar, Minnikin, Nicholls, O'Connor, Perrett, Powell, Purdie, Robinson, Rowan, Simpson, Stevens, Watts, Weir, Zanow.

Grn, 2—Berkman, MacMahon.

KAP, 3—Dametto, Katter, Knuth.

PHON, 1—Andrew.

Ind, 1—Bolton.

Pairs: Hunt, Molhoek; Lauga, Crandon.

Resolved in the affirmative.

VICTIMS' COMMISSIONER AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE REVIEW BOARD BILL

Resumed from 6 March (see p. 485).

Second Reading

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence) (11.20 am): I move—

That the bill be now read a second time.

On 6 March 2024, the Victims' Commissioner and Sexual Violence Review Board Bill 2024 was introduced into the parliament and subsequently referred to the Community Safety and Legal Affairs Committee for its consideration. I thank the committee members for their thorough consideration of the bill. A total of 15 submissions were received by the committee in the course of its inquiry. I extend my thanks to those stakeholders, organisations and individuals who made submissions to the committee and participated in the public hearing. I am pleased to inform the House that on 19 April 2024 the committee tabled its report and made two recommendations, including a recommendation that the bill be passed. I table the government response to the committee's recommendations.

Tabled paper: Community Safety and Legal Affairs Committee: Report No. 9, 57th Parliament—Victims' Commissioner and Sexual Violence Review Board Bill 2024, government response [704].

The Queensland government is committed to establishing an effective Victims' Commissioner to protect and promote the rights of victims of crime in Queensland. Victims should be treated fairly and with respect and dignity and their rights recognised and protected. As the Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce noted, a Victims' Commissioner can play an important and ongoing role to influence policy, practice and system reform so that rights of victims are upheld.

The bill will provide for the establishment of a permanent Victims' Commissioner with various functions to promote and protect victims' rights. Key functions include: conducting systemic reviews, research and consulting in relation to matters relating to victims, including with victims of crime; dealing with complaints about alleged contraventions of the Charter of Victims' Rights; publishing information about the criminal justice system; providing advice on issues affecting victims and the promotion of victims' rights, including making recommendations about improvements to government policy, practices, procedures and systems; and monitoring implementation of any recommendations that it makes.

The commissioner's functions, which enable it to conduct a systemic review, undertake research and consult, can apply to all victims of crime, including victims of property crime and other nonviolent crimes. The broad definition of a victim will support the Victims' Commissioner to use their independent judgement and discretion in how they choose to allocate their resources and focus on key issues impacting on victims of crime. This approach will also limit adverse impacts that may arise where some victims of crime may be excluded because they do not meet the legislative criteria to be considered a victim of violent crime or are not considered a victim who has a specific vulnerability to harm.

While the scope of the Victims' Commissioner is broad, the bill requires the commissioner to have specific regard to the vulnerability of particular cohorts of victims of crime, including victims of domestic, family or sexual violence; Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander victims; and victims who have characteristics that may make them particularly vulnerable to harm, including women, children, elderly people and victims with a disability. As the taskforce noted, people who face intersecting forms of disadvantage are more vulnerable to victimisation and effective systemic advocacy needs to recognise this.

Consistent with the current scope, the commissioner's functions to manage complaints about the charter is limited to victims of personal and domestic violence offences. The bill provides for the Victims' Commissioner to be supported by a dedicated statutory authority, known as the Office of the Victims' Commissioner. The Victims' Commissioner will have full control over how the office operates and how it will support the commissioner to exercise their functions and powers.

Some submitters to the committee raised concerns about the independence of the Victims' Commissioner. The bill provides that the Victims' Commissioner will be an independent statutory appointment and will not be subject to direction by the minister. I note the concerns raised by some submitters about the application of clause 8 of the bill and the reference that the Victims' Commissioner represents the state. I confirm that this clause is not intended to interfere with the commissioner's independence. Instead, it allows the Victims' Commissioner to rely on the immunities and protections of the state while they carry out their public purpose of protecting and promoting the rights of victims of crime. Similar provisions which refer to a statutory agency representing the state can be found in other acts such as those that establish the Queensland Family and Child Commission and the Queensland Mental Health Commission.

The bill will ensure that complaints made by affected victims about alleged contraventions of the Charter of Victims' Rights are managed in a transparent and accountable way. While the rights in the charter are not legally enforceable, the Victims' Commissioner will have functions and powers to improve the management of complaints. This will include the ability to request information, make recommendations and other actions to ensure that the rights of victims under the charter are continued to be upheld. I note that some submitters raised with the committee concerns about the lack of enforceability of the rights in the charter. The Queensland government, in its response to the second taskforce report, has committed to requesting the Victims' Commissioner review the charter to consider whether additional rights should be recognised or if existing rights should be expanded. The bill allows the Victims' Commissioner to conduct an independent review of the charter and this could include making recommendations to the government about improvements that could be made to greater support the rights of victims of crime.

While the bill will establish a permanent Victims' Commissioner, I would like to acknowledge and thank the Interim Victims' Commissioner, Jon Rouse APM, and the Office of the Interim Victims' Commissioner for their work. Since being appointed in September last year, the Interim Victims' Commissioner has engaged with victims of crime, victim support services and criminal justice agencies across all parts of the state. The Interim Victims' Commissioner has also supported the development of an easy-read English version of the Charter of Victims' Rights.

To further support this work, on Monday, 22 April 2024 the Premier and I announced that an additional \$2.97 million of funding has been allocated for the permanent Victims' Commissioner to support its operations, including the development of fit-for-purpose and multi-channelled solutions, including web-based and hard copy information, to assist victims of crime to access information; and the promotion of collaborative professional development opportunities between government and non-government agencies that work with and support victims of crime.

With a view to increasing the reporting of sexual offences and the number of successful prosecutions of sexual offences in Queensland, the taskforce recommended the establishment of a permanent board to identify opportunities for future and ongoing system improvements to address attrition rates for sexual offence reporting and prosecution. The bill implements the government's response to recommendation 46 of the second taskforce report through the establishment of the Sexual Violence Review Board. The board's main function will be to identify and review systemic issues in relation to the reporting, investigation and prosecution of sexual offences in Queensland. The board may review government policy, practices, procedures and systems to identify systemic issues. The board may also review and analyse data and information held by government entities and non-government entities about sexual offences.

The board will have a systemic focus and it is not intended that the board will review every individual sexual offence matter that does not progress. However, a review into a systemic issue may consider the progress of an investigation of an alleged sexual offence and whether further investigation or prosecution of a person accused of committing the offence has been affected by an act or omission during the investigation; or major decisions, and reasons for the decisions, about the charges brought against a person accused of committing an alleged sexual offence, or not bringing charges against the accused. Once the board has reviewed a matter, the board may publish a report which may include recommendations to help improve the reporting, investigation and prosecution of sexual offences in Queensland.

I am pleased to advise the House that the Miles government has allocated an additional \$3.78 million to the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions to support it to review past sexual violence matters and provide information and advice to the board as they conduct their systemic review functions. The board will be chaired by the Victims' Commissioner and comprise eight other members to complement and inform its systematic focus. In considering the membership of the board, it will be a requirement that at least one member is a person with lived experience as a victim of sexual violence and that one member is an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person. The minister must also ensure that the board's membership reflects the social, cultural and linguistic diversity of the Queensland community to ensure an appropriate mix of representatives.

The bill provides the Victims' Commissioner and the board with powers to request information to support their systematic review functions and the commissioner to exercise their complaint functions. Submitters to the committee raised concerns about the reach of the information-sharing powers provided to the Victims' Commissioner and the board. While government and non-government entities are required to provide information, the bill allows for reasonable excuses to be raised. A reasonable excuse is not defined in the bill and the few examples that are provided in the bill are not considered to be an exhaustive list. This supports entities that receive an information request to raise concerns with the Victims' Commissioner, or the chairperson of the board, where the request may relate to protected information such as where the information is protected by sexual assault counselling privilege.

To ensure identifying and confidential information is protected, the bill contains a wide range of protections including that unlawful disclosure or use is an offence. A report prepared by the Victims' Commissioner or the board will not be able to disclose confidential information, including any information that might lead to the identification of an individual.

In conclusion, I would like to again acknowledge and express my appreciation to all stakeholders and submitters and the committee during the development and review of the bill. The bill is another important step forward in our commitment to support victims of crime and it will place a significant focus on the promotion and protection of victims' rights and address systematic issues in the reporting, investigation and prosecution of sexual offences in Queensland. I commend the bill to the House.

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

MOTION

Order of Business

 **Hon. MC de BRENNI** (Springwood—ALP) (Leader of the House) (11.31 am) by leave, without notice: I move—

That, further to the motion agreed to by the House on 16 April 2024, general business order of the day No. 1 be called on for its second reading during the time set aside for private members' bills this evening.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

VICTIMS' COMMISSIONER AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE REVIEW BOARD BILL

Second Reading

Resumed from p. 1279, on motion of Ms D'Ath—

That the bill be now read a second time.

 **Ms CAMM** (Whitsunday—LNP) (11.33 am): What were you wearing? How many drinks did you have? What did you eat before you went out? Why were you out so late last night? These are the questions women around Queensland are being asked when they come forward pleading for help. They have been raped, stripped of their dignity, left bare, begging for someone to believe them. Instead of stepping up, the government has allowed a culture that has vehemently questioned a victim's legitimacy. It is what victim-survivors tell me when I speak to them. It is what they told the Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce. It is what we witnessed them crying out for in the streets over the weekend. One submitter to the taskforce wrote—

I did not report this to police or tell another person because at the time it was assumed that I had put myself in a position where I was responsible for the outcome.

Another said—

I felt embarrassed that I let it happen to me. I didn't want to go through police and court, and feel as though I would be judged, even though I absolutely know I did nothing wrong.

Another wrote—

I was [young] when I was sexually assaulted. I knew I could report it, I knew I could tell someone, but I did not think anyone would believe me.

To all the victim-survivors who have felt this way: we must do better, we must believe them. We must emphasise that sexual assault is not a result of a woman's bad behaviour or what she wears and it is not the result of a victim's poor choice; the only one responsible is the perpetrator.

In Queensland, 24 per cent of women have experienced sexual violence since the age of 15. That is essentially one in four. There are women in this House who have experienced sexual violence. It is one in every family; it is at least one in every friendship group. We are at a point of greater anger amongst the community at the violence being perpetrated against women. I was at the rally in Brisbane on the weekend and the feeling was palpable. It is not a woman's problem; it is the perpetrator's problem—it is a man's problem. What people do not want is more talk. Talk does not make people safer.

The LNP has shown our support for the Victims' Commissioner and we want to see the rollout of all of the recommendations of the *Hear her voice* and *A call for change* reports. We want to make sure all of those voices who contributed are heard. However, women should not have to wait so long. The updates on the progress of these recommendations was laid bare at the end of last year and it was clear that the government has fallen behind. So far they have changed the scope of dozens of recommendations in the hope that if they change the time frames maybe no-one will notice that they are behind, but the people who notice are the victims. They are the people watching things stay the same and feeling the same level of fear—if not more fear than in the past. They are concerned for their safety every day and nothing ever changes, and in some cases it has become worse.

Whether it is the effective rollout of the Respectful Relationships Education Program, a statewide victim advocate service or ensuring victims can access rape kits no matter where they are or when they turn up, victims still wait. It is our hope that the establishment of the Victims' Commissioner and the Sexual Violence Review Board will highlight the issues in our system as quickly as possible in an open,

honest and transparent way. The Victims' Commissioner and Sexual Violence Review Board Bill establishes the Sexual Violence Review Board, which I will turn to shortly, and the Victims' Commissioner, which the shadow minister for youth justice and victim support will speak to later in the debate.

The Sexual Violence Review Board is intended to identify and review systematic issues in relation to the reporting, investigation and prosecution of sexual offences. The board will: review government policy, practices, procedures and systems to identify systematic issues; review and analyse data and information held by government entities and non-government entities; make recommendations to the minister, government entities and non-government entities about improvements to government policy, practices, procedures and systems as a result of a review carried out by the board; and monitor the implementation of recommendations.

It is my wish, as a member of the opposition, that that information is shared quickly, transparently and in a bipartisan way to ensure victims are heard first and responded to quickly. This will follow through on recommendation 46 of the *Hear her voice* report 2. I understand it is intended to have a broad scope to allow it to review any part of the criminal justice system in relation to a sexual offence ranging from a victim-survivor's initial reporting of an offence to an entity such as a health service, support service or the police to the conduct of a court proceeding. However, the explanatory notes make it clear that the board is not intended to conduct case reviews of individual sexual offence matters or make recommendations regarding disciplinary action for the conduct of individuals in an investigation and prosecution of specific cases. Recommendation 46 specifically states—

The board's function and powers were provided for in legislation and should include the independent review of sexual cases that are not progressed, or cases requested to be considered by the victims' commissioner.

This bill overlooks that core element of recommendation 46—to conduct independent reviews of sexual violence cases. This is a clear restriction on the recommendation that was put forward by the taskforce and Justice McMurdo, whose contribution we greatly respected. It highlights the value in reviewing sexual violence cases that are not progressed or are requested to be reviewed by the Victims' Commissioner. The Domestic Violence Prevention Centre on the Gold Coast supported this recommendation. They stated—

The scope of the matters that the Board can review is not broad enough to cover all the systemic barriers that victims of sexual assault face in the criminal system.

The Board will not be able to provide meaningful advice on systems reform if it does not include in its review matters where the prosecution has been successful, however there were systemic issues apparent, including during sentencing, during the offenders' time in custody or parole proceedings.

The scope of the board should include:

- review of cases where sentencing has been inadequate.
- review cases that Victims Commissioner may refer to the board, which may have had a finding of guilt but where there were issues in the reporting, investigation, prosecution or sentencing of sexual offences.

We in the opposition certainly support that position. The Queensland Sexual Assault Network agreed, stating—

Sexual Violence Case Review Board should comply with WSJT recommendation and undertake both individual and systemic reviews.

...

QSAN strongly supports this approach ...

The Gold Coast Centre Against Sexual Violence made the comments—

... GCCASV is concerned that the model proposed in this Bill is not entirely consistent with the WSJT recommendations and must be amended in order to maximise community confidence and the safety and wellbeing of victim/survivors of sexual and domestic violence.

...

GCCASV believes that if this Bill is amended to accurately reflect the WSJT recommendations in their entirety, it will enhance safe, ethical, trauma informed, support to victim/survivors of sexual, domestic, and family violence and improve community and system responses.

Ending Violence Against Women and Children Queensland echoed these sentiments, stating—

EVAWQ supports that the WSJT recommendation be implemented in full to ensure both individual and systemic accountability for victims of sexual violence.

Legal Aid Queensland stated—

LAQ supports the implementation of the Victims Commissioner and Sexual Violence Review Board to review cases that are not progressed or fail to be successfully prosecuted.

knowmore stated that often their clients feel marginalised or excluded from criminal proceedings and encouraged the bill to be expanded to include independent reviews. DVConnect stated—

While the Bill suggests that individual issues may be considered indicators of larger systemic issues, this leaves a broad gap in response and accountability. First, individuals who have experienced this highly person, highly traumatic, and severely poorly responded to crime, deserve to have a body that oversees all matters. Further, this capability will increase the opportunity to identify systemic issues that could be easily dismissed without this closer inspection. There are many examples of how individual cases, if more closely examined may have highlighted the significant systemic issues that have been raised across the WSJT reports, Call for Change Report and the Forensic DNA Inquiry well before such taskforces and inquiries were needed.

We saw this come from one of the biggest systemic failings our justice system has ever seen with the DNA lab. We know over 41,000 cases will need to be reviewed by the legal-led review team. With only 440 case samples tested so far and 193 returning profiles where they previously did not have the potential, the situation cannot be understated. It could genuinely mean thousands of offenders of assault, of rape and of murder are walking free amongst Queenslanders and have been for some time. This is the most abhorrent case of government maladministration in living memory—the monumental failure of the state-run forensic services lab overseen by the Palaszczuk-Miles government where it was found that the DNA lab was failing in its most fundamental task: to find DNA. That was uncovered from one single case. One single case that was more closely examined uncovered a systemic failing.

I will turn now to the membership of the board. It is intended to be chaired by the Victims' Commissioner and comprise eight other members: four government members, being the Police Commissioner or their nominee, the Director of Public Prosecutions or their nominee, a public sector employee who is appropriately qualified in forensic services or clinical forensic medicine and a public sector employee who is appropriately qualified in matters relating to the court system; and up to four non-government members who have skills, knowledge and experience in sexual offence matters, providing support services to victims of sexual assault and/or a victim of sexual violence. As per the explanatory notes, the board must include at least one person who has lived experience as a victim of sexual violence and at least one member who is an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person. This is critical to ensure that there is informed and supportive outcomes.

The Public Advocate noted in their submission that they would like to see a member of the community with lived experience of disability be included on the board. Legal Aid Queensland believe there should be a member of the community with legal experience on the board specifically from a criminal defence perspective. The Domestic Violence Prevention Centre from the Gold Coast also noted that anyone with a domestic violence or sexual offence, whether summary or indictable, against them should be disqualified from appointment as commissioner of the board. It is my sincere hope that the Sexual Violence Review Board is a step in the right direction towards uncovering and resolving the systemic issues plaguing victims of sexual violence and preventing them from receiving justice; that the recommendations provide a validation for victims, a recognition of how system failures have translated to failing victims and an opportunity for government to respond, resource and improve outcomes for victims.

Victims of crime and survivors of sexual violence have been made vulnerable by the Palaszczuk-Miles government over the course of the last nine years in failings that I have outlined in particular around the DNA forensic lab. The lack of leadership and the lack of action by this government have left our community vulnerable and, in the case of many victims, unsafe. While those opposite may preach about community safety efforts and new plans that have been released, Queenslanders understand and know better because they are living the experience of the failings each and every day. The hundreds of people who marched on parliament with Voice for Victims over the course of this day know better. The families and friends of victims who have been murdered in Queensland since those opposite came to power know better. Most concerning for all Queenslanders is that perpetrators have worked it out and they know better.

It was the state Labor government that watered down the Youth Justice Act. It was the state Labor government that have dragged their feet in failing to roll out the recommendations of the *Hear her voice* report in a timely manner and it is the current state Labor government that have allowed murderers and rapists to potentially be walking free as a result of the forensic lab failure, with no hope for justice in sight for many of those victims. It was this government's failing in providing a substandard rape kit and a lack of trained and available staff to carry out procedures associated with collecting critical

evidence. This came to light only through brave victims like the young woman in Central Queensland who came forward after she was sent away to photograph her own injuries and collect her own evidence.

In fact, the number of victims of rape and sexual offences has grown without fail year on year. Last year it was up 105 per cent since the state Palaszczuk Labor government came to power, and already in the first two months of this year there have been 1,648 victims of rape and sexual offences. Tragically, of those, 674 were children. That is almost half, a growing cohort. This is an absolute disgrace and those leading the government should hang their heads in shame. This is just another reason why the Sexual Violence Review Board should be given the full powers recommended by the taskforce and Justice McMurdo almost two years ago.

The *Hear her voice* report is not the only review where we have seen unacceptable delays. We have seen report after report and recommendation after recommendation put on the shelf by those opposite because it is not publicly palatable to be up-front with Queenslanders. Enough is enough. The systemic issues that have been allowed to fester under this state Labor government must stop. It is our hope that the Sexual Violence Review Board will contribute to this greatly.

While we know those opposite are not known for transparency, I want to raise an issue that we have seen in relation to far too many bills coming before this House, and that is the time given for consultation. Transparency aside, which is clearly where it is located under this government, there is a great impact on frontline services and community organisations—those that are already hard pressed to deliver services to long waitlists of victims of sexual violence and domestic violence. They are pulled away from their core business at the will and the whim of this state government without any extra resourcing to undertake lengthy engagement that should be meaningful and should be co-designed. Instead, they are given short time frames within which to contribute their insights about legislation. The frontline workers in these services have a passion to change the ongoing scourge of domestic and family violence.

We are on the eve of Domestic and Family Violence Awareness Month and I would like to pay tribute to the fantastic domestic violence support services across our communities and our state. They are compassionate. They are generous. They are exhausted. They provide refuge for those at their lowest moment. They help to rebuild their lives. They give them strength when they are required to do so. They are passionate about making change for the long term. Also, many are not funded by the government and do not receive any support. While the opposition welcomes any announcement to increase funding, a number of organisations that do incredible things across our state deserve recognition and funding to be able to work collaboratively in the interests of victims.

I want to address some of the statements made by the government in reference to politicking. Since I have held this portfolio as the shadow minister for the prevention of domestic, family and sexual violence, the opposition has taken a bipartisan approach. We have endorsed every recommendation and supported the government's approach to the Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce. Like many members on this side of the House, I engaged with Justice McMurdo as part of that work. However, we hear members of the government, particularly female members of the government, playing politics with what is a very important issue. Women across our state expect the government and the opposition to work together. They do not expect to see disgraceful media releases, scaremongering women and victims of violence across the state.

I have given an undertaking to every women's service that is funded by the government that we will work with them. We will ensure that they will receive the resourcing they need and that it goes to help victims who endlessly contact the opposition because of the failings of this state Labor government. Ours is the bipartisan approach that Queensland women expect, not the politicking of this House. We will support the bill in the interests of not just victims but all Queensland women.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Bush): Before I call the next member, I will go through the list of those who are on a warning. They are the members for Ninderry, Clayfield, Everton, Currumbin, Whitsunday, Kawana, Lockyer, Nanango and Hinchinbrook.

 **Mr RUSSO** (Toohey—ALP) (11.51 am): I rise to speak to the Victims' Commissioner and Sexual Violence Review Board Bill 2024. In its report No. 9 of the 57th Parliament, tabled in this Assembly on 19 April 2024, the Community Safety and Legal Affairs Committee recommended to the Assembly that the bill be passed. The overarching objectives of the bill are to establish the Victims' Commissioner to promote and protect victims' rights and establish the Sexual Violence Review Board to identify and review systemic issues in relation to the reporting, investigation and prosecution of sexual offences.

The bill takes important steps in providing recognition and support to victims of crime. In establishing the permanent Victims' Commissioner, the bill addresses systemic issues relating to how victims of crime are treated. Too often, victim-survivors have reported feeling retraumatised and unsupported by the criminal justice system. It is time to change this. One in five women and one in 20 men have experienced sexual violence. As few as 13 per cent of sexual assaults are reported to police. That alarming statistic is not totally surprising because of the traditionally taboo nature of sexual violence and because the experience, from police to jury trial and verdict, has been described by the chair of the Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce as 'traumatising, confusing, disempowering and slow'.

In early 2023, the former Legal Affairs and Safety Committee inquired into the support provided to victims of crime. The terms of reference for the inquiry included how to achieve better coordination of services for victims, how to ensure victims are heard and included during the criminal justice process, the functions and effectiveness of the Victims of Crime Assistance Act 2009 and the impacts of any recommendations. The former committee made 18 recommendations for government. These included recommendations for reviews of victims' rights, improved coordination of services, increasing access to information and trauma informed training, investing in victim support services and improving access to restorative justice and youth justice conferencing. The report also supported the taskforce's recommendation to establish a statutory role of a Victims' Commissioner in Queensland and a review of the charter by the Victims' Commissioner, once established. At that time, the committee found the appointment of a Victims' Commissioner would go a long way to addressing many of the issues raised by the courageous witnesses who appeared at the public hearings.

The functions of the Victims' Commissioner, except its complaint function, will apply to all victims of crime within the definition of 'victim' as outlined in clause 6 of the bill. Beyond the person who suffers harm, the definition includes their family members or dependants and a person who suffers harm as a direct result of intervening to help a person who had domestic violence committed against them.

Several submitters raised the importance of the Victims' Commissioner conducting community engagement and consultation so that those most in need of the services are, firstly, aware of them and, secondly, willing to engage with them. Some victims may be aware of the services but, due to a lack of trust in or fear of the system, may not be willing to engage with the services. Multicultural Australia said that there are significant barriers, posed by language and culture, to the reporting of sexual violence offences in particular and spoke of the stigma around crime and identifying oneself as a victim. The organisation noted that the systemic review function of the Victims' Commissioner, in particular, will assist in breaking the multilayered barriers to multicultural victims accessing justice. Overall, the committee was satisfied with the appointment criteria provided for in the bill and that the Victims' Commissioner will be an independent statutory appointment. The committee acknowledged that many submitters spoke of the over-representation of marginalised groups as victims of crime.

All submitters who suggested changes relating to the membership of the board said these were necessary to accurately reflect the diverse community of Queensland and noted the benefits of increased representation at high levels in breaking down the barriers that marginalised people face in accessing justice. In response to these concerns, the department reiterated the requirements outlined in clause 69(5)(a) requiring the minister to ensure that the appointed members reflect the social diversity of the Queensland community such as those with a disability, lived experience of sexual assault and/or legal experience. The department also confirmed that it is intended that more than one member of the board may be an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person.

I am proud to be part of a government that has taken real concrete steps to address these serious social issues. On behalf of the committee, I thank those individuals and organisations that made written submissions on the bill. I also thank our Parliamentary Service staff and the Department of Justice and Attorney-General. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mrs GERBER** (Currumbin—LNP) (11.57 am): Twenty-six thousand: that is how many reported victims of crime there were in 2015 when those opposite first came to power. Under this Labor government, in which Premier Miles has been a key decision-maker for almost 10 years now, the number of victims of crime has grown year on year from 26,000 when they first came to power to an all-time 10-year high this year. Staggeringly, the figure is sitting at 81,000 victims of crime. That lies squarely at the feet of this third-term Labor government. Even this morning in this chamber, during ministerial statements, we heard the Premier try to convince Queenslanders that crime rates are going down, but Queenslanders know better. The staggering number of victims of crime know better—81,000 people.

Before the state Labor government came to power, before 2015, there were 18,000 victims of crime. Last year, there were 58,000. That is a 219 per cent increase. Before the state Labor government came to power 10 years ago, there were 4,500 victims of rape and sexual assault. Last year, there were 9,000. That is a 105 per cent increase.

This bill is a missed opportunity to listen to Voice for Victims who have marched on parliament to call for change. It is a missed opportunity to listen to what victims of crime are calling for. Any member of this parliament only had to step outside to talk with victims of crime who have marched on parliament to have their voices heard. I thank every single one of those victims outside who came this morning to call on this House to take this action. I thank in particular Graham Kimball, who is standing outside right now with his family. Two years ago he was a family of four. His son was killed in a car crash with an unregistered 17-year-old driver. He said he wants the Premier and his government to know that youth crime is not a media beat-up. He addressed the crowd, saying he is sick and tired of the government treating this crisis like a political football. People are dying. He said it took nine months for them to be connected to support.

I thank Russell Field, who is again bravely standing out there telling his story. Russell Field wants this government to know that youth crime is not a media beat-up. He said, 'Our son, his fiancée and their unborn child were killed by a juvenile out on bail, and where is the justice?' There are many victims and he is saying to the Premier, 'We did not ask to be a victim, but we are just one. We need someone to care, yet victims get nothing.' Cindy is here as part of Vyleen's family. She called on the government to start listening. She said Voice for Victims has been a great support to her. She said, 'We do not want this to happen to anyone ever again, but voices are being ignored and not heard and we need victims to be heard.'

The Robertson family, whose trauma is still fresh but who marched on parliament today to call for change while they are still struggling with their own grief and their own loss, said, 'We have not heard from the government for any assistance. We were not enough for premier Palaszczuk and we need the system fixed now.' Susan Marcus said she has been left devastated. She cannot work. She cannot sleep. She said, 'My life has been changed forever and my heart ripped out of my chest.' To everyone else this morning who marched so that the voices of victims could be heard, I thank you. Thank you for reaching out to the LNP. We are listening to you and we will act. We will ensure that detention as a last resort is removed from the Youth Justice Act just like members of Voice for Victims are calling for.

Mrs D'ATH: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order on relevance. I ask the member be brought back to the bill. I respect the views of those outside and victims of crime, but now the member is talking about matters that are not in this bill.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Hart): I have been listening closely to the member and I am finding that she is entirely relevant.

A government member interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Minister, are you reflecting on the chair? Member for Currumbin, you have the call.

Mrs GERBER: I say this to the Attorney-General, who just stood up on a point of order to say it is not relevant to listen to what victims outside right now are calling for—

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

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Pause the clock.

Mrs D'ATH: I take personal offence and the member should withdraw.

Mrs GERBER: I withdraw. Victims are calling for detention as a last resort to be removed from the bill. Since 2020 this state government has introduced a 10-point plan, a three-point plan, a four-point plan and today an 11-point plan but no plan to remove detention as a last resort. This bill introduces a Victims' Commissioner which the LNP supported from the very beginning—and in fact called for—so of course we will not oppose this bill, but we want to see the voices of victims of crime heard and acted upon, and this bill does not do that. This bill does not remove detention as a last resort like victims of crime are calling for. This bill deals with complaints about alleged contraventions of the Charter of Victims' Rights, publishing information in relation to the criminal justice system, promoting the victims' charter and rights of victims and advocating on behalf of victims by making recommendations to government, providing advice to the minister on issues affecting victims and monitoring the implementation of recommendations made by the Victims' Commissioner.

The Victims' Commissioner will also look into systemic issues. We know from listening to the voices of victims that there are many systemic issues, not just in the crime space but for victims of crime themselves. We know that victims of crime are not getting the financial support they need. They are having to wait 18 months to two years to get the financial assistance they need. For almost 10 years we have had the same state Labor government announcing the same plans—a 10-point plan, a three-point plan, a four-point plan and this morning an 11-point plan. Victims of crime are calling for tangible action and this government refuses to act.

The Victims' Commissioner will also conduct research into matters affecting victims, including particular cohorts of victims. That is the systemic aspect of the role of the Victims' Commissioner. Every day we are speaking to victims of crime. We know the horrors they are experiencing and we know it does not end when the crime ends. These people have gone through the most horrific crimes and they are telling us that the criminal justice system is detrimental to their experience. Victims of crime have been calling for an advocate service and I want to make the distinction that this Victims' Commissioner is not the same as the advocate service that was recommended as part of the victims of crime inquiry that the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee conducted last year.

Those opposite must do so much better. Whilst the Victims' Commissioner is a good step, so much more needs to be done to support victims of crime. Since 2014 over 400 people have tragically lost their lives to murder. That is almost one person every week. Some of their families and loved ones were here today marching on parliament calling for change—change this government is refusing to listen to and act on. The most recent crime report of the Government Statistician's Office reveals an all-time 10-year high when it comes to victim numbers across this state—an increase of 213 per cent. Assault is up 219 per cent. Rape and attempted rape is up 155 per cent. Armed robbery is up 221 per cent.

Today those opposite dismissed the desperate pleas of victims of crime to remove detention as a last resort from the Youth Justice Act. Labor's 10-point plan is simply another illustration of the chaos and crisis of this government. While Queenslanders are marching on parliament demanding action, this Labor government announces another 11-point plan. Only the LNP is listening to victims of crime. The LNP is committed to removing detention as a last resort, which is what victims of crime have called for.

Despite Premier Miles jetsetting around the state, he has closed his ears to victims of crime wanting real change. Queenslanders are calling for detention as a last resort to be removed from the Youth Justice Act. Our Making Queensland Safer Laws will do that. We will listen to victims of crime and we will take real action on what they are calling for.



Ms BUSH (Cooper—ALP) (12.08 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the Victims' Commissioner and Sexual Violence Review Board Bill, a bill that is delivering the tangible action the member spoke of and that I know we all want. I intend to remain relevant to the bill. Crime and the drivers of crime are complex problems that every government and every community right across the world face. While we on this side will never stop trying to make the community safer, we also know how important it is to wrap every bit of support around a person who, through no fault of their own, experiences the trauma of becoming a victim of crime. We know from the evidence presented over multiple inquiries that, if a victim of crime is treated with dignity and respect—if they are connected to strength-based services, helped to navigate the criminal justice system and have autonomy and control over the decisions that are made along the way, including the degree of voice that they can have in a process—they are far more likely to recover from that act of violence. This bill advances that objective for victims by establishing a permanent Victims' Commissioner for Queensland—the first of its kind in this state. I am really thrilled to be here on this date and to be part of this moment for which victims of crime have advocated for over many years.

In 2009, a Charter of Victims' Rights was established in Queensland and located within the Victims of Crime Assistance Act. This act was also seminal, completely reforming Queensland's financial assistance for victims away from the former compensation scheme towards an assistance model that gets victims the help they need when they need it. At that time, I was CEO of the Queensland Homicide Victims' Support Group and worked alongside the government with many other victim-advocates who used the collective voices of thousands of Queensland victim-survivors to co-design both the financial assistance scheme and the charter. Those principles were what victims themselves said they needed to feel supported and to recover from an act of violence: dignity and respect; relevant, timely and accurate information; to be kept safe from the offender while attending court; and to be able to express the impact of the crime on them and their loved ones.

These principles matter, but only insofar as they are upheld. The information we have received through two parliamentary inquiries this term into victim support, coupled with the incredible body of work that the Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce completed and the information received through the Independent Commission of Inquiry into Queensland Police Service responses to domestic and family violence, is that the rights of victims are not always met and that, despite the efforts of the tens of thousands of Queenslanders employed in policing, courts and victim support agencies, too many victims are left feeling empty, invisible or retraumatised by the criminal justice process. The appointment of a permanent Victims' Commissioner is an important step forward to correct this.

In August 2023 the Attorney-General announced that the government was working to introduce the bill to establish a Victims' Commissioner and that an Interim Victims' Commissioner would be appointed. In September last year, the Queensland government announced the appointment of Mr Jon Rouse as the Interim Victims' Commissioner. Since his appointment, the commissioner has looked at the issue of better responding to victim complaints. The Victims' Commissioner and Sexual Violence Review Board Bill will establish a permanent Victims' Commissioner to promote and protect these rights.

Victims have told us that they feel disempowered in the criminal justice system and that this can deter victims from reporting. Stakeholders have also raised that there is no single independent body responsible for identifying and monitoring systemic issues or issues of concern and that there is no oversight of complaints made about compliance with the Charter of Victims' Rights. To address this, the Victims' Commissioner will have key functions to: identify and review systemic issues relating to victims; conduct research into matters affecting victims; consult with victims about their experiences; publish information in relation to the criminal justice system; and provide advice to the minister on issues affecting victims and the promotion of victims' rights.

Importantly, the Victims' Commissioner will also investigate and manage complaints made by victims about contraventions of the Charter of Victims' Rights and ensure victims' complaints are managed in a transparent and accountable manner. Inquiries have found that the charter currently lacks visibility and consequence and that, while some victims are able to interpret the system and work with the prosecution towards a just outcome, too many victims are confused by the complex nature of the process and are unable to advocate for themselves due to the very real trauma that they are experiencing. As one witness to our 2023 parliamentary inquiry into victims' support, Patricia Pendry, told the committee—

In a society such as ours, justice should never depend on personal privilege. It should never be something gifted only to those who have the resources to navigate this labyrinth and the strength to endure it. Nor should the function of the justice system be reduced to a game of chance, spin the wheel and see if it's your lucky day.

The Victims' Commissioner will ensure all victims of crime can have their rights and interests upheld. The commissioner will work with relevant agencies to respond to complaints and to build the capacity of the sector to better understand the justice interests that victims have. Additionally, the bill establishes the Sexual Violence Review Board. The low prosecution success rates for sexual violence are now well documented. It is obscene that just 20 per cent of sexual assault matters reported—

Mr LANGBROEK: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. Can I draw your attention to the fact that a member is clearly reading a book while the member is speaking and it is visible on screen and that there have been clear directions about such actions.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Hart): Member for Mundingburra, can you put the book down please? Thank you, member for Surfers Paradise. Member for Cooper, you have the call.

Mr BROWN: I rise to a point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker. When has it been against the standing orders to read material while—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Capalaba, resume your seat. The Speaker has given deliberate instructions about books not being sighted, especially beside members speaking. If you would like to take that up directly with Mr Speaker, feel free to do that. That is my ruling. Members from either side of the House will not wave around books of any sort.

Mr BROWN: Just for clarification: was the member for Mundingburra waving around the book?

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Capalaba, I can clearly see the member's book and so could the member for Surfers Paradise.

Mr BROWN: That wasn't the question.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Capalaba, that is enough. Resume your seat. Member for Cooper, you have the call.

Ms BUSH: Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. Additionally, the bill establishes the Sexual Violence Review Board. The low prosecution rates for sexual violence are now well documented. It is obscene that just 20 per cent of sexual assault matters reported to police result in charges. Fewer still progress to court and very few sexual assaults result in a conviction. The experience of victim-survivors in the justice system is shocking. I am so grateful to health minister Shannon Fentiman who, as attorney-general, established the Women's Justice and Safety Taskforce that heard from hundreds of women about their experiences. The taskforce highlighted how these low conviction rates compromise victim confidence in the system and result in victim-survivors often not reporting to police at all. Data shows that the reporting of sexual violence matters by women to police is as low as 13 per cent of all matters.

I touch on the issue raised by the member for Currumbin around increases in victims' numbers. I obviously have a different interpretation of how victims' numbers work, because it is not always an indication that things are going wrong in the system; sometimes it is actually an indication that things are starting to come right. If we look at the work this government has done, we have now broadened the scope of domestic and family violence to capture coercive control—an offence that was under-reported or simply not reported at all forever.

Finally, we now are starting to capture those offences and have those offences reported. Naturally, there will be an uptick in domestic and family violence—and we want to see that. It is a sign that something is working. When more victims come forward to report to police, it is a sign that they trust that when they report to police they will be believed and heard and that they have a sense of faith in the justice system. To cherry-pick figures and suggest it shows something that it may not be showing I think is completely decontextualised and shows a misunderstanding of how victim reporting actually works. While we are all horrified by increasing numbers of victims within the context of the work that the government has done, there are signs that things are working and that we are getting some settings right.

The taskforce recommended the establishment of a permanent Sexual Violence Review Board to identify opportunities for system improvements to address the attrition rates for sexual offence reporting and prosecution. The Sexual Violence Review Board's main functions will be to identify and review systemic issues in relation to the reporting, investigation and prosecution of sexual offences in Queensland. The bill provides an enduring opportunity for the voices and experiences of victims to be heard and their rights protected.

I thank all victim-survivors who have bravely shared their stories across multiple inquiries, certainly even over this term, knowing that, while it will not change the outcome of their particular matter, it will absolutely change the journey for others and those women coming behind them. I think it is the most generous effort people can make when they share their story knowing it will make a difference to the path of others. I want to acknowledge that. I want to also acknowledge the many clever and tough advocates out there who keep speaking up and who keep identifying areas of improvement and asking for reform. The more we know, the better we can respond.

This work will always be agile. We will always be making changes to victims' support and victims' policy. It is not a set-and-forget approach. We are forever obligated to continue to look at what more we can do to support victims. The bill is a testament to all of those stories, people, victims and agencies. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr KRAUSE** (Scenic Rim—LNP) (12.19 pm): While we are supporting this bill, I want to echo the words of the member for Currumbin where we call into question the government's willingness and ability to listen to victims of crime and to truly act on their concerns. That is why we are seeing the demonstrations here today in Brisbane and the constant stream of victims of crime speaking out against this government and its failure to act. That failure manifested last year in this place where the victims of crime inquiry, which was started by the government, was simply not given enough time to do its job properly. That is relevant to the bill before us. I am going to confine my comments mainly to the establishment of the Victims' Commissioner which was one of the issues that arose during the victims of crime inquiry last year.

The government has failed through that inquiry to properly listen to victims of crime. It was an inquiry that made recommendations but did not have sufficient time—it had about two months only—in order to properly listen to the needs of victims of crime in Queensland. That was reflected through that inquiry process where multiple witnesses told the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee, which undertook that inquiry, that there was not the proper ability to delve into the issues that they wanted to raise. So there is that failure to listen. There is also the failure to remove the principle of detention as a last resort

from the Youth Justice Act which so many victims of crime and their families are calling for across Queensland to put community safety truly first. The government is refusing to listen on that front as well.

You do not need to take my word for it though, Mr Deputy Speaker. In the media today we have seen the family of Vyleen White basically saying that the Premier is insincere when it comes to listening to their concerns as victims of crime only a couple of months ago with the horrific murder that took place in Ipswich. This government has failed over a long time, starting all the way back in 2015 when in one of its very first acts it watered down the Youth Justice Act to put back in place the principle of detention as the last resort and closed the Childrens Court—all measures that victims of crime would have opposed at that time but the government steamed ahead regardless because it was not listening. It is only now when it has become a bad political issue for the government that it seems to be at least thinking about making some changes to those issues.

I want to talk about the Victims' Commissioner. Recommendation 18 of the Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce report No. 2 recommended the independent statutory office of the Victims' Commissioner be established. One of the functions that they were to be tasked with was to identify systemic trends and issues relating to policy, legislation, practice or procedure and potential responses to address these issues but also to assist victims in their dealings with government agencies across the criminal justice system, including through oversight of how agencies respond to complaints. I note that the bill does deal with the systemic issues. The bill will establish the Victims' Commissioner as someone whose job will be to identify and review systemic issues relating to victims and at a high level to consult with government, to advocate to government on those issues and to recommend changes based on their review roles within the system.

During the victims of crime inquiry—the one I spoke about before which only ran for nine weeks and which many victims of crime did not know about—one of the issues that popped up consistently was the fact that in our criminal justice system the main parties involved are the state and the offender. Victims are not parties to those proceedings, yet that set-up, which has gone on for a long time, sometimes leaves victims feeling marginalised and left out of the process, uninformed and retraumatised through the criminal justice process.

One of the issues that was not able to be delved into properly through that victims of crime inquiry process but should have been was about making victims a more central part to the criminal justice system. We would like to have had more time to explore that. Perhaps the Victims' Commissioner, as in some other jurisdictions, should be tasked with being that advocate not just at a systemic level but in each and every criminal justice proceeding where a victim is involved and where a victim seeks representation or seeks advocacy through that process.

Perhaps the Victims' Commissioner should be a party to those proceedings and have the ability to advocate directly within those proceedings on behalf of victims of crime. This bill does not do that. That would take some work to establish. It is a novel concept for Queensland. It would take some work, some investigation and some research to outline exactly how that would work in the process. When victims are calling for it—and they were calling for it during that inquiry—one would think that the government would take the time and perhaps give a parliamentary committee the time to delve into those issues in great depth to enable recommendations to be made that would give victims that voice, not just at a systemic level but in their criminal justice proceedings when their son, or daughter, or mother, or father, or grandmother or grandfather has been murdered—to give them that voice legislated in a bill through this parliament. This bill does not do that.

This parliament failed last year when I called for that victims of crime inquiry to be extended. The member for Noosa called for it to be extended as well. It fell on deaf ears. As a result, this bill goes some way to dealing with victims' rights issues in the criminal justice system but it leaves out a massive component that we could have done a lot better on. I will say it again: that inquiry was a total missed opportunity. We are supporting this bill, but it also represents a missed opportunity to be able to give a voice to victims in the criminal justice system.

The Victims' Commissioner will have the ability to make recommendations and to investigate systemic issues. I am going to go back to that victims of crime inquiry. There were a number of systemic recommendations that came out of that. I note that a lot of them were following on from other reviews and inquiries that had been conducted over the last few years. Recommendations 4 through to 7, recommendation 11 and recommendation 18 of the victims of crime inquiry last year largely relate to systemic issues within the system. I hope that the Victims' Commissioner in the scope of this bill will have the ability to take up those issues, to investigate them, to make representations to government and to improve the system for victims as a whole.

As I said, we are not opposing this bill, but I highlight again the failure of this government to really listen to the voice of victims. It started a long time ago but it has been manifested through their actions in the House in putting in place a victims of crime inquiry that really was inadequate for the job, failing to remove the principle of detention as a last resort in the youth justice system, shutting down the Youth Justice Reform Select Committee when it still had important work to do, and again failing to listen to victims of crime. We know that there are many victims of youth crime out there who would like to have seen that inquiry continue and to have seen the good work it was doing be completed. The government stopped listening and blew that inquiry up. We are where we are. We are not opposing the bill.

 **Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (Minister for Health, Mental Health and Ambulance Services and Minister for Women) (12.28 pm): I am so proud to rise in support of this bill. In responding to the contribution of the member for Scenic Rim, I cannot believe that the member for Scenic Rim is saying that we are not listening to the voices of victims. This very bill is as a result of a recommendation from the Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce that heard from over hundreds and hundreds of women with lived experience—victims of crime.

We are here today debating a bill to establish a Victims' Commissioner. I am so proud that we have listened to those victims' voices and that those women with lived experience are now being put front and centre in our criminal justice system. I would urge the opposition to stop playing politics with a bill like this.

In supporting this bill, we are actually delivering on two key initiatives recommended by the historic Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce. The taskforce frequently heard that victim-survivors felt disempowered by the criminal justice system and that they felt nobody was fighting for their interests. One victim bravely told the taskforce—

Victims are left in the dark in this system, we are not given enough information—perhaps they forget most of us have never had to interact with this system before, we don't know how it works.

This can deter victims from reporting crimes and pursuing justice and leave perpetrators emboldened to reoffend. This is why it is so critical to establish a permanent Victims' Commissioner who is tasked with representing victims' interests, one who will find out and root out systemic issues to help create a better criminal justice system for victims—a compassionate, trauma informed criminal justice system that puts victims' experiences at its centre.

The right of victims to be treated with compassion, respect and dignity and the right to particular information whilst a matter progresses is enshrined in the Queensland Charter of Victims' Rights, and the Victims' Commissioner will provide oversight of complaints made about compliance with the charter in a transparent and accountable way. The development of this role has been informed by consultation with victim-survivors, their families and the stakeholders who support them.

I had the pleasure of hosting the UK's former victims' commissioner, the Hon. Dame Vera Baird KC, here at parliament not that long ago, and she generously provided her insight and expertise on the development of the commissioner role here in Queensland. I want to thank her and all of the other stakeholders who contributed to the development of the Victim's Commissioner.

Importantly, this bill also establishes the Sexual Violence Review Board. The taskforce found that only 13 per cent of sexual assaults are reported to the police. Victim-survivors, sexual assault support services and legal professionals repeatedly spoke of victims not being believed and feeling judged, dismissed, blamed and powerless. They spoke of the impact of the myths and misconceptions about rape and sexual assault that influence the credibility and believability of victims. Our criminal justice system must be more responsive to victims, but to do that we need to understand why the criminal justice system is failing victims and drive meaningful reform.

The main function of the Sexual Violence Review Board will be to identify and review systemic issues in relation to the reporting, investigation and prosecution of sexual offences here in Queensland. Chaired by the Victims' Commissioner, the board will include representatives from police, prosecution, forensic services and courts. Importantly, the board will include four community members appointed for their lived experience, professional expertise in sexual violence or expertise in support services provided to victims. The board will make and monitor the implementation of recommendations about necessary improvements.

Our government is committed to ending all forms of violence against women. We have criminalised coercive control, we have introduced affirmative consent and we have made stealthy a crime. Our amendments to the legislation are working to address the myths and misconceptions that

persist in our criminal justice system. They are better aligned with modern community expectations and the voices and experiences of victim-survivors. Those experiences matter, and yesterday we announced that sexual assault services will receive a 20 per cent increase in their funding. We are also improving the responses of police, our health workers, our prosecutors and our courts. We are doing all of this because we are listening to victims. To them I say this: we hear you, we believe you, we thank you, and now we are taking action. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr BOOTHMAN** (Theodore—LNP) (12.33 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the Victims' Commissioner and Sexual Violence Review Board Bill. From the outset I want to thank my fellow committee members for a piece of legislation that does have a lot of relevance to what is transpiring in our communities at the moment. When it comes to victims of crime throughout our state, we have seen steep increases. I can certainly say that in my electorate of Theodore on the northern Gold Coast it is an issue that is continually coming to my attention. Residents tell me their concerns about what is happening in their community. This bill comes about due to recommendations 18, 19, 46 and 181 of the Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce report No. 2 and the Independent Commission of Inquiry into Queensland Police Service responses to domestic and family violence.

It is becoming a very tough job for my local police, who are continuously at the forefront of dealing with what is going on, and it is taking a toll on those individuals. I talk to my local police regularly and they are frustrated with what is happening in our community. When you look at crime statistics from the northern Gold Coast and what is happening when it comes to assault, we have seen steep increases. It is becoming an epidemic. Our community is now terrified of what is happening on their streets. I was recently doorknocking around the Pacific Pines and Maudsland area. Residents said, 'We saw a group of kids walking around the streets at night. What are they up to? Where are their parents?' It has come to the forefront of people's minds. It is getting to the point that residents are now employing security to patrol their streets. Other residents are starting to take matters into their own hands—something I am deeply concerned about—because of the abject failure of this state Labor government watering down the law in 2015 and removing detention as a last resort.

These were both very important pieces of legislation. Section 18 at page 22 of the *Youth Justice Benchbook* addresses the issue of detention as a last resort and for the least amount of time possible. Residents want to feel safe in the streets; they want to feel safe in their homes. When people are getting their houses broken into on a regular basis and those people are carrying weapons, that is not acceptable in our society.

The reason we are here is that of those opposite in the Queensland Labor Party. They look at perpetrators and say, 'They've had a terrible life.' Maybe they have, but it is still no excuse to destroy somebody else's life. It is still not acceptable to destroy somebody else's life. Victims of crime have gone up 213 per cent since 2015. Those opposite cannot say things are any better now because they are not. Queenslanders are fed up with all of these wonderful announcements. We have an 11-point plan today, but if we give it four more months will we have a 12-point plan, a 13-point plan, or will we go back to a three-point plan?

The problem with the Queensland Labor Party is that they refuse to allow these individuals to be taken off the streets in order to protect our streets. The police say on a regular basis that this is a revolving door of justice, and residents are sick of it. Those opposite have lovely little brochures, they carry on and they promise the world, but they do not deliver. They will not deliver anything and they know they will not. Queenslanders are fed up with excuses and they are fed up with what is happening on our streets. Most importantly, they have the right to show Labor the door in 2024.

 **Ms PUGH** (Mount Ommaney—ALP) (12.39 pm): I am pleased to rise to speak on the Victims' Commissioner and Sexual Violence Review Board Bill and, in doing so, I express my profound admiration for all of the victims who have contributed to this bill in its myriad forms. In my time as a local member—and I know that many members of the House share this experience—I have been privileged to have many members of my community share their experiences with me, in particular of sexual violence where we have recently seen a lot of legislative reform, and their thoughts on how we as a government and as a state can improve the experience of victims going forward. I can see that many of their thoughts and ideas will be supported in this legislation, which I am pleased to note has bipartisan support.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Hart): Pause the clock. Member for Logan and member for Theodore, take your discussion outside please. Member for Mount Ommaney, you have the call.

Ms PUGH: Thank you for your protection, Mr Deputy Speaker. Many members of my community will be pleased to see the permanent introduction of the Victims' Commissioner and the establishment of the Sexual Violence Review Board. The bill will also implement recommendations made by the Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce in its second *Hear her voice* report regarding women's and girls' experiences across the criminal justice system.

The bill builds on our government's ongoing work to continue to call out and criminalise dangerous behaviours like stealthing, revenge porn and coercive control, to name just a few advances we have made in this parliament recently. I am pleased to note that this bill has bipartisan support because I know that every single member of this House, no matter where they sit in the parliament, wants to support victims of crime and ensure their rights are promoted and protected, which is central to the criminal justice system.

The permanent appointment of a Victims' Commissioner will ensure that the voices of victims of crime are heard and that enduring systemic improvements continue to be made to improve the experiences of victims especially, but not exclusively, in the criminal justice system. I join with other members of the House in thanking Jon Rouse for his service since last year in this very important role. The Victims' Commissioner role will be focused, as I said, on those systemic issues impacting victims instead of representing victims at an individual level.

In line with the taskforce findings, the Victims' Commissioner will not provide services and support to individual victims so that the Victims' Commissioner can remain impartial, because it is all about providing systemic improvements that will improve the lives of hundreds, if not thousands, of victims going forward on matters that impact victims of crime. They can certainly be issues within the criminal justice system, but they can also be issues that sit slightly outside, including service supports and other matters that impact on victims of crime and their families, because we know that it can often have an effect on the whole family. Victims will also continue to receive advocacy services and financial assistance through those other important government services like Victim Assist Queensland.

Often when you meet with somebody who has been the victim of a crime, they will bring support people with them. It is that network that they build around themselves that can be incredibly crucial to getting them through that difficult time. Often those support people are family or friends who walk that journey with the victim metaphorically, or sometimes even literally holding their hand to make sure they get through the process. Almost every single one of these people has had good ideas about not only how their personal experience could have been improved but also how the whole system could have been improved. This makes perfect sense because their ideas are informed by their lived experience and also by their strong desire to see an improvement for future victims. They do not want the next person's experience of the criminal justice system to be as traumatising as the event that led to them becoming engaged with the criminal justice system in the first place. I am sure we have all heard stories, unfortunately—I know that I have—where that has been the case. With those few words, I am very pleased that this bill has bipartisan support and I commend it to the House.

 **Mr ANDREW** (Mirani—PHON) (12.44 pm): I rise to speak on the Victims' Commissioner and Sexual Violence Review Board Bill. I have just been with the victims of crime who are gathered outside the House. The fact that we have locked the gates to these people sends a really mixed message. This is the people's house. These people have come here to tell us about their situations. We have just heard everyone say that we are listening to the victims, but we locked the gates on them.

A government member: That's security.

Mr ANDREW: What security do they have? I take the interjection. What security are we providing for them? Why is it okay for us and not for them?

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Hart): Pause the clock. Member for Mirani, we will not argue across the chamber. Members, I am trying to listen to the member for Mirani.

Mr ANDREW: Thankfully the Premier did go down and front these people. They have massive concerns about recidivism in their own electorates. It is also a concern in my electorate.

The bill establishes the Victims' Commissioner and the Sexual Violence Review Board which are aimed at protecting and promoting the rights of victims of crime. Both initiatives—the Victims' Commissioner and the Sexual Violence Review Board—were recommendations contained in the Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce's second report of *Hear her voice*. The taskforce heard from victim-survivors about their feeling disempowered within the criminal justice system and noted that this can often deter victims from reporting. According to the taskforce, while the rate of reported sexual assault cases has increased, sexual violence cases have high levels of attrition rates, making

prosecution of sexual offences problematic. One study found that only 20 per cent of matters reported to police resulted in actual charges and even fewer cases progress to the court or result in a conviction. Currently, there is no single independent body responsible for looking after victims' rights issues in Queensland and it is hoped that this bill will fill this gap.

The key functions of the Victims' Commissioner are to identify and review systemic issues relating to victims, to conduct research into matters affecting victims, to consult with victims of crime about their experience in the criminal justice system, to publish information on the criminal justice system and to provide advice to the minister on issues affecting victims. The Victims' Commissioner will also manage complaints about alleged breaches of the Charter of Victims' Rights. The charter provides victims with rights in relation to how they should be treated by government and non-government entities throughout the criminal justice process, including the right to be treated with courtesy, compassion, respect and dignity and the right to particular information—something which we should have extended to those gathered outside by leaving our gates open so that they could come and put their views across. Currently, however, the charter is something of a toothless tiger and its principles are not legally enforceable. It will therefore be up to the Victims' Commissioner to ensure that the charter is adhered to and that these rights are upheld.

The Victims' Commissioner will also manage complaints made by victims about alleged breaches of the Charter of Victims' Rights. The victims' charter is a statement of what victims of crime are entitled to and of the obligation of government entities to uphold these entitlements. In its current format, the proposed victims' charter is not adequate. It needs to be a clear statement of all of the rights and entitlements of victims. Victims will read this section of the legislation more than any other part of the legislation to understand their rights. Entities will be required to understand the extent of these rights and provide this information to victims. For these reasons, the victims' charter needs to be a clear, comprehensive, unambiguous and accessible statement of these rights and obligations. The charter should also speak to the sentencing, parole and appeals process to make it clear and easily understood by victims of crime and responding entities.

Informing a victim of their right to independent legal advice and support should be included in division 2 section 5 of the victims' charter, modelled on the South Australian Victims of Crime Act 2001. In addition, a principle should be added to the legislation that speaks to the protection of the privacy of the victim, as per the South Australian Victims of Crime Act 2001. The charter provides rights for victims in relation to how they should be treated by government and non-government entities throughout the whole process. As noted in the Victorian Victims of Crime Commissioner's submission on the Victorian government's consultation paper titled *Systemic review of police oversight* in February 2022, the role of the VOCC oversees complaints about police from victims of crime in the context of the victims' charter and the victims' charter therefore needs to be clear. Section 48 of the bill should therefore include a time frame for taking all reasonable steps to resolve the complaint.

The bill's inclusion of 'as soon as is reasonably practicable' in subsection (2)(b) is far too vague and open to misuse and delay. Accountability of the justice system is imperative when it comes to dealing with victims of crime. By enshrining a specific time frame in legislation, victims will know that their complaints will be given priority. Currently, the charter is something of a toothless tiger and hard to uphold. While the taskforce found that the rate of reported sexual assault cases has increased, data on sexual violence cases shows that prosecution of a sexual offence is still problematic. The bill also implements other recommendations and all the situations that surround it.

I would like to talk about my electorate and the situations that unfold there. There are burnt out cars along the roads everywhere. People are complaining about the fact that there are drivers on the road who are absolutely out of control every day. There are young ones who are stealing cars and breaking into houses. We have people worried about their safety all of the time, and older people especially are locking up all of their things. They will not go out early in the morning or in the evening, and they are frightened to walk on their own. This is impinging on their life as Queensland citizens.

As the member for Theodore and most members here have said, it is a situation that we have to get hold of and we have to make changes. We cannot keep going on throughout our terms here in government and seeing the crime increasing and the situations becoming more and more dangerous. People are dying. Rhys Bosley was down there before. He had a petition in the House in relation to nonlethal ways we could use to protect ourselves, say, with pepper spray. One has to wonder about the risk assessments that would be involved with the people who have died recently through those terrible knife attacks. What could have happened if they were able to use pepper spray to protect themselves and other citizens? People say, 'It's dangerous.' It is okay to say it is dangerous if you are

down there with the police and your own security team protecting you with firearms and able to use lethal force. It is okay from that respect, but none of us can protect ourselves. The victims cannot protect themselves.

The victims of homicide have said that they would like the rules changed so they know where the perpetrators who enacted the crimes on them are when they leave prison or at any stage of their lives so they do not interact with them. That is not much to ask. They are not asking about their personal life or anything else; they just do not want to face these people. They do not want to see them face-to-face because of the heinous crimes they have committed on their family members or people who are close to them. We need to look at the entirety of what goes on here. There are people out there who are trying to make a difference. The police are fighting this every day. The watch houses are full and the police are sometimes being told that they cannot arrest any more people who are committing crimes. It is a sad situation and a sad indictment on this state.

I believe the people in Queensland are some of the best people in Australia, not that I am biased. I grew up in country towns and everyone looked after each other. We all had each other's backs. We have to get back to the stage where we can leave our doors open. I know that would be difficult to achieve but we work better when we work together in a bipartisan manner. The member for Noosa tried very hard. I saw the trials and tribulations she went through to try to deliver some good outcomes. We need to go back and revisit it and make sure those good outcomes are delivered here in parliament. It does not matter which side of the House is in government. We have to come to some consensus and deliver something that is workable for the people of Queensland and the victims of crime. We need to work through this together. We wasted all of that time and taxpayers' money just for a political football. We should play the ball and not the man with this because there are enough people getting played out there. They are being threatened and they are worried every day of their life because we are not doing our job.

 **Ms HOWARD** (Ipswich—ALP) (12.54 pm): I am pleased to rise and speak in support of the Victims' Commissioner and Sexual Violence Review Board Bill. The Queensland government is committed to supporting victims of crime throughout their recovery and in their fight for justice. The Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce in its second report titled *Hear her voice—report 2: Women and girls' experiences across the criminal justice system* recommended establishing a permanent Victims' Commissioner to promote the rights of victims. It also recommended establishing a Sexual Violence Review Board which will identify systemic issues in relation to the reporting, investigation and prosecution of sexual offences. These two initiatives were also supported by the Independent Commission of Inquiry into Queensland Police Service responses to domestic and family violence and the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee's inquiry into the support provided to the victims of crime.

Far too often, women and girls are the targets and victims of crime, whether in domestic settings or in public. There have been 27 women around the nation killed by a current or former partner just since the start of this year alone. Over the weekend thousands of victim-survivors and their supporters came out to rally against domestic, family and sexual violence and demanded governments do more to prevent violence against women. Our government will not ignore these calls. We are committed to doing everything we can to stop the scourge of gendered violence, and this is why we have recently boosted funding for the domestic, family and sexual violence sector by \$36 million. This brings our total funding for these services to nearly \$214 million for 2024-25. I really do want to give a shout-out to our local domestic and family violence frontline workers. They are absolutely exceptional people who I know are over the moon about this funding boost.

Recent episodes of violence against women demonstrate that women are vulnerable in not only their own homes but also public spaces. The brutal stabbing murder of Vyleen White in Ipswich at Redbank Plains Shopping Centre was a senseless, tragic, violent crime that was traumatic for the whole community. The five women who were stabbed and killed and the eight women who were injured at the Westfield Bondi Junction shopping centre earlier this month was yet another tragedy that shocked the nation. Women were clearly targeted in both instances because they were seen as vulnerable, easy targets for their male attackers or for some other dark reasons.

For women to be truly free, we must be safe everywhere—in the home, in public spaces and in the workplace. Importantly, anyone who survives a violent crime must also feel safe and supported in our criminal justice system. The experience of the court system can be disempowering and traumatic and deter many from reporting crimes. There have been growing calls for improving support for victims of crime and recognising their rights in the court system. Too many victims of crime or domestic, family and sexual violence have told us that their experience of the criminal justice system leaves them feeling disempowered, retraumatised and invisible.

As the Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce noted in their report, victims are integral players in criminal justice, rather than mere bystanders. The Victims' Commissioner builds on a body of reforms the Queensland government has implemented already to bolster support for victims, including creating a Charter of Victims' Rights in 2009 and establishing Victim Assist Queensland. We have also increased the amount of financial assistance available to victims, particularly victims of domestic and family violence, to help them get their lives back on track.

We are committed to ensuring that justice should not be something that serves only the privileged few. Quite often it is the most vulnerable and marginalised members of our society who find themselves the victims of crime, but we know that crime is something that can happen to anyone. While the recommendation to establish a permanent Victims' Commissioner came out of the Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce, the Victims' Commissioner's functions will apply for all people who suffer harm because of a criminal offence or because of domestic violence committed against them. Those victims include family members of a person who died because of a criminal offence committed against them and persons who witnessed or intervened in events and suffered harm as a result.

The Queensland government takes the safety of Queenslanders seriously and that is why today we announced the Community Safety Plan. It is an investment of \$1.2 billion that will keep Queenslanders safe and reduce crime. We are going to deliver 900 new police personnel and new police helicopters in Townsville, the Sunshine Coast and Wide Bay. We are expanding our successful youth co-responder program, one of which is already operating successfully in Ipswich. It is turning young lives around.

I do not want to discount the problem of youth crime that we are currently facing, but I do want to say that the actual rate of youth offending during Campbell Newman's time was higher than it is now. Youth offender rates have continued to fall since Labor came to government in 2019. We know there is more to do and we have listened to the victims of crime and their loved ones who have told us that Queensland's criminal justice system is not meeting their needs. I want to thank all of those community advocates and victim-survivors who have had the courage to tell their stories and demand action for change. I commend this bill to the House.

Debate, on motion of Ms Howard, adjourned.

Sitting suspended from 1.00 pm to 2.00 pm.

MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST

Youth Crime

 **Mr CRISAFULLI** (Broadwater—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (2.00 pm): Queensland is in the grip of a youth crime crisis, fuelled by weaker laws and fewer police, with a generation of untouchables who know that their rights outweigh the rights of victims. How hard is it for a government to say sorry and admit they got it wrong? How hard is it for a government to admit that the decision to water down the Youth Justice Act and insert a provision that says detention must be a last resort was a mistake?

The Premier says he does not want to revisit that bad decision, but Queenslanders are living with it every day. Every day in their homes, in their businesses, in how they feel on the streets, they are living with that bad decision, and the leader of this state will not even accept responsibility for creating the mess in the first place.

The Attorney-General boasted when that legislation was changed in 2016. She trumpeted the weakening of those laws. Today the Attorney-General attempted to accept credit for reopening the courts that she closed nine years ago. How have we reached this point when no-one will accept responsibility for the heartache that this state is living through, the fear that every day Queenslanders are experiencing?

The government is refusing to listen to Queenslanders when it comes to removing detention as a last resort. Victims want it removed. Frontline police want it removed. We know that even some of those members sitting opposite want it removed, and not just the members on the Youth Justice Reform Select Committee. We know that there were members in the cabinet who wanted to see that provision removed.

I think the 11-point plan may have been a 12-point plan until the chaos and crisis that we have seen unfold continued. I did not think we would see in this state a bigger circus than a month ago when the government took a decision to cabinet to cancel an Olympic and Paralympic Games that they bid for over 1,000 days before, and by the end of that day a government minister had leaked to the media

and five other ministers confirmed it. I did not think we would live to see that. We have not even reached news time and already the leaks are starting from within the cabinet. That is how bad it is, that is how dysfunctional it is, that we now have ministers leaking against their own government when it comes to the removal of detention as a last resort and a Premier who will not accept responsibility.

The history of this is clear. The act was watered down in 2015 and it sent the clearest of signs to the police that it had a government that did not have its back and to victims that their rights did not count for anything. We are living that. Car theft is up 116 per cent since this government came to office, break-ins are up 54 per cent since this government came to office and assaults are up 220 per cent since this government came to office, yet we have a government that will not even look victims in the eye and say, 'We got it wrong.' It will not even admit that the decision to ensure detention as a last resort is something that they got wrong.

Members on this side of the House and I have personally made commitments to victims that we will fight for removal of the provision of detention as a last resort. I made that commitment to the Fields, to the Beasleys, to the Beaumonts, to the Whites and to every person who has been a victim of home invasions, of break-ins and of the feeling of violation. We have made that commitment and we will continue to pursue it. We have stood with business owners who have told us they cannot insure their businesses anymore. We have stood with home owners who tell us they cannot insure their cars anymore, and this government does not accept responsibility for creating that.

I want to unpack the government's announcement when it comes to police numbers. Before the last election, the government promised 1,450 additional full-time-equivalent frontline police officers. It is wonderful to see the police minister nodding. The government promised 1,450 additional full-time-equivalent frontline police officers, yet there are fewer today than when that commitment was made. That is the government's own figures. In a moment the member for Maroochydore will discuss the figures and the fact that the government is not releasing them as often as it promised it would, but I will tell members one thing: when a government makes a commitment to add 1,450 and the numbers go down by more than 70, I would suggest that is a cut of more than 1,500. That is what I would suggest. That is what that is. That is a Labor cut. That is a Labor cut—and the minister can attempt to parade all he likes—but if the net increase is going backwards rather than upwards, then, I am sorry, that is a reduction and therefore, as of today, the people of Queensland have been denied up to 1,500 officers that they were promised by this minister and this government. The announcement today counts for nothing because it is the same minister who made the same failed promise as part of the same cabinet, and nothing this government says has any credibility whatsoever.

In recent years we have seen, and the deputy leader articulated this in his question this morning, a 10-point, five-point, four-point, three-point plan—this was a 12-point but was reduced to an 11-point plan—but the point is they will not do what really matters, and that is listen to the community and remove detention as a last resort.

This government weakened the laws. This government has failed to listen to the people who have put forward the solutions. If you have a look at every one of those 10-point, five-point, four-point and three-point plans, there is a consistent theme amongst all of them, and that is that announcements were made and the follow-through and the success of those programs have not been what was promised.

Labor increased penalties for stealing cars from seven years to 10 years. They did not change the sentencing cap, so increased penalties cannot be imposed. Previously, Labor increased a more severe penalty of 14 years if an offence is committed at night, if the offender uses violence or is armed. A recent question on notice shows that only three young offenders have been sentenced in a higher court. Two got 12 months and one got five months. Previously Labor said GPS trackers were a solution. As of 30 November 2023, only five were fitted.

This is a government that is big on announcements but very small when it comes to follow-through. What we have seen today is a government that will not own the problem it created. For the Premier to say he does not want to revisit that decision when Queenslanders are living that decision in their homes and in their businesses, every single day in every part of this state, it shows a government that does not listen and does not care—a government that lacks the ability to follow through, a government that lacks the compassion to do better for the community.

If the government changes in October, the Making Queensland Safer Laws will be law by the end of the year. At the centrepiece of the Making Queensland Safer Laws will be the removal of detention as a last resort. The provision that this government changed nine years ago created a

generation of untouchables, a generation that is laughing at the law. It has created a generation of people who wear blue uniforms leaving quicker than they can be replaced because they do not have a government that has their back, and the Making Queensland Safer Laws will change that.

The Making Queensland Safer Laws will make sure that victims' rights count for something again. Victims' rights will matter and victims will have a voice again. It will be part of a suite of proposals that will deal with the problem at both ends of the spectrum. What is happening in early intervention in Queensland is not working and at the other end of the scale the repeat hardcore offenders get more repetitive and more hardcore every day. The only way this will change is if government changes because this government does not have their heart in this plan or in the last five plans of the last half a decade. This is a bad government, this is a government that is weak on law and order and this is a government that must be shown the door in 2024.

(Time expired)

Community Safety Plan

 **Hon. MT RYAN** (Morayfield—ALP) (Minister for Police and Community Safety) (2.10 pm): I rise to highlight the significant work that has gone into the Queensland Community Safety Plan. This is a significant investment in the front line and it is a significant investment in victim support. It is detailed, it is focused and it is backed by evidence. It has been developed as a result of the Premier and ministers travelling the state and speaking with frontline workers, experts, victims and community organisations about how we can build safer communities.

This detailed plan is backed in with significant funding. There is significant funding for more resources for police—more police personnel, better police facilities—better support for victims and community organisations that support victims and reforms in key areas of the law. There are enhanced penalties when it comes to ramming and dangerous driving. Jack's Law will be extended. It will focus on the harm that can be caused by people misusing social media and posting and boasting about their offending. This is a critical plan for enhancing community safety and it is one that the government has worked diligently on. This plan is detailed and backed by evidence—unlike the slick slogans of those opposite. That is it there—their slick slogans are on one little bit of paper.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Member, you will read from it or table it.

Mr RYAN: Our Community Safety Plan for Queensland is detailed and evidence-based, backed in with funding and starts now. It delivers now.

I look at their slick slogans on their little bit of paper which is their so-called plan. They cannot even bring themselves to say that they will commit to growth in the Queensland Police Service. All they can say is 'retention and attraction'. They cannot be ambitious enough to commit to growth. Our ambition has delivered a record budget for the Queensland Police Service that is backed in with retention, attraction, recruitment opportunities and funding to support the Queensland Police Service in meeting that ambition. The efforts of the Queensland Police Service when it comes to recruiting are delivering results. Unlike any other policing organisation in Australia, and a lot of them around the world, we are seeing the Queensland Police Service turn the corner on recruitment in just two months. By the end of June, almost 350 police will graduate the academy—in two months, 350 will graduate. Almost 700 are at the academy right now. Over 1,200 applicants are in the recruitment pipeline right now. The Queensland Police Service is the envy of the nation when it comes to police recruitment.

We do not deny it is hard. It is hard in every industry at the moment. If we look around Australia at the moment, we find that it is hard to recruit in any industry, but the Queensland Police Service is envied when it comes to recruitment. I will say those numbers again: in just two months almost 350 will graduate from the academy; there are almost 700 at the academy right now; there are over 1,200 in the recruitment pipeline right now. That is what ambition delivers for the Queensland Police Service. We know those opposite lack ambition because at the last election they had a plan that committed to 1,000 fewer police than the government. They would not have a recruitment challenge if they were elected because they committed to 1,000 fewer than the government.

We are committed to the Queensland Police Service and this commitment is backed in every single time with the decisions that we make around recruitment, resourcing, facilities, personnel and the laws that we bring into this parliament. This is a plan to enhance community safety for Queenslanders. It is evidence-based and it is supported by victims, victims' groups, police, community organisations and key stakeholders around the nation. As I said, it follows significant work done by the Premier, ministers and key people in government to deliver a comprehensive evidence-based plan for Queensland.

The Community Safety Plan shows that the government is 100 per cent committed to community safety. We back it in with significant funding. We back it in with strong laws. Under the government, the Queensland Police Service will always have a supporter. We will always have their back.

Miles Labor Government, Performance

 **Mr BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (2.15 pm): The Labor Party will do and say anything to be re-elected in October. The police minister talks about new recruits. What he does not say is what the net figure is because we know that there are more police leaving the service than joining or being recruited. He will not release the net figures because he knows that it does not look good for the Labor government. Why? Because police do not like the culture that has transpired during the time of this Labor government and this police minister. We saw an 11-point plan released today. As I indicated this morning, this is on top of the five-point, the four-point and the three-point plans. I think before Anastacia Palaszczuk flew to Italy there was a nine-point plan or a 10-point plan released. Goodness gracious, Queenslanders have lost trust in this Labor government being able to deliver any plans because anything they have delivered has failed.

This morning Treasurer Cameron Dick talked about 'more eyes in the sky'. You would think he was talking about Polair but he was not. He was talking about two luxury jets. Last week there were plenty of eyes in the sky. When we talk about 'eyes in the sky', we talk about police, police helicopters and police on the beat on the ground. All the Labor Party talk about is 'eyes in the sky'. Isn't it fascinating, colleagues? The Premier comes in here this week and announces new laws, which are yet to be introduced, and says, 'This is all based on the fact that I took two luxury jets last week and travelled around Queensland—flew into Hervey Bay for half an hour and Townsville for 45 minutes.' If only they had had access to luxury jets in the last nine years to solve the youth crime crisis. Do you know what? They did! If only they had used the two luxury jets to fly and swan around Queensland in the last nine years, all of the youth crime problems would be solved in Queensland. How ridiculous!

We have a cost-of-living crisis and we have the minister swanning around in his luxury private jet next to the Premier in his luxury private jet, waving to each other, 'Hello Premier, I can see you at 30,000 feet.' How ridiculous. I note that the day after it appeared in the *Courier-Mail*, the minister did fly with the Premier. They still took two luxury jets to Cairns, but the minister did end up finding a seat. This is why the LNP did not support Labor's renewable energy targets two weeks ago. We knew that they would never be able to achieve their renewable targets when they are flying around in two luxury jets. They would not be able to commit to their own target on emissions—that is why we opposed the renewable emissions bill.

On Polair: we had the member for Caloundra two weeks ago saying, 'I am petitioning my government for a police helicopter in Caloundra' and a week later they have announced a police helicopter in Caloundra. Would you believe that? I table a copy of a picture of the member for Caloundra at the Caloundra Aerodrome where he is photographed in front of the Westpac lifesaver rescue helicopter which has a 10-year contract for Polair for the Queensland Police Service operating from his own electorate.

Tabled paper: Extract from a social media account of the member for Caloundra, Mr Jason Hunt MP, regarding Westpac Rescue Helicopters [705].

Polair already exists on the Sunshine Coast. The 10-year contract starts on 1 July, and he is happy to be in photographs with Polair's Westpac helicopter and to have a contract with the state government and the Queensland police, but, 'Oh no, they need the police helicopter'.

Let me also talk about how Queensland is being held to ransom by the CFMEU and the union movement that put Premier Steven Miles into his job. He was not elected. He was positioned in that job because of the union movement in Queensland. We are seeing construction sites around Brisbane being halted today. We are seeing the CFMEU officials jumping fences. We are seeing court case after court case. Why? Because this government is supporting the efforts of the CFMEU and the thuggery and bullying on work sites.

A CFMEU official Dean Rielly has been photographed illegally jumping fences, and guess what? This particular CFMEU official has had his permit from the Fair Work Ombudsman rescinded. He is not a fit and proper person, but guess what? The Queensland government have allowed him to keep his Queensland registration permit. Is that not interesting? Fair Work say, 'You are not a fit and proper person, Mr Rielly,'—and I table a copy of that—but the Queensland government says he is a fit and proper person to hold a workplace permit in Queensland.

Tabled paper: Document, undated, titled 'Register of WHS entry permit holders as at 29 April 2024' [706].

What is happening on our construction sites in Queensland is disgraceful. Today the union officials are demanding new recruits on worksites get paid over \$240,000—nearly three times more than a Queensland nurse. This Labor government is a disgrace. It is time they were turfed out. In October show Labor the door in '24.

(Time expired)

Community Safety

 **Hon. DE FARMER** (Bulimba—ALP) (Minister for Education and Minister for Youth Justice) (2.20 pm): It is interesting. We have only heard two speakers from that side in the MPI debate and I am yet to hear anything about what they are going to do about rolled-gold early intervention, but I live in hope. About six months ago I started raising what a real insult it was to victims that those opposite are attempting to show their plan for youth crime by giving us three slogans. We know that, whether someone is a victim of a horrific homicide or someone has broken into their house while they and their kids were home, it is a deeply traumatic experience. Governments owe it to victims to take their concerns seriously and to put forward plans that are based on evidence and advice from experts, frontline workers and victims themselves. That is exactly what our Community Safety Plan is all about.

What have we seen from those opposite? Six months ago they actually had three slogans—there were 13 words but three slogans. One of them was about unshackling the judiciary and they flicked that pretty quickly because when they were in government they shackled the judiciary with their breach of bail laws. They were called 'breach of bail laws', but they were not really because they were completely unworkable. We notice they are not saying anything about rolled-gold intervention because it does not matter how many times the Leader of the Opposition has been asked, and about half the people on his social media ask him, 'Yeah, but what are you going to do?', and the media ask him. He is asked all the time. I raise it incessantly in parliament and not once have we heard anything at all.

The *Gold Coast Bulletin* gave a fantastic breakdown—it would not have taken them long—of the very small number of policies that the LNP has talked about. They said—

... the Opposition's answer to how it would solve the issue appears to largely be a grab-bag of tried approaches which they were campaigning on and implemented during the Newman Government era more than a decade ago

The member for Toowoomba South said that past behaviour is the best predictor of future behaviour. In the absence of any detail, that is pretty much all we have to go on. We know they had breach of bail, but it did not work because the magistrates could not use it. Then there were the boot camps, but people were more likely to reoffend if they were in one of the boot camps—and I will not even go there regarding the cost blowouts. We know that not only did they not build any detention centres; they did not even plan to build any.

It must hurt because we know the Leader of the Opposition loved Campbell Newman. He just absolutely loved him and it must have been personally hurtful to see Campbell Newman being so nasty. It was a bit nasty. It is just an extraordinarily arrogant display from people who think they have the state election in the bag. It is actually his old colleagues he is talking about. We know the Leader of the Opposition was the treasurer in that government. He was the one who cut early intervention programs. He cut \$259 million from community organisations that provided early intervention. He cut \$26.5 million from youth diversion programs. He cut the BoysTown job placement program. He cut youth homelessness support. He cut youth mental health services. He abolished youth justice conferencing. He abolished special circumstances courts that helped drug addicts stop reoffending. He cut Skilling Queenslanders for Work. He gagged the community sector from speaking out.

I think it is really important that our plan today actually includes a whole range of programs that are already showing great evidence of working. We need to know if he is going to cut intensive case management that shows a 70 per cent drop in reoffending. Is he going to cut Transition 2 Success or restorative justice conferencing that shows a 50 per cent drop in reoffending? Is he going to cut the youth co-responder program where we picked up around 90,000 young people who were at high risk of offending?

It is time now if he is really serious about this. What did he say? There is going to be no youth crime, pretty much within seconds if they win government; it is pretty much just going to go away. It is time now that he actually lays out his plans. What is he going to cut? What is he actually going to do? What are the details? Let us lay it out because it is time. The election is looming and we need to know what their youth crime policy is.

Child Safety

 **Ms CAMM** (Whitsunday—LNP) (2.25 pm): For over three years now I have been calling out the failures of this Labor government's child safety system. Previous to me it was the member for Burnett and the member for Mudgeeraba who have prosecuted on behalf of vulnerable children across this state. For nine years this government has failed these children. They have pointed the finger at everybody else, not taking any responsibility for themselves. Major service providers are walking away from a system on the edge of collapse. We are hearing on the ground of the extreme case loads and the pressure on the front line. This government keeps saying it is all fine.

Two cases have filled our media in the last week and have pointed to some of the key issues we have seen and show that for some time now things have not been fine at all. On Sunday the ABC published the article titled 'How to make a killer'. It is a title that was clearly made to be provocative, but its contents are even more disturbing. The long-form article paints the picture of the young man who killed Angus Beaumont and how the failings of the child safety system led him to that act. The report quotes Amy, a community worker who helped the young offender and had reported her concerns to Child Safety dozens of times. The article states—

'We could actually see this coming, myself and another colleague had gone to the department and said that exact thing,' she says.

'That if you don't do something, this was the outcome—and that was the outcome.

'This was a preventable thing that happened. If somebody had just done something to look after him, we wouldn't be in this situation.'

Angus Beaumont did not deserve to die. He deserved to have a government that was proactive about community safety. I want to read part of the article relating to the comments from his mother, Michelle. It states—

When she spoke with the ABC, she was 'angry and heartbroken' to learn the Queensland government had been warned about the lethal trajectory of one of his killers.

'He did not deserve to die ... they could have stopped them at any turn,' she says.

'It just confirms what we all know—the system failed in every way.

'It failed through youth [justice], children's services, through the court system [and] through the legislation that police have to work with.'

These are all systems and legislation that were brought about by this Labor government. Angus's parents should not have to live without him, but years on they face the pain every single day. There is no denying that there are many young people caught up in the youth justice system and they have faced disadvantage. They are vulnerable. We recognise that. The Premier spoke about that this morning. What the Premier missed was the role that this government has played in contributing to the disadvantage these young people are facing and the creation through a broken system that has led some of these young offenders to the actions we have seen or the opportunities that have been missed to intervene with devastating consequences. I have heard members opposite outline many times that there is no correlation between the child safety system and youth justice. That is rubbish—absolute rubbish. It is about time accountability was taken.

Child Safety cannot prevent a child coming to harm before they are under Child Safety's care. Once a young person is known to Child Safety, they have every opportunity to make a difference and they fall under the minister's responsibility as that child's guardian. Instead, again and again this government fails. Again and again, despite family and friends, community members, service providers and countless reports, they fail. This government continues to talk down the correlation.

This week, the coronial inquest into the deaths of two young toddlers is also underway. The Leader of the Opposition and I have met with Peter Jackson and we have heard his pain. It will stay with me and I am sure it will stay with the Leader of the Opposition too. We are now hearing claims that Child Safety staff were aware that the girls' mother bought urine online to get through drug tests and that ongoing reports were made but went unanswered. No doubt we will see more come to light this week.

For years now Peter has spoken vocally about the failings of the system. He will forever mourn Darcey-Helen and Chloe-Ann. He joins many before him who have cried out for this broken system to be given the attention that it needs yet his and other voices have been ignored. Instead, what do we hear? We hear from ministers who failed in their obligations. We see the failing system being passed

from one minister to another. Three ministers in one year is disgraceful. That is how this government treats the children of this state. How is that keeping our communities safe? This government has to focus less on announcements and more on responsibility.

(Time expired)

Cairns Youth Foyer

 **Hon. MP HEALY** (Cairns—ALP) (Minister for Tourism and Sport) (2.30 pm): I am very happy to rise to talk about youth foyers. We know that youth foyers are a very important part of our plans to build a better future for Queenslanders as opposed to those opposite who have no commitments, no obligations, no plans and no idea. Earlier this year, the Queensland government announced a commitment under the Homes for Queenslanders plan. I am very pleased that the minister is here because she has been tolerant as we have had full-ranging discussions. The Alliance of Social Services in Cairns has been asking for a youth foyer for a long time. This is another example of the Miles government listening to people in the community and responding. When we look at all the challenges that the community faces, we know that one of the most important things we can do is give young men and women an opportunity to live in a place where they can grow and make a better life for themselves.

Under the Homes for Queenslanders plan, the goal is to deliver eight youth foyers across the state to assist young Queenslanders at risk of homelessness—the first in Cairns and then Hervey Bay and Moreton Bay. It is proposed that the Cairns youth foyer will be built in Manoora where there is a high demand for independent and supported housing. The youth foyer will provide 40 self-contained units for young people aged between 16 and 25 years. I was delighted to be accompanied by the minister recently to look at the site.

I cannot understate the importance of having a youth foyer in Cairns and the difference it will make for young people who are looking for a fresh start and support. These are real initiatives that are absolutely fundamental to building a better life for those young kids. Cairns was identified as a location for a youth foyer due to the high demand for independent and supportive housing for young people. It will be the fourth youth foyer to be developed by the department of housing, with established youth foyers operating already in Logan and the Gold Coast and a third currently under construction in Townsville.

To date, the operating youth foyers have assisted more than 200 vulnerable young people. Youth foyers provide accommodation for young people who are committed to engaging in education, training and work or who are in need of a safe and stable environment in which to live as they build their future as adults. Youth foyers are staffed by experienced youth support workers, with the model ensuring that staff are onsite 24/7. Having staff available over 24 hours gives young tenants security and ensures that they have onsite support when it is needed.

There are several reasons young people may come to live in a youth foyer. Many of them need to escape home due to conflict or family violence. Some experience overcrowding in the family home. Sometimes working or studying can be a little challenging. It is important that we provide safe places. For children leaving the safety of the system when they turn 18 years of age, a youth foyer can provide a safe house where they can learn and develop independent living skills and establish a good rental history before securing a mainstream property. This is where foyers serve a vitally important purpose.

In this place we hear about many topics and this is one in a range of important issues that the government continues to invest in. We need to make sure that those at risk of homelessness are provided with better opportunities and this is part of our investment into that. Youth foyers fill a gap. They prevent young people from becoming homeless adults. They help educate and upskill and, more importantly, they help prepare young people for real world experiences and they fill a gap, making them a little less vulnerable to the challenges in the community.

To be eligible for accommodation at a youth foyer, young people need to be enrolled in education or training or be employed. Tenants are required to shop and cook for themselves. They learn about their rights and responsibilities and they learn respect for others while living in shared accommodation. This is an outstanding, ongoing and well-funded initiative. I commend the minister and I recognise the hard work of the government. A huge amount has gone into this. The average stay is 18 months, but it depends on each tenant's circumstances and their plan to complete their education. This is about investing in our youth where the real future is.

Democracy

 **Ms BOLTON** (Noosa—Ind) (2.35 pm): Democracy is very much a matter of public interest, especially when Australia continues to slide down global rankings in democratic performance. In 2023, in the Economist Intelligence Unit's Democracy Index, we were equal 14th with Uruguay, below all of the Nordic countries and New Zealand. Queensland contributes to this poor performance by the issues I have raised on a number of occasions on key components for an effective democracy, which includes an independent review of public sector capabilities as the just released Even Better Public Sector for Queensland Strategy 2024-28 does not recognise or acknowledge major issues including that the housing crisis could have been avoided by having forecasting capacity and that the fallout from COVID-19, such as failing mental health across our state and unsustainable demands on our policing and health systems, could have been foreseen and provision made for them. The recent QAO report No. 4 on police resources highlights what I raised in a previous estimates hearing regarding demand modelling. As I have raised previously, we need to reform the committee system and the estimates process, including the Business Committee, which is constraining debate through sheer volume at the moment. We need to sit later or for more weeks to restore the right of all members to have their contributions heard.

When researching other unicameral chambers to see why they were performing better than Queensland, including in obtaining necessary bipartisan agreements that move beyond a political term or party, I was told that our issue was immaturity. Sadly, what Queenslanders are seeing and why they are so frustrated is that we are not maturing as we should. Instead, there is a reliance on media grabs, misinformation and fearmongering in our politics and election strategies. This diminishes trust. Last sitting I asked both sides of the chamber to support ending practices that hoodwink Queenslanders yet only the crossbench voted for greater transparency. Australia is one of the only advanced democracies where parties are completely exempt from privacy legislation, which is so wrong and must be addressed.

I have asked for integrity and credibility in the run-up to the next election but again, sadly, no. Two weeks in a row, a candidate in my electorate has been misinforming my community, first by saying that the future of our hospital is uncertain, which is incorrect. The slowness of renegotiating the lease to accommodate the expansion of the emergency department has been the issue, not that an extension or new lease would not occur. Secondly, after the interim report into youth justice reform was released, I asked both sides of the House to get on with committing to the recommendations and stop the politicking out of respect for all, including victims. Again, no. The same candidate in my community is broadcasting falsehoods, including that it was Labor that had delayed, stalled or blocked that report, which is incorrect. How can Queenslanders ever trust any member of the parliament or a political party when that type of behaviour continues?

As requested previously, during campaigns all need to state what they will deliver for our communities and state it clearly, concisely and without the broad motherhood statements that mean nothing. That includes committing to the recommendations in the draft interim report. I acknowledge that both sides have said they will be releasing their versions of community safety plans, and one was released today. However, when I was chair of the Youth Justice Reform Select Committee, I made a commitment to victims and their families that the inquiry was not a tick-box exercise and that it would lead to tangible action.

Over the coming days, on behalf of all Queenslanders I ask that both sides simply articulate what they will commit to from those 60 recommendations, leaving aside campaign slogans and media grabs. All in this chamber know that by continually setting an example of poor and combative behaviours we are escalating these behaviours in our communities. This is not productive in any way. It is time for Queensland politics and governance to grow up and for voters to reject the theatrics, smoke, mirrors and lack of solid commitments and instead seek transparency, integrity, credibility and maturity in their politics and politicians. Queenslanders do deserve better and we can do that by restoring their faith in our systems and in us. Let us move up in the democracy indexes, not slide further down.

Townsville, Police Resources

 **Mr WALKER** (Mundingburra—ALP) (2.40 pm): I rise to speak about crime, not only the serious issue of juvenile crime but all crime. As the member for Mundingburra I will always advocate in the strongest possible terms for my community. The Miles Labor government has listened and has delivered and will continue to deliver for my community and Queensland when it comes to addressing juvenile crime. This side of the House continually invests in our Queensland Police Service so they have the best training and resources to fight all crime and enhance community safety. We have some

of the toughest laws in the nation when it comes to juvenile law-breakers, especially recidivist young offenders. That is not just us saying it; the experts around the country continually say it. We on this side of the House know that the LNP do not want to address the issue of juvenile crime. 'Why?', you ask. Because when it came to the establishment of a bipartisan select committee to address juvenile crime, the LNP went on a mission from day one to blow it up. Its members were continually dragging the chain so an interim report could not be tabled in this parliament. They did not want success to come from this committee. They did not want the victims' submissions to be heard or addressed.

The LNP did not want the people of Queensland to see an inclusive or a bipartisan process be successful. They did not want Queenslanders to feel safe and to be safe. They are using this serious issue, with slick slogans and fear, as a political tool to try to get elected. What is of very serious concern is that the Leader of the Opposition, David Crisafulli, has not once mentioned domestic violence, victims of domestic violence or a detailed policy to address domestic violence in this state. There has been nothing. That is why it is quiet on that side of the House right now. It is only the Miles Labor government that has a comprehensive Community Safety Plan for Queensland. It is this side of the House, the Labor side of the House, that for the first time in Queensland's history made breach of bail a criminal offence for young offenders under the Bail Act.

There are more police in Townsville than ever before—more than 700 officers, including a Rapid Action Patrol team that relentlessly targets offenders. We also have a new Polair helicopter in Townsville. The government has also invested \$25 million in extremely high-visibility police patrols. It means more boots on the ground more often and produces real results. The community is noticing the extra patrols in public places, including shopping centres and other places with high levels of pedestrian traffic. Police are disrupting and preventing crime. In Townsville under Operation Victor Unison police conducted nearly 12,000 proactive activities. Under this operation police have caught 377 adult offenders and charged them with 862 offences. They have apprehended 388 juvenile offenders and charged them with 490 offences. That is a total of 765 offenders on 1,352 charges. That is making a real difference. With the increased resources in Townsville thanks to Premier Steven Miles, juvenile crime in Townsville has dropped by 33 per cent for the first three months of 2024. I will say it again: it has dropped by 33 per cent for the first three months of 2024.

I thank the Townsville police for their unrelenting efforts. The Miles Labor government is backing police every day with the biggest investment in police personnel in more than three decades. The Miles Labor government is making big investments in police infrastructure in Townsville at Kirwan with a new station, new police academy and facilities for specialised police units. There are currently 700 police recruits undergoing training at the Brisbane and Townsville police academies who will be sworn in next month. There are over 1,400 applicants in the recruit pipeline that would not be there if those opposite had their way. The LNP went to the last election committed to cutting the government's investment in police by more than two-thirds. If the LNP had its way, that would mean more than 1,000 fewer police officers across the state. Those opposite are a disgrace. The LNP does not support police. The LNP does not support the community. The people of Queensland, especially those in Townsville, know that the LNP does not support them. That is why the people of Mundingburra kicked the opposition leader out of parliament. The people of Townsville know what is real and what is slick, spiv spin. The people of Townsville know what happens under the LNP. Under the LNP it is always fewer police. Under the LNP it is always less support for the community.

Miles Labor Government, Integrity

 **Ms SIMPSON** (Maroochydore—LNP) (2.45 pm): Only a Labor government has the audacity to reduce transparency, claim it is increasing it and then wrongly claim a Coaldrake recommendation is endorsing its behaviour. This is dishonest, dodgy and sneaky. Labor's move to stop releasing the public sector workforce report from twice a year to only once a year is a reduction in transparency and accountability. In the shadow of an election, when it is clear Labor will not deliver on its promises for teachers and police, it has suddenly ripped away the transparency measure from Queenslanders to see in a timely way what the public sector workforce numbers are. Contrary to the Labor government's claim that the Coaldrake *Let the sunshine in: review of culture and accountability in the Queensland public sector* report was endorsing this move, it does not. I table an excerpt of the report where, on page 87, the report references the type of data that the Victorian Public Sector Commission released, not the frequency. There is in no way a recommendation to cut the frequency of the release of the public sector workforce data.

Tabled paper: Extract from a report by Professor Peter Coaldrake AO, dated 28 June 2022, titled 'Let the sunshine in: Review of culture and accountability in the Queensland public sector, Final Report' [\[707\]](#).

When Labor came to power nine years ago it promised to be honest and accountable. This latest sleight of hand shows they are desperate to do and say anything to hold onto power at the next state election. They will trash transparency and accountability. Queenslanders see through these outrageous cover-ups. They see the erosion of integrity by this government. The public sector workforce data up until September last year was due for release at least by the beginning of this year, but it has not come out. Why? Because Labor decided to change the reporting dates and only release once a year and then outrageously misled the people as to why. I wonder what Peter Coaldrake would think of his report about letting the sun shine in—addressing and calling out the bullying culture and abuses of key integrity measures that had grown up under this government—being misused to justify something that this report never recommended.

Today the LNP is announcing that if elected in October under leader David Crisafulli it will reverse Labor's dodgy decision to hide information about Queensland's Public Service workforce. The LNP has committed to releasing public sector workforce data every six months to provide Queenslanders with transparency into frontline services and programs, with police, teacher and nurse numbers. This matters with regard to holding government to account to ensure that recruitment and retention of frontline staff in critical roles is being effective in delivering the services that Queenslanders need. Earlier we heard from the Leader of the Opposition that Labor promised that it would deliver an extra 1,450 police, but at this point in time it has actually delivered 73 fewer police. It has failed to retain frontline workers and failed to recruit in order to keep up. They have broken their promises and now they want to break the mechanism of reporting publicly in a timely way about the public workforce data.

The LNP commitment follows revelations that this Palaszczuk-Miles government has stopped this biannual release of the data. They are hiding the truth about frontline workers and then misleading people about why they have done that. LNP leader David Crisafulli and the LNP team are committed to openness and transparency to drive accountability in government actions. This is vitally important for those frontline services. Transparency and integrity in government matters. That is why we will release critical workforce reports twice a year. Get rid of Labor in 2024.

(Time expired)

Community Safety

 **Mr HARPER** (Thuringowa—ALP) (2.50 pm): It is a well-known fact that an invertebrate like a cockroach does not have a backbone. It is a real shame the Leader of the Opposition scuttled out of here because I want to clear up some facts around when he said that we do not back police and have reduced—

Mr HEAD: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I understand the member was referring to the presence or absence of members in the chamber. I bring that to your attention as you were not listening.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): I was conferring with the clerks at the table at the time. Member for Thuringowa, there is a convention that we do not refer to the absence of a member. If you did do that, I ask you to withdraw.

Mr HARPER: I withdraw. A number of LNP speakers referred to the number of police having dropped under Labor. That is incredibly wrong. Following on from the member for Mundingburra's contribution, I point out that we have 771 police in Townsville—thank you police minister—65 of whom I have been able to secure in Thuringowa since 2015. That included a doubling of the Rapid Action and Patrols hub which the LNP left with 20 officers. It now has 40 officers. I then built an Upper Ross police facility with 10 staff. Kirwan Police Station has gone from 54 to 96 police, which is incredible. We have significantly increased police numbers up there and we back our police. We do not sack police and we do not try to sell the academy either. I am happy that the Premier visited last week because we announced a further \$100 million for the Kirwan police precinct. That is on top of the replacement of the Kirwan Police Station. That is a total investment of \$145 million. That is backing our police.

What did the LNP candidate for Thuringowa want to do with that site—she is on the record about this? I table this document.

Tabled paper: Article from the *Townsville Bulletin*, dated 12 September 2020, titled 'Political support secured for true test of trots in Townsville' [\[708\]](#).

In 2020 the LNP Thuringowa hopeful announced that the Liberal National Party would support turning that site back into a paceway. I am not going backwards in time; I am going forward. We will deliver a brand new police facility. I ask the LNP candidate for Thuringowa: does that mean if the LNP gets in that they will not be backing the police?

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order on relevance. I ask that the member be brought back to the victims.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: There is no point of order. We are not on that bill.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: We are not on the victims' bill? That is a fair call.

Mr HARPER: It is great that the member for Nanango is paying attention in the House. In 2015, we heard those opposite talk about some watering down of the law and that crime is out of control. I table this document from 22 February 2013, which states—

Out-of-control kids terrorising Townsville residents.

Roaming gangs of teens ... as young as 12 have turned a regional city into a war zone ... authorities say ... they are powerless to deal with the problem.

Townsville residents say they are living in terror ...

Tabled paper: Article from the *Townsville Bulletin*, dated 22 February 2013, titled 'Out-of-control kids terrorising Townsville residents' [709]

I say to those opposite: do not come in here and pretend there is some linear time in the past when laws were watered down. In fact, that was when it was out of control. This article talks about a 16-year-old and a 14-year-old who stole a car and rammed it up against a tree. I went to that job in 2014. Someone nearly lost their life. It was in Albert Street right near the office of the former member for Mundingburra, the now Leader of the Opposition. That was a terrible accident involving a stolen car. I say to members opposite: don't come in here and pretend that it started in 2015 when it was well and truly out of control, as the media reported, in 2012, 2013 and 2014 under the LNP's watch.

We will continue to back police in Thuringowa. I am very proud of that commitment. I thank the police minister for visiting with the Premier and announcing that additional \$100 million. That is unmatched by the LNP or the LNP candidate. In 2020 I was able to secure funding for a brand new Kirwan Police Station. That was unmatched by the LNP. We are constantly backing police in our city. I am happy with the Premier's announcement this morning regarding Queensland's Community Safety Plan which will look after our community by doing everything within it. There are more police. The police helicopter is doing a fantastic job. Assistant Commissioner Massingham was in Townsville. Unbelievably, there has been a nine per cent drop in crime over the past nine months. In the first quarter of this year, there was a 33 per cent reduction in crime largely due to the use of the helicopter in our city. This side of the House backs our police; that side of the House sacks police.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Time has expired for the matters of public interest debate.

VICTIMS' COMMISSIONER AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE REVIEW BOARD BILL

Second Reading

Resumed from p. 1295 on motion of Ms D'Ath—

That the bill be now read a second time.

 **Mrs FRECKLINGTON** (Nanango—LNP) (2.56 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the Victims' Commissioner and Sexual Violence Review Board Bill 2024. I wish to align my comments with those of the shadow minister, the member for Whitsunday, and her detailed examination of this bill. I thank the committee members who put so much time and effort into the examination of the bill before the House. It is harrowing to have to listen to the terrible, tragic stories of victims in Queensland. As opposed to what the member for Thuringowa was just talking about, yes there has been crime. There will always be crime, but, unfortunately, the figures tell the truth.

In 2015, there were 4,454 rapes and sexual assaults—4,454 too many. In 2023, there were 9,107. That is an increase of 104 per cent. In relation to assaults, in 2015 there were too many—8,135; but, in 2023, there were 57,863. That is an increase of 219 per cent. I do not believe that those opposite can come in here and say that there is not an issue with crime in this state. This is from a government that continues to promise more police officers but continues not to provide them. In fact—and I stand to be corrected—we have about 90 fewer police officers than we had even in 2020, let alone when we lost government in 2015.

As has been noted by many speakers, victims in this state do feel unsafe and they feel that they have been hung out to dry by this government. As much as the government likes to talk about community safety, we in Queensland know this. When each and every one of us are in our local

constituencies in this state—when I am in Nanango, Murgon, Kingaroy, Esk, Toogoolawah, Kilcoy, Woolooga, Kilkivan, Proston, Durong, Quinalow, Crows Nest, Cooya or Yarraman; it does not matter where we go—there are victims of crime and they are hurting. All members know that. Members cannot come into this House and think that there are no victims out there needing a hand.

It took the LNP's commitment—and I note the member who mentioned this before—to appoint a Victims' Commissioner for this government to act, once again leading from opposition, governing from opposition and giving solutions to the government.

Government members interjected.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: Members can laugh all they like, but it was the LNP that committed to appointing a Victims' Commissioner. We also know that with the watering down of the laws—and we have heard this over and over again in this chamber—going right back to 2015 and 2016, whether it be the watering down of the youth justice laws or the failure to roll out the recommendations of the *Hear her voice* report, Queenslanders have not been protected. I have stated the 213 per cent increase in victims since 2015. Quite frankly, the government have no-one to blame but themselves. We know that this is a government that likes to announce things and talk about things but never actually follow through and deliver. As I say, I really do want to thank the shadow minister for her contribution.

I also want to acknowledge the contribution of other people particularly in the domestic violence space in my electorate—those hardworking, frontline people who deal with this on a daily basis. No matter what time of the day, they are there to help. I want to talk about CTC and Centacare in Kingaroy and the South Burnett. Laurel Place in Murgon does an incredible job counselling and supporting DV victims. It is a much needed service and it does a huge amount of work.

We also must acknowledge that the issue for victims in rural and regional Queensland is that they cannot just reside in a safe house in their own community. If you are escaping a domestic violence situation or you are a victim of serious sexual assault or assault in your community in some of these small towns, you cannot just be put in a safe house in that local town because the perpetrator knows where you are: you are just up the street. That is why all of our small rural and regional towns often end up with victims of crime, assault and sexual assault being sent all over the state. We must provide more support and services to these incredibly hardworking DV workers who are out there each and every day looking for more help.

As I have done in this House many times, I want to give a big shout-out to Graham House in Murgon. They do an incredible job. I met with the organisers who run a men's behavioural program. People from all over my electorate go to Graham House to attend that program. I really want to see that program continue because it is much needed.

Whilst the bill before the House appoints a Victims' Commissioner and talks about the Sexual Violence Review Board, it is important that everyone in this House acknowledges that there is an issue. On the ground people need to know where they can go. It is important to note that a report will be tabled and should be tabled because the voices of those victims should be heard right here in this parliament by all members of parliament no matter what side of parliament they sit on. Each and every one of us has a duty to stand up and represent those constituents of ours who are suffering.

Again, when it comes to rural and regional towns, I met a lady through the incredible services of one of our providers in Kingaroy who had to move with her two young children to a safe house in Rockhampton. For those of you who know the distance between Kingaroy and Rockhampton, it is many hours away, but that is the closest support for that person and her children to get to a safe space. That is what they have to do. There are many victims in this state. We must make sure that we are doing everything we can to control crime in this state. I suggest that the only way we can drive down crime in this state and prevent these horrific assaults from happening is to change the government.

I want to touch on the systemic issues that have been highlighted through this committee process—none more so than the DNA disaster. It is very clear—and I said it in the House just in the last sitting week—that this DNA disaster, which was overseen by the current Attorney-General, who was the then attorney-general and the then health minister when this debacle was happening, could very well result in thousands of cases—

Mrs D'ATH: Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I take personal offence and ask that the member withdraw.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: I withdraw. The absolute disaster that is the DNA lab disaster, which was presided over by the then Palaszczuk government attorney-general and the then Palaszczuk government health minister who is now the Miles government Attorney-General, could very well result in thousands of cases being overturned. That is on the public record. We know that this is a disaster of

the Palaszczuk-Miles government's own making. Why? It is because they refused to listen to victims of crime. Enough is enough. This government must get its head out of the sand when it comes to victims in this state. As I have just said, each and every one of us in this House has a role to play in this space but none more so than those failed ministers of the Miles government.

 **Mr SULLIVAN** (Stafford—ALP) (3.06 pm): I rise to support the Victims' Commissioner and Sexual Violence Review Board Bill 2024. I think that this bill takes significant steps in supporting and recognising victims in the criminal justice system, building on historic reforms delivered by Labor governments over decades. It formalises and cements the work of the Victims' Commissioner, the role of the Victims' Commissioner and the office, and it addresses systemic issues throughout the criminal justice system.

Having heard a lot of this debate, I would like to start by associating myself with the considered, informed and complex contributions by members on this side of the House such as the Attorney-General and particularly the member for Cooper compared to the rhetoric of those opposite. The member for Cooper brought her personal experience, her experience as an advocate in the community sector and as an advocate in the public sector and of course her role here in this House. Contrasting that considered, passionate contribution, with the three-word slogans opposite speaks for itself.

Mr Skelton: Five-word slogan.

Mr SULLIVAN: I take that interjection from my friend the member for Nicklin: it might be a five-word slogan. I do not want to mislead the House.

Jokes aside, I want to particularly thank the Interim Victims' Commissioner, Jon Rouse APM. He has done an extraordinary job. For those who do not know him or know of him, I want to thank him for his work even before he was interim commissioner. He was well recognised for his service in the Police Service, particularly in leading Task Force Argos. There are particularly tough roles that our police officers and people in the criminal justice system deal with. Targeting the sexual exploitation of children is particularly important and particularly challenging. I thank him for his absolute dedication in that regard. I also want to thank him for continuing his public service as the interim commissioner.

I also want to recognise that, when we are talking about victims, when it comes to the sexual exploitation of children extended trauma occurs to police officers, officers of the DPP, people in Legal Aid, people on the Parole Board, people in corrective services, people in child safety and people in the community who have to deal with these sorts of issues—to name a few. I do want to pay my respects to Jon and thank him for his extraordinary work. Some of that work includes extraordinary engagement with people right across Queensland. In my new role I was lucky to meet with the Interim Victims' Commissioner and his secretariat, headed by Nicola Doumany. Nicola is a very respected public servant in her own right and was central in establishing Victims Assist Queensland back in the day, so I thank her for her continuing service too.

The Interim Victims' Commissioner facilitated workshops across Townsville, Cairns, Toowoomba, Mount Isa, Brisbane, Gold Coast, Redlands and Logan and heard from both victims themselves and those who interact or are advocates for victim-survivors, including support services. I thank him for that extraordinary outreach. As outlined by the Premier this morning, it reflects his intention to meet with victims and victims' advocates right across the state. I support his work and dedication in that regard as well. Insights from the workshops and community survey data will assist the Interim Victims' Commissioner as well as whoever becomes the permanent Victims' Commissioner to: raise awareness of the rights of victims and the services available; identify, develop and provide additional resources for victims of crime; and identify training needs for government agencies to interact with victims in a trauma informed manner.

I want to reflect on the fact that the work of Interim Victims' Commissioner Rouse with Task Force Argos was not just about finding people to penalise when they were committing horrendous crimes, it was about prevention. The number of kids—and let's call them kids—they were able to identify and take out of the horrendous situation they were in was phenomenal not only in Queensland but also across Australia and, indeed, internationally. We want to stop crime, so similarly this government thinks that the best way to support victims is to reduce the number of victims to start with. We want to prevent crime to start with, so let's be holistic around how we do that. We have our Community Safety Plan for Queensland. We heard in question time and during ministerial statements today that it is not just an issue for the Attorney, the police minister and the corrective services minister. It is an issue across portfolios such as education, amongst others. I appreciate the approach that the government has taken. We are not going to let government work in silos. We want to work across portfolios to get this job done.

Once people touch base with the youth justice system or the criminal justice system we want to stop them from coming back. We want to educate them. We want to give them opportunities. As I have said many times in this House before, in 10 or 20 years time we want to call them taxpayers so they have had a productive life contributing to their families and the community. Where that does not occur and there is recidivism—and not just recidivism, but an escalation of behaviour that we sometimes see with both youth justice and the criminal justice system—we have strong laws in place and a strong correctional system to deal with them. That is what this government is delivering. I want to thank the Attorney-General for bringing this legislation forward.

I also want to quickly mention the establishment of the Sexual Violence Review Board. As the taskforce found, we want systemic reforms to ensure victim-survivors have the confidence and support to come forward. As has been pointed out, including by the Attorney and the member for Cooper, if we do our job right we will likely see a spike in numbers, just as we saw when we introduced specialist DV courts in the state. More and more people had the confidence and felt they had the support to come forward. It is not an increase in crime. DV and sexual offending is still occurring: people are just not reporting it or coming forward. We want to give them the confidence to come forward and know they will be supported. That is what this is about. When those opposite carry on about increased numbers here and there, what we want to do as a government is encourage all of those victims who already exist today—and will continue to be victims in the future—to know that we have their back. They should have the confidence to come forward, and we will deal with them with respect and help them through a system that we know is challenging.

Thank you to the committee chair and the members who did such a great job on this bill. I look forward to continuing to work with the government on our Community Safety Plan for Queensland. I also thank the department staff who have done so much to get us where we are today. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr LANGBROEK** (Surfers Paradise—LNP) (3.15 pm): I rise to speak on the Victims' Commissioner and Sexual Violence Review Board Bill 2024. Firstly, I would like to recognise that it is Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Month in Queensland, and along with rallies held across the nation I hope that by raising awareness of this issue we send the clear message that violence in our communities will not be tolerated.

I note the comments of the previous speaker about people who commit crimes 'touching' the justice system. I note with concern the statistics that have been released by the Queensland Police Service for assault, rape and sexual offences, robbery, car theft and break-ins, and I am quoting from that table. In 2015 there were 18,135 assault cases; in 2023 there were 57,863—a 219 per cent increase. Rape and sexual offences went from 4,454 in 2015 to 9,107 in 2023, an increase of 104 per cent. Robbery is up from 967 in 2015 to 2,642 in 2023, a 173 per cent increase. I put it to those opposite that, if you are talking about the people who commit these crimes, Queenslanders want more support for victims. That is the basis of this bill.

The previous premier used to say in this House quite regularly, 'The best thing you can do for these people is get them a job.' Clearly, they do not always want a job. It might be because of their circumstances and the situation they are living in. As a former education minister, I know that can involve homelessness or drugs and alcohol. There are other issues that can affect families, but it is time we had some balance restored for the victims of crime which, statistics show, are massively increasing. That is why we have said on this side that we do want to have early intervention and programs that actually work, which is why we have asked the Auditor-General to assess whether those programs are working. Victims of crime also deserve to be recognised more than they have been.

This applies in my electorate of Surfers Paradise and across the Gold Coast as well. I have noticed and regularly reported to this House, local publications and the news about the lack of police numbers which has therefore resulted in victims of crime not being able to be serviced by police. A classic example is in one of the two police stations in my area. As I understand it, for some time Surfers Paradise has had staffing of up to 120 officers, but up to 38 are currently not there. We are down to 79 police because 38 have been seconded to Operation Whiskey Legion. I asked a question on notice about that today. It is no wonder that when constituents ask me whether they can get some police service I had the plaintive response from our local police that they are either dealing with domestic and family violence cases—which take up so much time—or they just do not have the cars to do the patrols. Before Easter there was significant action by the police: for the first time we had random alcohol tests, the old RBT tests. Many of us cannot remember the last time those tests were done. A lack of police presence has meant that victims are turning to private security guards. We have had that happen throughout my electorate in a number of different suburbs, and I have spoken about that before.

Having said that, it is clear that the opposition are not opposing the bill and, whilst it represents a step forward in addressing issues surrounding victims' rights and the treatment of sexual violence in our community, it is not without its deficiencies in addressing the ongoing failure of the Miles Labor government with regard to victims. The bill is the result of extensive reviews into how our criminal justice system addresses and supports victims of crime. It seeks to implement the recommendations from the Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce, the Independent Commission of Inquiry into Queensland Police Service Responses to Domestic and Family Violence and the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee inquiry into support provided to victims of crime.

I want to note submissions to the inquiry by the Domestic Violence Prevention Centre Gold Coast, the Queensland Sexual Assault Network—QSAN—and the Gold Coast Centre Against Sexual Violence which, among other stakeholders, raised concerns about the model proposed for a Victims' Commissioner and the board's ability to review individual cases not being consistent with the recommendations of the Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce. Concerns around the scope of the Victims' Commissioner have also been raised, with stakeholders arguing that the bill's broader focus may dilute the intended impact as the taskforce recommended a focus on victims of domestic, family and sexual violence along with suggestions to create a deputy commissioner role to concentrate specifically on these victims.

Whilst it is encouraging to see the government announcing a 20 per cent boost in funding to address domestic and family violence, more police resources are needed to tackle this issue, particularly on the Gold Coast. As I have already mentioned, the majority of the time and resources of our local police are being taken up with domestic and family violence call-outs. I refer to an article from the *Gold Coast Bulletin* dated 21 February 2024 titled 'QLD crime crisis: surge in domestic violence offences eclipses even youth crime crisis'. The article refers to a survey conducted by pollsters of 1,500 people about youth crime, with 56 per cent of people living in regional Queensland saying that they felt unsafe in their homes and communities due to youth crime. It is an article by Keith Woods, and I table a copy of that.

Tabled paper: Article from the *Gold Coast Bulletin*, dated 21 February 2024, titled 'QLD crime crisis: Surge in domestic violence offences eclipses even youth crime crisis' [710].

The article continues, highlighting the most common offence associated with youth crime—the unlawful use of a motor vehicle—with 2,781 offences recorded on the Gold Coast last year. It is now very common amongst most of us when in social interactions to say to people, 'Have you or do you know someone who has had their car stolen?' I imagine nearly any member of this parliament could go to a social engagement and know someone who has either had their car stolen or knows someone who has. That is something that is very different to the way Queensland used to be. What is more damning is that last year 5,252 breaches of domestic violence orders—DVOs—were recorded, with the police commissioner at the time Katarina Carroll saying—

To have in one year a 25 per cent increase in domestic and family violence is just unheard of.

A key element of the bill is the establishment of the Victims' Commissioner whose role will be to promote and protect the rights of victims by identifying and reviewing systemic issues affecting victims, conducting research, consulting with stakeholders, handling complaints and advocating for victims' rights. The bill also establishes the Sexual Violence Review Board to review systemic issues in the reporting, investigation and prosecution of sexual offences. Whilst this board can review government policies, practices and procedures, as highlighted earlier by QSAN, it does not have the authority to review individual cases and could restrict the board's ability to address serious issues and suggest meaningful changes.

Despite promises by the Miles Labor government of increased community safety—and we have heard it again here today—we have seen an unbelievable 213 per cent increase in recorded victims since 2015. I refer to an article in today's online *Courier-Mail*, 30 April, titled 'Domestic violence Qld gets a \$36m boost as calls for action grow'. I refer to Queensland's new Police Commissioner, Steve Gollschewski, who is quoted as saying—

... domestic-violence-related calls for service represented about a third of the police workload, with the state tracking toward 190,000 known occurrences for 2024 based on the current trajectory.

In spite of the promises of the previous member that, if you walk into a police station and have a complaint about DFV—domestic and family violence—you will be attended to immediately, that is just not happening. I have constituents who complain about the fact that they are not able to get the service they need, meanwhile the hardworking police are trying to do the best they can. I table a copy of that article from today's online *Courier-Mail*.

Tabled paper: Media article, dated 30 April 2024, titled 'Domestic violence Qld gets \$36m boost as calls for action grow' [711].

The Victims' Commissioner and Sexual Violence Review Board Bill has the potential to create positive change in Queensland, but it needs to ensure the independence of the commissioner, focus on the most vulnerable victims and grant the review board sufficient authority to address systemic issues highlighted under this government. None have been more clear than those raised by the Leader of the Opposition, and that is why we are focusing on that election in October and beyond to sort these issues out on behalf of Queenslanders.

 **Hon. DE FARMER** (Bulimba—ALP) (Minister for Education and Minister for Youth Justice) (3.25 pm): It is just so tedious to listen to those opposite. I am sure they do genuinely care as human beings. No-one can sincerely not care about victims. There is not one of us who does not care, but I hear them lecturing and hectoring. That would be okay if they had something that they themselves were offering. We literally do not know what they are going to do. We literally do not know.

We are talking about the Victims' Commissioner bill. I was not taking it personally, but I was thinking, 'Is it just youth justice they're not giving us any detail on?' There is nothing. If those opposite really are genuine, then they will have to put thought into it. If they genuinely believe that they are going to be the next government—and there are plenty of reasons for them to think that—then by now they seriously should have given thought to what they are going to do and they would be telling people what that will be. It is all very well for them to criticise us, but when will we actually hear what they are going to do? I do not even need to quote Campbell Newman or all of the other people who are asking them for those details. People want to know. They just want to know, and victims deserve that.

This is what those opposite did for victims. They cut \$259 million from community organisations that provide victim support. They cut Victim Assist by \$323,000. Who even does that? They abolished the Sentencing Advisory Council, thereby silencing victims. That is their track record. That is all we know about what those opposite do for victims. That is all we know. In their little book—we all know that little book, the brochure—I cannot remember the name of it—with the slogans in it—

Ms Boyd interjected.

Ms FARMER: That is right; thank you, member for Pine Rivers. They barely even mentioned victims there. We have nothing to go on except what they did last time and lots of rhetoric. They owe it to victims to say what they will do.

Let us talk about this bill. This Victims' Commissioner and Sexual Violence Review Board Bill will establish that board and implement a charter of rights for affected victims. It is such an incredibly important bill to support all of the other work that has been and is being done for victims. There has been much mention in this debate already about the appointment of Mr Jon Rouse APM as the Interim Victims' Commissioner. There has already been some fantastic work going on, and I know that many victims who have spoken to Mr Rouse or his office have been much heartened by the work that is coming out of that office.

I am not going to talk about this in much detail, but it is something that is very much close to my heart—that is, the establishment of the Sexual Violence Review Board. It does not really matter what experience has led someone to becoming a victim—and I understand this is quite a common theme in the IMAC discussions—but all victims want to be believed and want to know that there is someone walking alongside them to assist them through the process.

I think these two things will hit the mark for victims. Both of them were recommendations from the Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce in their second report. They are incredibly important. The introductory speech talked about how much victim-survivors often feel disempowered in the justice system, and both of these things that will be established through this bill will go a long way towards addressing that.

I congratulate the Attorney-General on her great work in this space over many years as a passionate advocate. I know how proud the Attorney-General was to speak to our Community Safety Plan today, particularly about the victim liaison work that she is introducing. It is an Australian first and I know that this is the No. 1 thing that victims talk about. I want to thank her for this great work. It is something that all of us as local members, especially me as the youth justice minister, can offer in a tangible way to victims. A pilot has been running already and it has been a great success. The Community Safety Plan contributes around \$18 million to the rest of that work, which is incredibly important.

Much has been done already around support for victims, including increased amounts available to victims for compensation. The Attorney-General has put on a lot of new staff to cope with demand and she is absolutely intent on reducing the waiting times for victims. She is increasing public

awareness. We have the victims liaison officers. I want to congratulate the Independent Ministerial Advisory Council, which is made up of victims, victim support providers and people associated with victims. They are doing fantastic work and they will assist the government to make even better decisions about how we can best support victims.

The excellent report from the select committee has a number of recommendations. We know that the member for Noosa and the government representatives supported those. However, it is unclear whether the LNP supports them because we know they did not want to have it released. The Department of Youth Justice is supporting four of those recommendations, including for restorative justice conferencing. I feel really passionate about this. It is an important program. Something like 70 per cent of victims report that it helped them to manage the effects of crime, and that is so incredibly important. It is an internationally recognised program and it is evidence based. Obviously, the LNP cut that when they were in government, which is what they seem to do. If it works, they cut it—go figure.

Restorative justice conferencing is about victims having the opportunity to confront the perpetrators of crime about the impact it has had on them. I have heard young people in the youth justice system say that they would rather go to detention than have to have one of those confrontations because it has shamed them. One of the best outcomes—aside from the fact that it helps the victims deal with the impact of their crimes—is that there is about a 59 per cent reduction in reoffending, and that is important. I thank the Youth Justice Reform Select Committee for their range of recommendations about that. I know there are a number of departments involved in supporting those recommendations.

Members on our side have referred to the fact that the best way to support victims is to reduce rates of crime, and this morning the Premier referred to the pleasing figures we have had this year of a turnaround in youth crime of over 10 per cent. It is why we have announced the Community Safety Plan for Queensland today, because we know it is not a simple fix. It has to cover a range of portfolios and a range of actions, and that is what the Community Safety Plan for Queensland is all about. It is about supporting victims, delivering for our front line, detaining offenders, intervening when people offend and preventing crime before it occurs. We are so proud to be going forward with this. If there ever is any detail from the opposition, we look forward to hearing about what they might do if they are going to do anything about it.

 **Dr ROWAN** (Moggill—LNP) (3.35 pm): I rise to address the debate on the Victims' Commissioner and Sexual Violence Review Board Bill 2024. On 6 March 2024 the then Acting Attorney-General and Minister for Justice introduced this legislation into the Queensland parliament where it was subsequently referred to the Community Safety and Legal Affairs Committee for detailed consideration. As outlined by the then Acting Attorney-General, the two overarching objectives of this legislation are to, firstly, establish the Victims' Commissioner and Office of the Victims' Commissioner to promote and protect victims' rights and, secondly, establish the Sexual Violence Review Board to identify and review systemic issues in relation to the reporting, investigation and prosecution of sexual offences.

I note that the majority of the amendments that are proposed within this legislation seek to implement recommendations which have been outlined in a number of important reports: the *Hear her voice—report 2: Women and girls' experiences across the criminal justice system*, a report of the Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce; the report entitled *A call for change: commission of inquiry into Queensland Police Service responses to domestic and family violence*; and the report from the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee, report No. 48, *Inquiry into support provided to victims of crime*.

Victims of crime often face a myriad of challenges in the aftermath of a criminal act. Often the impacts of such acts extend far beyond the immediate incident itself. Whether it is an assault, theft, harassment or any other crime, victim-survivors often grapple with a complex array of physical, emotional and practical difficulties. These challenges can be both immediate and enduring, profoundly affecting the wellbeing and security of those affected. Significant research into crime victimisation has shown how the aftermath of a crime can inflict profound emotional trauma on victims, whether through shock, fear, anger or even sadness. Such trauma can often lead to further anxiety, depression and even the development of post-traumatic stress disorders.

For too many Queenslanders, we have also seen how the psychological effects for victims of crime can linger for far longer, even well beyond when physical wounds have healed. Such traumatic and psychological impacts can also have devastating consequences far beyond the individual, with impacts on personal relationships, work and even financial strains all contributing to the exacerbation of what is already a traumatic experience impacting those relationships, work and overall quality of life parameters. For victim-survivors, navigating this emotional turmoil can be overwhelming, requiring access to appropriate mental health support and counselling services.

In light of these many challenges, the role of a formal Victims' Commissioner therefore becomes paramount. A Victims' Commissioner should and can serve as a dedicated advocate for the rights and needs of victim-survivors, working to ensure their voices are heard and their concerns addressed. By providing a centralised point of contact within the criminal justice system, a Victims' Commissioner can and must work to empower victim-survivors and fundamentally promote the rights of victims.

The harsh reality is that, for too long under Labor's youth crime crisis, Queensland victims of crime have felt abandoned and not heard by this current state Labor government. The Liberal National Party has listened to countless Queenslanders in our own electorates and across the state who have shared with us their devastating personal experience with crime and their feelings of being abandoned by a state Labor government which cares more about the rights of perpetrators than the rights of victims.

The latest official statistics paint a damning picture of the enormity of Labor's crime crisis and the trauma that is being inflicted on Queensland victims. As the annual crime report which was recently released by the Queensland Government Statistician's Office revealed, Queensland victim numbers have skyrocketed 165 per cent under the state Labor government to a 10-year high. The annual crime report also revealed that victim numbers are up almost 18 per cent in the last year alone, that the crime rate rose over 11 per cent last year, that juvenile offender numbers have increased over five per cent to 11,000, and that more Queensland crime is now going unsolved. Further, we also know that break-ins have increased 20 per cent and stolen cars have increased by 16 per cent in 12 months per 100,000 Queenslanders, with 55 per cent of all break-ins and 55 per cent of stolen cars now committed by juvenile offenders.

These are not simply statistics and numbers in a report; these are real Queenslanders. These are mums and dads who have woken up to find their cars stolen, these are businesses that have had to close their doors after another break-in, and these are communities which have had to live in fear whilst youth criminals continue to run rampant at night.

As the state member for Moggill, local residents continue to reach out to me, sharing the devastating impacts and trauma that they have had to endure, either as victims themselves or on behalf of their loved ones who have become the latest victim of a crime. I have had an elderly couple share with me the devastating financial and emotional toll they suffered after enduring two home robberies in the space of two months. I have spoken with businesses in Chapel Hill and Kenmore that in the space of one night were all targeted with their doors and windows broken in multiple attempted robberies, with small business owners having to count the costs of not only repairs but also lost clientele and higher insurance costs as a consequence.

Recently, I had a Brookfield resident share with me how, in the space of 12 months, her family were victims of separate acts of crime with two cars stolen. As the father told me, his wife and young son were left traumatised after accidentally confronting the two masked men in their garage as their car was stolen. These honest Queenslanders are all real victims of crime and victims of Labor's crime crisis. They are not part of a media beat-up, as some Labor government members have suggested.

The fact is Labor simply cannot be trusted to fix the crime crisis, to make our community safer or to ensure the rights of victims of crime are put first; nor can the Greens political party ever be trusted on the issue of crime and support for victims, given that it is the Greens political party whose various members, candidates and elected representatives have supported calls to defund the police. It is only the Liberal National Party which is committed to making our communities safer and strengthening the rights for Queensland victims of crime.

That is why the Liberal National Party has already announced three significant changes to bolster the rights of crime victims through our Making Queensland Safer Laws. In contrast to the years of inaction and too little, too late changes by the Labor state government, should the Liberal National Party be successful at the October 2024 state election we will take strong action to strengthen the rights of victims of crime by rewriting the sentencing principles and the charter of youth justice principles of the Youth Justice Act to make victims' rights paramount and ensure the full impact of youth crime on victims can be considered by the court and move victims' rights up to the Youth Justice Act. We will also lift the veil of secrecy by providing victims updates relating to their case with automatic updates.

Mrs D'ATH: Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order on relevance. I ask the member be brought back to the long title of the bill. We are not debating what the LNP may or may not do; we are debating the bill before the House.

Dr ROWAN: Madam Deputy Speaker, I raise a point of order. I am responding to the member for Bulimba, who specifically in her speech was referencing how we would respond, and I am also referencing victims of crime.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Lui): I will take some advice. There is no point of order, but, member, I remind you to stay within the long title of the bill.

Dr ROWAN: Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker. Currently, victims of crime must apply to receive updates regarding the justice process for youth offenders, and this can be an overwhelming process. The LNP will remove the burden from victims and make it as easy as possible to receive updates, which is why we will shift the onus from the opt-in to opt-out.

Finally, the LNP will also amend the Childrens Court Act to remove the provision excluding victims and their families from the Childrens Court on the basis of prejudice to offenders. Victims and their families are often blocked from court proceedings involving offenders, so the LNP will remove this provision to allow victims and their families to always attend court. That is why the LNP believes in listening to the voices of victims and responding as appropriate.

I wish to stress how victims of crime deserve to be a priority, not an afterthought. Whilst the legislated introduction of a Victims' Commissioner and Sexual Violence Review Board is welcome, it has not been without controversy or genuine critique from those within the legal, domestic and sexual violence and other key sectors. The state Labor government must listen to these stakeholders and listen to Queensland victims and ensure such concerns are sufficiently addressed.

I wish to thank all stakeholders and victim-survivors who contributed to this committee's examination of this legislation, as well as all committee members from both sides of the House, including the Liberal National Party's deputy chair, the member for Theodore, as well as the member for Scenic Rim.

There is certainly a lot more that needs to be done here in Queensland with respect to listening to the victims of crime. There certainly needs to be more with respect to key legislative reforms, particularly when you are putting funding into recidivist and prevention programs. When you are pouring more money into those programs and getting fewer outcomes, the question needs to be asked why. There is a whole lot more work that needs to be done here in Queensland despite this legislation. This legislation is certainly welcomed and hopefully it will go some way to addressing many of the issues that are here in Queensland with respect to not only youth crime but also crime overall.

Given what we are also seeing with respect to those victims of crime and their families, their voices need to be heard. They feel their voices are not being heard. When I travel across my electorate of Moggill and right across Queensland, Queenslanders are saying that this government is failing on crime, it is failing victims and it needs to do a lot more. They are very concerned about this issue. They are very concerned about community safety. Really, over the last nine years this government has given up on community safety. They have not been listening to the victims of crime. Hopefully things will change in October when we can show Labor the door.

 **Mr KELLY** (Greenslopes—ALP) (3.45 pm): I support the Victims' Commissioner and Sexual Violence Review Board Bill 2024. I agree with the member for Moggill when he says there is always more we can do for victims and we should always be listening to victims. I think there would be no MP of any persuasion in this House who, when they learn somebody in their electorate has been killed or injured or hurt, whether they have been injured physically or psychologically by anything, does not feel a deep sense of pain when people in their electorates suffer those things. Whether they are caused by crime, car accidents, fires, domestic violence, diseases—whatever causes that death, pain and suffering—you want to try to understand it, and you want to try to comfort those people who are impacted. Like most members of this parliament, I have made efforts when I have learnt of these things in my community. Whether you hear about them on the news or hear about them on social media or you hear them down at the local sporting club or wherever, you try to reach out to those people who have been impacted to offer support, to listen and to try to understand their situation to see if there are things we can do differently or better, if there is anything that can be done at all.

I know it is sometimes frustrating for members of parliament that when you hear about something and you reach out to police or health services or try to make contact with victims of various things sometimes they are restricted in the information that they can share with you. However, where you can identify people, you reach out and offer that support. Some people do engage and look for practical support and want to share what has happened to them and want to look for ways so we can stop that from happening again, and other people choose not to do that. However, I think it is really disingenuous of the opposition to suggest that there would be any single member in this parliament who would not care about victims of crime or victims of anything in their community and in their electorate. The one thing I would say about all members of this chamber is that they are all caring people who care about people in their communities.

I want to acknowledge some of the organisations that support people who are victims of crime and sexual violence and domestic violence in my community, particularly the great folks at the support service Zig Zag Young Women's Resource Centre, the recently established Small Steps 4 Hannah Foundation after a tragic event, and the World Wellness Group which supports refugee and multicultural communities, many of whom are not just victims of crime but victims of torture. I want to acknowledge the great focus at Stepping Stone Clubhouse. We know that people with mental illness are much more frequently victims of crime rather than perpetrators of crime. I also want to acknowledge Beyond DV, another great organisation which is supporting people affected by domestic violence.

In all of this discussion around victims, I want to acknowledge the member for Cooper. I have reached out to her on many occasions. I note her personal experiences and her strong advocacy over many years, so she brings a great deal of insight into this parliament and I have always valued that, and I want to thank her for her ongoing advocacy.

One of the people I connected with following a violent incident in my electorate was Ben Cannon. I want to thank him for meeting and engaging with me. I thank him for the work he has done with Voice for Victims. It is important that we listen to the voices of victims. This bill establishes the Victims' Commissioner which I believe Voice for Victims called for. This body will be totally focused on providing ongoing support for victims and for systematic improvements for victims. Similarly, one of the things I really like about the Sexual Violence Review Board is its focus on the ongoing systematic review and improvement to the system. It is probably a little akin to what happens in the Office of the Health Ombudsman where there is ongoing systematic reviews of our systems. Oftentimes there are things that could be done better or things that should not be done at all, but we live in a system whereby unless somebody initiates a complaint sometimes things do not change. You need these ongoing reviews so I think these two things are a good step forward.

When I look at the evidence-based Community Safety Plan for Queensland, one of the things I am pleased about is that it is focused on a holistic approach that looks at how to deal with the things that ultimately will prevent crime. Ultimately, if you deal with these things, you actually make society better for everyone. It is focused around educational engagement—free kindy, free TAFE, the expansion of the great Pathways colleges, which has a campus in my electorate. We know that if we can get kids engaged in education and keep them engaged for as long as possible, the outcomes across society—as well their lives—will be better. I acknowledge the government's massive increase in funding for Speld which supports people experiencing learning differences. We know that a very large number of people who are in the criminal justice system have literacy and numeracy challenges.

The plan also looks at the prevention of domestic violence. We heard shocking statistics today of the number of people involved in youth justice who have been victims of domestic violence or have witnessed or been impacted by it. As the chair of the select committee into opportunities to improve mental health and alcohol and other drug services in Queensland, I am pleased with the focus of the Better Care Together plan. We will continue to do all of those things that, ultimately, help you to prevent crime. We have to do all that is outlined around policing and the criminal justice system and, importantly, there is support for victims. I think every victim would say categorically that if we could have no victims that would be the ultimate outcome.

The Leader of the Opposition talked in his matter of public interest statement today about people taking responsibility. I note that the opposition have made a lot of noise about their making Queenslanders safe legislation which apparently, if they win the election, will be law by the end of the year.

Mr O'Connor: Thanks for the ad!

Mr KELLY: I am very happy to give you the ad because I think what you also need to do, member for Bonney, is actually explain the laws to the people of Queensland. Let me take people through the legislative process. If the election is held on 26 October and there is a change of government, what will we have? One sitting week before the end of the year.

Mr Mander interjected.

Mr KELLY: Member for Everton, it is great for you to interject having been a member of the Newman government that smashed piece of legislation, after piece of legislation through this chamber.

Mr Mander interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Lui): Pause the clock. Member for Everton, you are warned under the standing orders.

Mr KELLY: The member for Everton smashed piece of legislation after piece of legislation through this parliament without any due respect for parliamentary process and that had an impact on our community. This is the signature piece of legislation that those opposite are taking to the people of Queensland but they are not going to show it to the people of Queensland? They are not going to give us any insight into what that would be? Is that how the Crisafulli government would be conducting itself? I think the people of Queensland would be rightly deeply concerned about that.

The Leader of the Opposition does not take any responsibility for the damage of the Newman government. Let us talk about the changes that the opposition made in their mercifully short period of time in government that had massive impacts on our community and contributed to youth crime. They defunded and gagged community organisations, many of which supported victims of crime and also victims of domestic violence. Shutting down schools and TAFE is not a good way to help people to re-engage with education or to keep them engaged with education. They shut down the Skilling Queenslanders for Work program—a program that helps young people who are having difficulty getting into the workforce get into the work. Those are things they did. They shut down youth mental health services, cut police, cut child safety. Those are things that you do. This bill is what you do, if you believe in this—you support victims of crime and domestic violence and victims of sexual assault. I certainly support victims at every single turn I get in my community and in the legislative work that we do in this parliament. I will continue to do that, as will every member on this side of the chamber. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr BERKMAN** (Maiwar—Grn) (3.55 pm): I rise to give my contribution on the Victims' Commissioner and Sexual Violence Review Board Bill 2024. I want to speak in support of the establishment of the Victims' Commissioner for Queensland and the Sexual Violence Review Board as the bill proposes. There is no doubt that victim-survivors of violence, especially sexual violence, need greater support in this state. A couple of years ago I heard from a woman who had just moved into my electorate to escape domestic violence. She contacted me after trying to access financial payments from Victim Assist Queensland to help get her back on her feet and she was told that the wait could be months. Now we were able to help her out with some fairly limited financial support, but it was clear at that point that this instance was not isolated; it was part of a much bigger problem.

When I asked the state government about processing times for Victim Assist claims they told me there were almost 400 domestic violence victim-survivors who were still waiting to have their applications processed after more than two years. They said that they had introduced a new streamlined process but that people were still waiting up to four months. That is an incredibly long time when you are seeking financial support and the means to escape a violent relationship. In fact, that is the kind of wait time that could clearly put those people's lives at risk. I want to acknowledge right now that this government has made efforts to fix this with additional funding for Victim Assist to engage more staff and to improve the assessment process. I understand wait times are falling, which is a relief to hear, although I came out of a meeting with Voice for Victims only an hour ago and it is clear from hearing their experience that there must be further work on that process both in terms of the eligibility for Victim Assist and the difficulties with the processes and wait times that people are still encountering.

Moreover, financial compensation is just one part of supporting victims, potentially a relatively small part, and this bill acknowledges that. It establishes the Victims' Commissioner to promote and protect the right of victim-survivors in Queensland. I am genuinely pleased that the government is implementing this key recommendation from the Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce in its *Hear her voice* report. Establishing the commissioner as an independent statutory body to address the systematic issues facing victim-survivors on an ongoing basis and to deal with complaints is a positive and essential step forward.

In particular, I am glad to see that the Victims' Commissioner will have functions that deal with the experience of victim-survivors beyond just the criminal legal system. In their submission on the bill, LawRight pointed out that the victim-survivors they support are 'generally more concerned with recovering from the violence and the consequences of it rather than seeking redress from the criminal justice system'. It is increasingly clear and it has been exposed by a number of inquiries, including the inquiry into police responses to domestic and family violence, that victim-survivors face discrimination, belittling and even further victimisation when seeking support through the criminal legal system.

It is also clear that the problem extends to how our economy and society are structured and how this affects people's vulnerability to victimisation as well as their ability to survive and recover from violence. Victim-survivors are isolated and made vulnerable by underfunded social services and governments that would prefer to protect the profits of the big corporates rather than fund the things that could have kept them safe and prevented further harm. I speak, for example, of building social

housing to give people a safe place to go, raising social security rates to limit financial dependence on a violent partner or investing in a properly funded public health system where victim-survivors know they can get help. I am hopeful that the commissioner as well as the Sexual Violence Review Board might highlight some of these systemic failings and underfunding. Whether the government is willing to respond may be another question.

We have seen that the government can and will provide piecemeal funding increases for support services like those in the domestic and family violence sector, and that is welcome. However, we have also seen an unwillingness to act on underlying problems if there is any risk to the big corporations and wealthy investors which apparently run this state. Their total refusal to limit rent increases or build enough social housing is a case in point. They do not want to limit property investor profits or create any genuine competition with private developers. As a result, more Queenslanders—

Mrs D'ATH: Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. Again, these are important issues, but they are not part of the long title of the bill. I ask the member be brought back to the bill.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Lui): Member, I ask you to stay within the long title of the bill.

Mr BERKMAN: Certainly, Madam Deputy Speaker. The point I am making is that, as a result of this context, more Queenslanders than ever are facing housing insecurity, which we know is one of the most common underlying vulnerabilities, especially for victim-survivors of domestic and family violence.

This government folds under pressure from the property lobby every time, but there is another group that it seems totally powerless to stand up to, and that is the Queensland Police Union. This bill responds to some of the recommendations of multiple inquiries in recent years that have examined the experience of victims in this state. One of the things we have heard most frequently and emphatically in those inquiries is that the criminal legal system and particularly the Queensland police do not respond appropriately to victims of crime, especially victim-survivors of domestic and family violence and sexual violence. In fact, they frequently contribute to the retraumatisation and further harm of victim-survivors. The inquiry into police responses to domestic and family violence heard evidence of how appallingly the QPS has failed victim-survivors at every turn—from the officer who leaked personal information about a domestic violence survivor to her abuser, to the senior officer who told a co-worker that they did not investigate a suspicious death because the woman and her husband lived 'in a shit area in a shit house'—yet the government is bending over backwards to dodge the key recommendation—

Mrs MULLEN: Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I believe the member has used unparliamentary language and must withdraw.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member, you have used unparliamentary language. I ask you to withdraw.

Mr BERKMAN: I withdraw, yet the government is bending over backwards to dodge the key recommendation arising from that inquiry, and that is to establish an independent police integrity unit led and staffed by civilians to deal with all complaints against police. The inquiry's final report was clear that this unit should be up and running in May 2024. For anyone who has not checked the calendar today, that is tomorrow.

What has Queensland Labor been doing for the past 18 months? They have paid consultants more than \$400,000 to find a way out of the commission of inquiry's recommendations. They are unwilling to take this crucial step to hold police to account. While they bow to Ian Leavers and the Queensland Police Union, 99 per cent of the complaints against police officers are investigated by other police.

Mrs D'ATH: Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order on relevance. I ask the member be brought back to the bill. You cannot discuss what you would like the bill to contain. Members must discuss what is actually in the bill.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member, I will ask you to stick to the long title of the bill or I will ask you to sit down.

Mr BERKMAN: Certainly, Madam Deputy Speaker. I would put that it is relevant to this bill because, although it establishes the Victims' Commissioner with the ability to receive and deal with complaints regarding breaches of the Charter of Victims' Rights, the commissioner would be able to simply refer complaints on to another department if they think it would be better dealt with there. Given the broad scope of the commissioner's responsibility, it is not unforeseeable that resources will be limited to deal with complaints and that complaints involving police responses would be referred back to the Ethical Standards Unit—back to the police to investigate themselves. I understand that the bill does require the commission to have specific regard to the vulnerability of particular cohorts of victims of crime, including victim-survivors of domestic and family or sexual violence and First Nations

victim-survivors. I would hope that this means not referring complaints made by marginalised people back to the police, who have demonstrated disproportionate and systemic levels of racism, sexism and violent prejudice.

I also share the concerns raised by a number of stakeholders that the information-sharing provisions in the bill could be inadequate to protect victim-survivors' privacy. In addition to potentially putting victim-survivors at further risk, organisations like LawRight said this could undermine people's trust in service providers and even deter victim-survivors from seeking help. The issue is that the services may be required to provide information to the commissioner, for example as part of a complaints process, without the express consent of the victim-survivor. This includes information that would otherwise be protected by a sexual assault counselling privilege. This creates a risk of alleged perpetrators accessing the information through a subpoena. Although access could be rejected using this privilege as a legal defence, the process itself is likely to cause further trauma and other information such as, for example, details provided regarding domestic or family violence would not be protected. LawRight suggested amending the bill so that the Victims' Commissioner or Sexual Violence Review Board can require a non-government entity to provide only information that its victim-survivor clients have consented to being provided. I urge the government to consider adding this small additional protection.

On the whole, this is a good bill that implements two broad recommendations from the Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce, the parliamentary committee inquiry into support for victims of crime and the inquiry into police responses to domestic and family violence. However, I remain concerned that the government is avoiding perhaps the most significant recommendation of that latter inquiry to stop police investigating themselves and that this could affect victim-survivors' ability to access just outcomes through the newly established Victims' Commissioner. I urge the government to take not just piecemeal steps but broad, systemic changes to give victim-survivors the security and support they deserve including access to safe and affordable housing, fully funded public health care and a secure income.

(Time expired)

 **Mr O'CONNOR** (Bonney—LNP) (4.06 pm): Domestic and family violence is far too common in my community on the Gold Coast. We were the first area selected in the state for a specialist DV court in Southport because we have unacceptably, shamefully high rates of what is our most important challenge to overcome as a society. I know the vast majority of my community want to see change, so they will welcome this bill. Queenslanders generally will also welcome this change because there have, of course, never been more victims of crime than under this decade-old Labor government. Labor's law and order legacy is a 219 per cent increase in assaults, a 173 per cent increase in robberies, a 54 per cent increase in break-ins and a more than doubling of the number of rapes and sexual offences.

This bill will establish the Victims' Commissioner to promote and protect the rights of victims across Queensland and the Sexual Violence Review Board to identify and review systemic issues. I want to particularly thank Di Macleod and her team at the Gold Coast Centre Against Sexual Violence for their submission to this bill and for the incredible work they do generally to support women who are victims of sexual, domestic and family violence in our city. Their submission highlighted how this bill does not fully implement recommendation 18 of the Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce to have a commissioner specifically focused on the victims of domestic, family and sexual violence and on First Nations victim-survivors.

The department noted to the committee that, while the bill before us does not include a provision for a deputy commissioner, the Victims' Commissioner will have nothing stopping them from appointing a deputy commissioner. This is a good idea, as a number of stakeholders raised, and it should be a priority for the appointed commissioner once they have started setting up their office.

I also want to pay tribute to the incredible team led by Lucy Gregory at another vital frontline service in my area, the Domestic Violence Prevention Centre Gold Coast. I acknowledge the comments they made in their submission about the appointment of the commissioner and the language in this legislation, particularly around consent.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Lui): 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.

Opposition members interjected.

Mrs Frecklington: Another guillotine.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Members to my left, order!

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence) (4.09 pm), in reply: According to the business program motion, 3½ hours was set down with 40 minutes for consideration in detail and reply as part of that 3½ hours. That was my reading of the business program motion this morning.

I thank the members for their contributions to the debate on the Victims' Commissioner and Sexual Violence Review Board Bill 2024. In doing so, I make special mention, as others have, of the member for Cooper for not only her time as the member for Cooper but also prior to her time in this place as well as her time within the Department of Justice and Attorney-General. I acknowledge her many years of advocacy as a victim of crime.

As I raised in my earlier speech, the bill supports the establishment of the Victims' Commissioner to promote and protect the rights of victims of crime and it establishes the Sexual Violence Review Board to identify and review matters relating to the reporting, investigation and prosecution of sexual offences in Queensland. The establishment of the Victims' Commissioner in Queensland is a significant step in not just acknowledging but also strengthening the rights of victims of crime in Queensland.

In seeking to further implement the recommendations of the taskforce, I will write to the Victims' Commissioner, once established, to request that they conduct a review of the Charter of Victims' Rights to consider whether additional rights should be recognised or if existing rights should be expanded. This will be another important step in recognising the rights of victims. I look forward to receiving advice about the outcomes of the review.

I will now address some matters raised by honourable members during the course of this debate. The member for Whitsunday raised various matters in her contribution. I will be responding to the matters raised that relate to the bill before the House in relation to the board's functions, its ability to review individual cases and its composition.

The board's functions are broad and will allow it to review any part of the criminal justice system in relation to sexual offences, ranging from a victim-survivor's initial contact with the police, health service or other form of initial reporting of a sexual offence through to the conduct of a prosecution of a sexual offence. This function does not limit or prohibit the board from reviewing an individual case but, given its systemic focus, it is not intended that the board will review each and every case of sexual violence that does not proceed to trial or result in a conviction. As part of its review function, the board may look at the circumstances of the reporting, investigation and prosecution processes of a particular case to identify any improvements that can be made at a systemic level. It is intended that the board will be able to consider cases where the prosecution of a sexual offence has been successful as well as cases where the prosecution fails or a matter does not proceed to a prosecution.

The board will not have a role in reviewing the sentencing of an offender who has committed a sexual offence. The sentencing of offenders is a matter for the judiciary, including as part of any appeal. However, the board could look at systems and supports provided to the victim as part of criminal proceedings and make recommendations to improve supports or victim participation in a criminal proceeding. In addition, the Queensland Sentencing Advisory Council has functions that include advising the Attorney-General on matters relating to sentencing and obtaining the community's views on sentencing and matters about sentencing.

Also, the board will not replace existing internal agency practice reviews. The Queensland Police Service and the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions will continue to discuss improvements in operation and practice. The QPS and the ODPP are reviewing and updating the memorandum of understanding relating to the investigation and prosecution of sexual violence cases in accordance with the second taskforce report recommendation 45.

Recommendation 46 of the second taskforce report stated that the board should consist of representatives from the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions and the Queensland Police Service and members who are professionals with sexual violence expertise, people with lived experience of sexual violence and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. The bill gives effect to this recommendation. The bill requires the membership of the board to reflect the social, cultural and linguistic diversity of the Queensland community and must include at least one member who is an Aboriginal person or a Torres Strait Islander person and at least one member who has experience as a victim of sexual violence.

In addition to the Victims' Commissioner who will chair the board, there will be four members from government agencies who provide services in relation to the criminal justice system, being the Director of Public Prosecutions or their nominee, the Police Commissioner or their nominee, a public sector employee who is appropriately qualified in forensic services or clinical forensic medicine and a

public sector employee who is appropriately qualified in court systems. The other four members must have either professional experience in the field of sexual offence matters, experience in providing support services to victims of sexual violence or experience as a victim of sexual violence. All members are required to meet the eligibility criteria and must not be disqualified from being appointed or continuing in their appointment under clause 70 of the bill—for example, where a person seeking appointment has been convicted of an indictable offence or has been disqualified from managing corporations under the Corporations Act.

I note that, in her contribution, the member for Whitsunday talked about the recommendations of the various taskforce reports and the commission of inquiry. She made reference to the government falling behind in the implementation of those recommendations. She said we needed to speed up and get all of these recommendations implemented. The reality is that these recommendations have to be staged. It is actually unsafe to do all of them at once. In fact, some rely on others to be done first in order to build on that. They also need to be evaluated to make sure they are working before you build on them. Most importantly, the staged approach that we have put in place will be done in consultation with the sector itself. We want to know what they see as the priority recommendations that we should be working on and staging. I am very proud of the way we have worked with the sector to make sure that staged approach is working well.

That is why, although we have passed the laws on coercive control, they are not operational yet because we have listened to all of the stakeholders who say that we need time. We need time to develop the training, to change the procedures and to ensure everyone understands. In addition, we need to make sure the community understands what coercive control looks like so that when it becomes operational we can make sure it does what it is intended to do. It is not just a platitude. It is not changing a law so we can tick a box. It is not a slogan. It is actually about real reform. We want change out of this. We want more perpetrators of domestic and family violence held to account. You have to listen to the sector. You have to listen to people with lived experience. When we roll out these recommendations and the staged approach, all of the recommendations and their implementation are overseen by the independent implementation supervisor who reports on our progress. We publish that. We table that for everyone to see because we want transparency, we want accountability and we want people to see that we are taking action on these recommendations.

However, as we know, changing laws, changing policies, implementing training and providing more police and more funding for providers will not, on their own, solve domestic and family violence. It is a whole-of-community problem and, as some have said, including the opposition, it is also a male problem because the majority of domestic, family and sexual violence is committed against girls and women by men. We need to see men rallying in the streets. We need to see men initiating marches, not to support us, but because they are angry and fed up with their daughters, their partners, their sisters and their mothers being abused, being sexually abused and being killed at the hands of other men. We need men to have conversations with men. There are so many good men out there but still there are way too many silent bystanders. We have to change that. We need the silent bystanders to call it out.

Ms Camm: You want to guillotine debate.

Mrs D'ATH: If the member wants to guillotine me when I am talking about DV—

Opposition members interjected.

Mrs D'ATH: I did not guillotine anything!

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Lui): Member for Whitsunday, order! Members to my left, order!

Mr Krause: Such a hypocrite.

Mrs D'ATH: I take personal offence and ask the member to withdraw.

Mr Watts: So do we.

Mrs D'ATH: I beg your pardon? Did you just say, 'No way'?

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, members!

Mr BAILEY: Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The member for Whitsunday just made some physical gesture which I think was inappropriate. I draw your attention to it and I think that she should apologise.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: I will get some advice. Can I ask you to point out which member you took offence to?

Mrs D'ATH: I may have been incorrect in recognising the member for Toowoomba North. It may be the member for Scenic Rim. I know it was one of the two gentlemen there, and I would hope that they would be mature enough to own up to their interjection that I took personal offence to and withdraw.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: I ask the member for Scenic Rim to withdraw.

Mr KRAUSE: I withdraw.

Mrs D'ATH: As I was saying, we want men calling out men for their behaviour against women and to be appalled and angry and fed up with the abuse of women and girls and to want change just as much as we do because it is out of control. These individuals, predominantly men, feel entitled to abuse women, to take advantage of women, to sexually abuse, rape and molest girls, women and boys. As Attorney-General I have spent too long reading in graphic detail about babies, toddlers and young children being molested. I am sick of reading about that abuse. It is really hard. We have to call it out. They are victims and often they do not get a voice because they are too young, and when they finally speak up most of the time they are not listened to because what would a child know over an adult.

These are good reforms. I will not apologise for staging the recommendations because we are doing it in direct consultation with the providers, workers, volunteers and those with lived experience. I recognise there has been an increase in assaults. As I said this morning in my ministerial statement, sadly the majority of assaults in this state relate to domestic and family violence. When we talk about victims of crime, a large portion of those are girls and women.

I recognise the comments from the member for Currumbin. The member for Maiwar talked about Victim Assist Queensland and the payment time frames. I thank the member for Maiwar for acknowledging that we have done a lot of work to bring the time frames down. The member for Currumbin said people were waiting 18 months to two years. That is not the average time frame at all. We have brought it down considerably.

Mrs Gerber interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Currumbin, order!

Mrs D'ATH: I take the interjection of the member opposite. That is not the average length of time. Some individuals' processes may take longer because of the complexity of the matters, but we have today in our Community Safety Plan announced additional funding for more staff for Victim Assist Queensland so that we can get the payments out the door as quickly as possible. Since late last year, when we uplifted the actual financial amounts that we are paying, we have changed the way that we approve payments. The initial payment to many victims is paid instantly, and there is less paperwork required to get that first payment to give them that assistance that they need. Then, of course, there are other areas that we prioritise.

The bill forms one part of the government's broader reform program to support victims of crime and their families. This reform work continues to be guided by recommendations made by significant reviews conducted by the Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce, the Independent Commission of Inquiry into Queensland Police Service Responses to Domestic and Family Violence, and the former Legal Affairs and Safety Committee inquiry into support provided to victims of crime. The member for Maiwar commented on the commission of inquiry. We have not abandoned or left behind any recommendations. We are systematically working through all of the recommendations of these reports because they are very important reports. We know that there needs to be changes and we support those changes.

I acknowledge the comments from the member for Greenslopes when he stated that every single person in this parliament recognises victims and the need to support victims of crime. One side of politics does not have more leverage than the other when it comes to recognising victims. I would hope that is one of those areas where we do not play politics. We could have stood up and talked about the Victims' Commissioner and the Sexual Violence Review Board being established. If the other side want other laws, bring in a private member's bill. There have not been many of those. I think there has been one in almost four years. There are fewer than five sitting weeks left to the election and those opposite have brought in one private member's bill, yet they stand and make their speeches about what should have been in the laws. Do they move amendments in consideration in detail? No. There are no amendments being circulated. Do they bring a private member's bill? No. In fact, the only private member's bill they have brought in was around the CCC's powers to play politics with a particular situation.

Opposition members interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Lui): Members to my left, order!

Mrs D'ATH: Those on the other side want to talk about what they want to do, but they do not want me talking about it. The member for Greenslopes called out the opposition when it came to their—I will not say 'plan'; it is not a plan—slogans and their commitment to bring in new laws before the end of the year. If you are going to do that and it has more than one line about detention—

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

Mrs D'ATH: It could not be more relevant. I am responding to all of you.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Minister! What is your point of order?

Mr WATTS: Relevance. We need to get back to the long title of the bill. I was guillotined and unable to speak.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: I will get some advice. Minister, I remind you to stay within the long title of the bill and make sure that all comments are through the chair.

Mrs D'ATH: I was simply seeking to respond to the debate that has been allowed—

An opposition member: You are reflecting on the chair.

Mrs D'ATH: I am not reflecting on the Speaker at all. I am going to be relevant by reflecting only on things that are said in the debate on this bill.

Ms PEASE: Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The member for Toowoomba North was very unparliamentary in his language there. I ask that you ask him to withdraw.

Honourable members interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Lui): Order, members! Member, I did not hear anything and if there were anything unparliamentary we will go back to the recordings.

Ms PEASE: I point out as another point of order that when a point of order was made about him he left the chamber, which in itself is disgraceful.

Honourable members interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, members! It is not a point of order. I call the minister.

Mrs D'ATH: We all want to ensure victims of crime get the utmost support. This is another step in doing that as well as the Community Safety Plan that we announced today. I thank the committee and the stakeholders who contributed to this bill and the committee process. I make a special mention of every person who works in the domestic and family violence and sexual violence sector every day and who puts themselves in a situation to deal with other people's trauma to try to help them and make their lives better. I thank them for that.

I also acknowledge all of the other advocacy and support groups, including Brett Thompson from the Homicide Victims' Support Group. I thank them for the work they have done for over three decades. I thank him for the work he does for families across this state in the most difficult and heartbreaking of times. They are supporting them through their journey. I thank members for their contribution. I thank members from all sides of parliament for saying that they will be supporting this bill. In conclusion, I thank all honourable members and 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 131, as read, agreed to.

Schedules 1 and 2, 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) (4.32 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) (4.33 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.

EMERGENCY SERVICES REFORM AMENDMENT BILL

STATE EMERGENCY SERVICE BILL

MARINE RESCUE QUEENSLAND BILL

DISASTER MANAGEMENT AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Emergency Services Reform Amendment Bill 2023 resumed from 28 November 2023 (see p. 3703), State Emergency Service Bill 2023 resumed from 28 November 2023 (see p. 3703), Marine Rescue Queensland Bill 2023 resumed from 28 November 2023 (see p. 3704) and Disaster Management and Other Legislation Amendment Bill resumed from 7 March (see p. 560).

Second Reading (Cognate Debate)

 **Hon. MT RYAN** (Morayfield—ALP) (Minister for Police and Community Safety) (4.33 pm): I move—

That the bills now be a read a second time.

As outlined in my introductory speech, these bills address recommendations from the Independent Review of Queensland Fire and Emergency Services by KPMG and the review of Queensland's disaster management arrangements undertaken by the Inspector-General Emergency Management. These reviews considered the effectiveness and efficiency of Queensland's emergency services and disaster management arrangements and made a range of administrative and legislative recommendations for reform. These bills will make those amendments required to meet those recommendations.

On 15 March 2024, the Community Support and Services Committee tabled its report on its examination of the Marine Rescue Queensland Bill 2023, the State Emergency Service Bill 2023 and the Emergency Services Reform Amendment Bill 2023. The Community Safety and Legal Affairs Committee considered the Disaster Management and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024 and tabled its report on this bill on 19 April 2024. These committees have recommended that each bill be passed.

While I will outline matters relating to all these bills, my colleague Minister Boyd will go into further detail on matters that relate to her portfolio area during her contribution and respond to matters relating to the Queensland Fire Department during consideration in detail. In relation to the Marine Rescue Queensland Bill, the Community Support and Services Committee made a further recommendation—

... encourages the Queensland Police Service's Reform Implementation Taskforce to undertake public education and information sessions to effectively engage and inform State Emergency Service and Marine Rescue Queensland volunteers as part of the implementation of the emergency service and disaster management reforms.

I table the government response to the committee report which addresses this recommendation.

Tabled paper: Community Support and Services Committee: Report No. 42, 57th Parliament—Marine Rescue Queensland Bill 2023, government response [\[712\]](#).

I believe that the successful implementation of the emergency services and disaster management reforms within these bills depends on properly engaging our volunteers within the State Emergency Service and our volunteer marine rescue organisations.

To date, the Police and Emergency Service Reform Implementation Taskforce has delivered more than 280 engagement activities with these volunteers and staff transitioning to the State Emergency Service and Marine Rescue Queensland. This engagement has included more than 100 visits to marine rescue units, meetings with volunteers and responses to question and answer forums. A Marine Rescue Queensland implementation working group has been established to assist with the transition of existing volunteer marine rescue services to Marine Rescue Queensland by providing assistance with the planning and delivery of this project and supporting volunteers.

There have been more than 180 engagements with State Emergency Service volunteers and staff transitioning to the Queensland Police Service, including face-to-face visits, presentations at town halls around Queensland and online question and answer sessions which have been recorded and are available on the State Emergency Service [forgov](#) website. In addition, information packs and engagement material has been provided to State Emergency Service and marine rescue units to share with members and the public, who have also been encouraged to visit the [forgov](#) website to subscribe also to a regular e-news update.

The Reform Implementation Taskforce has acknowledged the importance of ongoing engagement through increasing its education campaigns as these emergency management reforms come nearer to completion. The Reform Implementation Taskforce intends to undertake a targeted communications campaign tailored to inform our volunteers and the public generally.

In recognition of Marine Rescue Queensland being a newly established community marine service, an extensive public awareness campaign is planned for coastal locations and with boating enthusiasts to provide advice about Marine Rescue Queensland, whom to contact in an emergency and how to stay safe when on the water. The Reform Implementation Taskforce will continue engaging with volunteers through face-to-face and online public information sessions, transition workshops and other direct communications.

Similarly, engagement with volunteers within the State Emergency Service will also continue, with the Reform Implementation Taskforce planning face-to-face unit visits, online sessions and information packages. Additionally, a roadshow of planned visits to all seven regions across the state has commenced with the aim of ensuring direct engagement with State Emergency Service staff and volunteers within each State Emergency Service unit. Further, the Queensland Police Service is collaborating with Volunteering Queensland, a not-for-profit organisation dedicated to support and advocacy for volunteers, to develop a volunteerism strategy. These strategies will be designed to promote the way the State Emergency Service and Marine Rescue Queensland volunteers are continually engaged and recruited.

I will now take this opportunity to thank these committees for their support of these bills and the officials from the Queensland Fire and Emergency Services, the Queensland Reconstruction Authority, the Queensland Police Service and those other agencies that have made themselves available and assisted the committees in their consideration of these bills. I also acknowledge and thank the wide range of individuals and organisations that submitted to both of these committees or participated in the development of these bills. In particular, I acknowledge the members of the State Emergency Service, the Australian Volunteer Coast Guard Association, the Volunteer Marine Rescue Association Queensland, the Office of the Inspector-General Emergency Management, the Local Government Association of Queensland, Volunteers Queensland and volunteer organisations like the SESVA and the SES VCC and relevant trade unions that participated in consultation during the development of these bills.

I would also like to acknowledge, of course, the Rural Fire Brigades Association Queensland, the Maroochy South Group of Rural Fire Brigades, Dayboro & District Rural Fire Brigade, Mr Fergus Adrian AFSM, the United Firefighters Union Queensland and Caravanning Queensland, among others. All of these organisations have contributed to the development of these bills and obviously the scrutiny of these bills. They have done it in their own time. I think we should all acknowledge that that is a big contribution and we are grateful for their contribution.

I will also take this opportunity to foreshadow that amendments to the Disaster Management and Other Legislation Amendment Bill will be moved to better reflect role eligibility for scientific officers, remove a reference to QFES and remove a redundant provision in the new section 104RO regarding smoke alarms.

We must recognise that our emergency services volunteers provide an invaluable service to our community. Their worth should not be undervalued or understated. Put simply, the State Emergency Service, rural fire brigades and volunteer marine rescue organisations would cease to exist without the hard work and effort of volunteers. Time and time again our emergency services volunteers would come to the aid of their fellow Queenslanders, usually when their assistance is most greatly needed. I am proud of these fantastic and committed Queenslanders who donate their time and expertise to support our emergency services response and emergency services agencies and the community more broadly. Their service should be acknowledged and applauded.

It is often not acknowledged enough that at the heart of emergency service volunteerism is the Queensland spirit of being able to help your mate when your mate needs it most. That is epitomised, of course, in every single one of those volunteers who contributes to emergency services responses.

My admiration for our emergency service personnel grows when I consider the challenges they willingly face. The impacts of recent severe weather seasons have been significant. It began with an early start to the fire season, which impacted communities right across the state, and was closely followed in December by Tropical Cyclone Jasper, the severe thunderstorms in South-East Queensland over the Christmas period, and then Tropical Cyclone Kirrily in late January. Sadly, throughout these significant events seven Queenslanders lost their lives. Of course I join all members in once again expressing our deepest sympathy to the families and friends of all those impacted by these natural disaster tragedies, including the first responders, the emergency service volunteers, who are often confronted by those tragedies just because they are there to help.

It is sobering that the disaster season Queensland has just endured is not particularly unusual. Furthermore, there is no sign that the frequency of these disaster events will diminish, and there is the prospect that climate change will cause further disasters to be more regular and more severe. We have learned from decades of experience that the scale and impact of these disaster events can only be faced with a strong network of experts in disaster management working together through the community with the four phases of disaster management of prevention, preparation, response and recovery.

This government, after considering the independent reviews conducted into the delivery of our emergency services and our disaster management arrangements, is undertaking crucial reforms supported by additional funding—record funding—to ensure that our emergency services agencies can perform the best they can. These bills reach that objective by making legislative reforms in two distinct stages.

The first stage will establish the State Emergency Service in a standalone act through the State Emergency Service Bill 2023; it will also establish Marine Rescue Queensland in a standalone act through the Marine Rescue Queensland Bill 2023; it will place Marine Rescue Queensland and SES within the Queensland Police Service department through the Emergency Services Reform Amendment Bill 2023; and it will formally establish the State Disaster Management Group within the Disaster Management Act 2003 through the Emergency Services Reform Amendment Bill 2023. The second stage of legislative reforms—the Disaster Management and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024—will restructure Queensland Fire and Emergency Services and will make improvements to Queensland's disaster management arrangements and the Queensland Reconstruction Authority.

In considering the first stage of reforms, a fundamental change made by this legislation is the integration of Marine Rescue Queensland and the State Emergency Service as separate entities hosted by the Queensland Police Service. This is a substantial change that needs to be made without diminishing the delivery of emergency services. Unnecessary legislative amendments could potentially cause disruption to these agencies, affecting their ability to perform their essential functions.

Consequently, amendments in these bills are limited to those necessary to allow Marine Rescue Queensland and the State Emergency Service to operate effectively within the Queensland Police Service. This will be achieved through deeming Marine Rescue Queensland and State Emergency Service members as QPS members. This brings clear benefits, including: the provision of consistent governance and command structures; IT systems with consistent security settings and frameworks; streamlined information-sharing processes; and the reduction of duplicated processes or procedures.

Importantly—and this is important to the volunteers—this measure ensures civil liability protections that currently apply to the State Emergency Service and its members will continue and will extend to Marine Rescue Queensland and its members. This will be achieved by affording the same civil liability protections that exist for current QPS members to Marine Rescue Queensland and State

Emergency Service members. Additionally, these bills authorise the commissioner to provide legal representation on behalf of an MRQ or SES member who was acting in the execution of their duty for an action, claim, demand or offence brought against them.

These bills will also address a concern raised in the SES review *Sustaining the SES—Partnering for change* by Campbell Darby. This review contended that there was a degree of ambiguity in the command and control of the State Emergency Service exacerbated by poorly defined command chains. Further, there were no formal processes such as directives, delegations or formalised and legislated positions to provide appropriate support and oversight of local controllers of State Emergency Service units. The State Emergency Service Bill will create a hierarchy that operates at a state, regional and local level to ensure appropriate command and control of the State Emergency Service.

The State Emergency Service Bill will maintain the functions of the local controller of a State Emergency Service unit. At regional level, this bill provides for a State Emergency Service commander who will maintain oversight of a number of State Emergency Service units and can provide support to an individual unit through organising the supply of resources from outside the unit. At a state level, the bill will provide for the State Emergency Service chief officer who will be responsible for the day-to-day operations of the State Emergency Service. Overarching this hierarchy, the Police Commissioner has ultimate responsibility for the State Emergency Service and may provide guidance to State Emergency Service members through codes of practice and issuing directions.

A similar hierarchical structure will also be established for Marine Rescue Queensland. The Marine Rescue Queensland Bill will introduce roles similar to those within the State Emergency Service. For example, the new role of Marine Rescue Queensland unit commander can be seen to be the equivalent of a local controller of a State Emergency Service unit. Similarly, the new Marine Rescue Queensland coordinator is similar to a State Emergency Service commander. Finally, the Marine Rescue Queensland chief officer may be considered to be the equivalent of the State Emergency Service chief officer, as both roles carry the obligation to ensure the everyday operation of their respective organisation is conducted efficiently and effectively.

Further legislative reforms made by the Disaster Management and Other Legislation Amendment Bill will amend the Disaster Management Act 2003 and Queensland Reconstruction Authority Act 2011 by strengthening the operations of Queensland's disaster management arrangements and the ability of the Queensland Reconstruction Authority to manage the delivery of its functions more efficiently.

These will be achieved by: recognising the role of the Queensland Disaster Management Committee as the paramount body providing strategic leadership during significant events and disaster operations; formally establishing the role of the State Recovery Policy and Planning Coordinator and providing for the appointment of the chief executive of the Queensland Reconstruction Authority to that role; ensuring consideration of improvement of the resilience of a community across the four phases of prevention, preparedness, response and recovery when planning disaster management as part of the guiding principles under the Disaster Management Act and defining what resilience is; expanding the functions of the Queensland Reconstruction Authority to include the coordination of the development and implementation of whole-of-government policies for carrying out risk assessments for potential disasters; specifying the Queensland Reconstruction Authority will administer, coordinate and distribute financial assistance for communities to mitigate against, recover from or improve resilience to disasters; and addressing issues for the Queensland Reconstruction Authority about the delegation of functions and establishing a quorum.

The amendments to the Fire and Emergency Services Act 1990 set out in this bill will ensure the legislation provides the appropriate operational, administrative and management framework to support and enhance the effective delivery of fire and emergency services across the state now and into the future. In December 1864 the Great Fire of Brisbane swept through the heart of what we know as the CBD, destroying businesses and residences in the block bordering Albert, Queen, George and Elizabeth streets and focusing attention on the need to establish a permanent fire service in the colony. Since that time, Queensland Fire and Emergency Services and its predecessors, with support from volunteer rural fire brigades, has developed a longstanding and proud history of serving and working alongside Queensland communities. When established, the new Queensland Fire Department will form the latest chapter in the evolution of the provision of these services with a renewed and sharpened focus on the hazard of fire.

Importantly, this bill establishes the Rural Fire Service Queensland, or RFSQ, as a service separate to the Queensland Fire and Rescue Service, or QFR, and will provide for the membership of the Fire and Rescue Service and the Rural Fire Service, with membership of the Rural Fire Service being inclusive of rural fire brigades and rural fire brigade members. Consideration has been given to conclusions made within the independent review report, which stated—

The option of creating additional or separate agencies entirely ... can be quickly ruled out, both in terms of the assessment against the design principles and simply from a logic perspective given the identified fiscal challenges that already exist. Adding additional costs by creating a new agency ... or duplicating functions ... across multiple entities is not a realistic option.

Consequently, this bill will establish Rural Fire Service Queensland as a separate service from Queensland Fire and Rescue, but as recommended these services will both be housed within the Queensland Fire Department. This is critical to ensure the continued and sustainable delivery of fire services that meet the needs of all Queenslanders.

Further, establishing Rural Fire Service Queensland by incorporating brigades and their volunteer members as a service within the Queensland Fire Department will address any ambiguity about the roles and legal status of brigades and reduce concerns about brigade members being exposed to personal liability when performing functions on behalf of the brigade. In addition, as part of this government's ongoing commitment to strengthen service delivery, this bill will establish the statutory role of the Chief Fire Officer. The Chief Fire Officer will be responsible for providing advice to the fire commissioner on matters relating to service delivery, operational culture, best practice and innovation, and research across the fire services.

Persons seeking appointment as commissioner, chief fire officer, deputy commissioner Queensland Fire and Rescue or other executive or senior roles in Queensland Fire and Rescue will be required to possess professional firefighting experience, incident control expertise and fire prevention expertise. A chief officer and deputy chief officer of Rural Fire Service Queensland must have rural firefighting experience, rural incident control expertise or rural fire prevention expertise. Mandatory qualifications for appointment have been included in this legislation to ensure the safety of members and the community. Including job-specific employment obligations in legislation is not novel, particularly where the statute relates to public health and safety. Relevant professional experience and expertise required for appointment are to have been gained in Queensland Fire and Rescue or an equivalent fire and rescue service in Australia or New Zealand to ensure an appointee will have relevant experience, thereby enhancing the safety of firefighters and the community.

These reforms are about ensuring the safety of our first responders and the Queensland communities they serve. To this end, these amendments will ensure that these operational, mandatory qualifications, skills and experiences are given primacy of consideration in the recruitment of firefighters over any other factors going to the suitability of a particular candidate.

The Disaster Management and Other Legislation Amendment Bill will also address an ongoing issue about the powers that may be exercised by officers who are present at the scene of an incident. The delivery of Queensland's Fire and Emergency Services is based on specified persons exercising the powers of an authorised fire officer. Persons who can exercise these powers include, in certain circumstances, a first officer of a brigade and, where the first officer is unavailable, the next senior officer. On occasions, however, a first officer or next senior officer may not be available; for example, due to personal or work reasons or if they are impacted by an event themselves and are unable to assist in response operations. In these circumstances there is no other person at the scene with the authority to direct brigade members to lawfully exercise the powers they require to control and extinguish fires. This has implications for the chain of command and, importantly, for volunteers who may be acting in good faith on behalf of their community but without the protection of the law if something goes wrong.

This bill addresses this issue by allowing for the commissioner or a delegate to appoint a person in charge of operations for controlling and extinguishing a fire or controlling another incident if the commissioner considers it appropriate and necessary. It is expected that an appointment of a person in charge would likely be a first officer from a neighbouring brigade area or an authorised fire officer from the locality where the fire is occurring. Such an appointment may be written or oral and for the duration of an event or for a stated or indefinite period. In practice, it is expected that this power will be delegated to someone at an appropriate level to ensure timely appointments, reflecting that while the commissioner of the Queensland Fire Department will have overall control and command of the fire services, arrangements will continue to be locally led, district coordinated and state supported.

This is an important reform that addresses a gap in the powers for controlling and extinguishing fires and the protection of rural fire brigade volunteers. In totality, these legislative reforms represent an important component part of a larger reform agenda. To deliver these reforms the government established the Reform Implementation Taskforce, comprised of disaster management experts and practitioners to implement the range of necessary changes. These changes include machinery-of-government changes, developing new policies and procedures and negotiating and preparing service agreements and grant allocations.

Considerable milestones have already been met. The Queensland Police Service has restructured itself by establishing the Emergency Management and Coordination Command, which will be dedicated to supporting these reforms. This command has been allocated 80 new full-time-equivalent positions and includes personnel who have already made the transition from Queensland Fire and Emergency Services. This brings together a larger knowledge base and range of expertise to disaster and emergency management.

It was also my pleasure to announce on 26 January this year the appointment of Mr Tony Wulff as the first Chief Officer of Marine Rescue Queensland and Mr Mark Armstrong as the first dedicated State Emergency Service Chief Officer. Both of these officers have impressive leadership skills and experiences and have already commenced reform work within the Emergency Management and Coordination Command prior to assuming operational command of their respective organisations.

This government has supported the work of the RIT through committing to a total funding package of almost \$600 million over five years, with ongoing funding. This will see a substantial uplift in these emergency services agencies, particularly an uplift for the SES which will bring its annual budget to \$60 million a year and an annual budget for Marine Rescue Queensland of \$27 million. This also includes extra full-time-equivalent staff and will see the SES full-time-equivalent staff grow to over 200.

I want to take this opportunity to express my greatest thanks to our dedicated emergency services personnel past, present and future—the thousands of staff, officers and volunteers who risk their lives to keep their community safe. I proudly emphasise that our emergency services personnel and our disaster management arrangements are world class. However, we must be continually vigilant to any opportunities to improve our emergency services organisations and ensure that they are properly resourced and structured to act efficiently and effectively.

This government acknowledges that its paramount responsibility is the safety of our communities and our people. We take that obligation seriously and we recognise the importance of our emergency services agencies performing the best that they can. I believe that these bills will meet this objective through providing support to our emergency services personnel and organising our emergency services agencies so that they can focus on providing their valuable and vital service to the people of Queensland. I commend the bills to the House and I encourage all members to support them.

 **Hon. N BOYD** (Pine Rivers—ALP) (Minister for Fire and Disaster Recovery and Minister for Corrective Services) (5.02 pm): I rise in support of the emergency services reform bills, including the Disaster Management and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024. I will speak solely to the Disaster Management and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. I want to extend my thanks to the Community Support and Services Committee and the Community Safety and Legal Affairs Committee for their thorough consideration.

The independent review of the Queensland Fire and Emergency Services considered five options for the future of the department to identify the option that provided the best sustainable outcome. The outcome was that a model involving the fire, rescue and emergency related functions of the Fire and Rescue services and Rural Fire Service remaining within a single organisation would be the strongest long-term model. Importantly, the review report noted—

...the separation of services into standalone agencies would likely increase risks associated with service delivery and coordination of Queensland's activities across these functions.

In line with the review's recommendations, this bill establishes Rural Fire Service Queensland and Queensland Fire and Rescue as separate entities within the Queensland Fire Department. I note that the member for Mirani stated in his statement of reservation that the Rural Fire Service needs to be independent with their own commissioner and own budget and to work collaboratively and cooperatively with QFES. Along with advocating for what has already been identified as unsustainable, the model advanced by the member does not address the concerns raised by volunteers in the review report regarding protections from liability.

For the first time, brigades will be recognised formally as part of Rural Fire Service Queensland, ending years of ambiguity about legal status and volunteer protections. I have spoken to countless volunteers who are eagerly awaiting increased protections—rural fires like Tony, a canefarmer who turned out for a job only to be assaulted by the landowner, pushed to the ground and told to get off the property. Rural volunteers should have proper legal protections when they put themselves in harm's way to protect our community. We are indebted to their service. They should not expect to be assaulted or ordered to leave a fireground by a landowner. They should have better legal protections. This bill and our government will provide them.

It is volunteers like Tony whom this legislation puts first. Our rural fire brigades are at the heart of our local communities and are integral in delivering Queensland's fire and emergency services. We have thousands of volunteers through our local brigades and we value the tremendous contributions they all make. I have had the pleasure of meeting many of these brave individuals as I have travelled across the state during recent natural disasters—be it tropical cyclones, long, raging bushfires or tragic house fires, like the one we saw some months ago on Russell Island. These are the men and women who are the front line of defence protecting many Queensland communities. Their extraordinary work is essential and valued by all Queenslanders.

I also want to be clear that brigade funds and assets will remain available for local brigades. The state will continue to provide direct funding for appliances, protective equipment, training, insurance and other items for the running of brigades. Money raised and held by brigades from 1 July 2024 will continue to be managed and spent by brigades, as they have done previously. Funds raised by brigades after 1 July 2024 will be expended on the brigade that raised the funds and reserved for local purposes. Brigades will be able to access and spend these funds following delegated approvals in line with government accountability. Appliances will be placed on the RFSQ asset register and recorded as being state owned, which allows these vehicles to be insured and maintained. This is what happens now and will continue on the commencement of this bill.

The Minister for Police and Community Safety has already addressed the important inclusion of an amendment regarding the appointment of a person in charge of operations. Despite what is being said by some, I have repeatedly made clear that yellow trucks need not wait for red trucks to respond to an incident. I note the comments from the members for Scenic Rim and Theodore in their statement of reservation about the number of level 3 incident controllers across the state. Incident controller training is offered to both salaried and volunteer staff. The new RFSQ will have greater opportunity to offer training for a service that will stand ready, trained and capable to defend Queensland communities from fires and other disasters.

Opposition members have also raised concerns about clause 83 of the bill. Clause 83 relates to the amendments to a dictionary definition in the bill. I can only assume that the members' concerns relate to the definitions regarding qualification requirements for appointment. As previously stated, those definitions only apply in relation to requirements for appointments to salaried positions. To suggest that they create confusion demonstrates a clear lack of understanding of the legislation.

Consultation on these reforms started when the independent review into QFES was commissioned by the government in July 2021. As part of that review, KPMG held formal consultations with over 50 representatives from 26 key stakeholder groups across the state's emergency and disaster management sector. I now table for the benefit of the House an outline of various consultations since May last year with the RFBAQ.

Tabled paper: Document, undated, titled 'Reform Implementation Taskforce—Legislation and Reform Program: Stakeholder consult RFBAQ' [713].

Rural Fire Service Queensland recently released a survey regarding the future directions of the agency which received over 300 submissions to date. The responses have been very positive, noting that there is still work to do with brigades across the state. I am also aware of correspondence to the Rural Fire Brigades Association Queensland from local brigades outlining stakeholder dissatisfaction with representation provided by the RFBAQ. One such piece of correspondence states in part—

Recent and ongoing representation of the Rural Fire Service by the RFBAQ has been extremely unhelpful. Comments and opinions expressed by the RFBAQ seem to have no basis in data or evidence, leaving many confused or concerned.

I urge the RFBAQ executive to heed the concerns of the volunteers that they purport to represent and base their advocacy in fact, not fantasy.

This legislation will also establish the Rural Fire Service Advisory Committee which will be the peak advisory body for volunteers to have their voices heard—something I have heard loud and clear during consultation. The Miles government recognises the unique differences and needs of Rural Fire Service Queensland and the Fire and Rescue Service. These two separate entities will work cooperatively under the organisation of the Queensland Fire Department to provide the best response to our community. The bill enables the Fire and Rescue Service to return to being operationally focused—a fire service run by firefighters. The basis of the organisation is command and control.

For a fire and rescue service to be world leading, it needs to have people at all levels with the right technical knowledge to know what equipment and training firefighters need to respond to an ever-changing environment. This is the biggest reform the fire service has seen since the 1990s. This bill will create the role of Chief Fire Officer as a statutory position within the department. The Chief Fire Officer will be responsible to the commissioner on matters relating to service delivery, operational culture, best practice and innovation and research across the fire services. From a recruit to the academy to the commissioner of the service, this bill enhances and embraces a professional organisational structure with a service that invests in its people and our community.

Finally, I will mention amendments in the bill requiring the installation of a working, photoelectric smoke alarm in caravans and motorhomes. The amendments being progressed in the bill form part of broader work to develop options for increased fire safety in vehicles and dwellings being used as accommodation. Further extending the regulatory scheme requires carefully weighing potential public safety benefits with the costs of regulation on individuals, particularly in light of current pressures on housing and accommodation. Prior to introduction I wrote to industrial organisations, the RACQ and Caravanning Queensland advising of the amendments and seeking the assistance of motoring and caravanning organisations. I thank Caravanning Queensland for its contribution through the committee process and the RACQ in expressing support for these amendments. QFES will continue to work with these organisations.

I acknowledge the very valuable feedback that has been provided by stakeholders over a long period of time. A constructive working relationship between stakeholders is essential in moving forward and it is something that we are all committed to. I also acknowledge the tremendous staff we have internally within the Queensland Reconstruction Authority and QFES and the tremendous contribution that Minister Ryan has made in this space. We know as Queenslanders we will continue to face disasters and emergencies. This bill makes critical amendments to support our frontline emergency services in prevention, preparedness, response and recovery now and into an uncertain future. I commend the bill to the House.

Debate, on motion of Ms Boyd, adjourned.

MOTION

Order of Business



Hon. MC de BRENNI (Springwood—ALP) (Leader of the House) (5.12 pm), by leave, without notice: I move—

That the order of business for this Wednesday's sitting be altered in accordance with the document circulated in my name.

Wednesday (1 May 2024)

9.30am—10.15am—*Preliminary Business* *

Prayers

Messages from the Governor

Matters concerning privilege

Speaker's Statements

Appointments

Petitions

Citizen's Right of Reply

Notification and tabling of papers by the Clerk

Ministerial Papers

Ministerial Notices of Motion

Personal Explanations

Tabling of Reports

Notice of motion for disallowance of statutory instrument

Notice of motion for debate during Crossbench Members' Motion (4.30pm—5.00pm) (Notice may be stated in the House and delivered to the Clerk)

Notice of motion for debate during Private Members' Motion (5.00pm—6.00pm) (Notice may be stated in the House and delivered to the Clerk)

Ministerial Statements

Government Business

12.00pm—1.00pm—

Question Time

1.00pm—2.00pm—

Lunch break

2.00pm—3.00pm—

Debate of Committee Reports (in accordance with Sessional Order 5) if no reports to debate, Government Business

3.00pm—3.30pm—

Introduction of Private Members' Bills #

3.30pm—4.30pm—

Government Business

4.30pm—5.00pm—

Crossbench Members' Motion (motion for which notice was given during Preliminary Business)

5.00pm—6.00pm—

Private Members' Motion (motion for which notice was given during Preliminary Business)

6.00pm—7.00pm—

Government Business

7.00pm—7.30pm—

Automatic Adjournment

** (If completed before 10.15am, Question Time will commence earlier and continue for 1 hour with starting times for all other items, except lunch breaks, in the Order of Business adjusting accordingly.)*

(If there are no Private Members' Bills to introduce, or any introduction to complete, the next item of business to commence with starting times for all other items, except lunch breaks, in the Order of Business adjusted accordingly.)

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

EMERGENCY SERVICES REFORM AMENDMENT BILL

STATE EMERGENCY SERVICE BILL

MARINE RESCUE QUEENSLAND BILL

DISASTER MANAGEMENT AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading (Cognate Debate)

Resumed from p. 1329 on motion of Mr Ryan—

That the bills be now read a second time.

 **Mr LAST** (Burdekin—LNP) (5.13 pm): 'Queensland is the most disaster affected state in Australia.' Those nine words set the scene in each of the four explanatory notes for the Marine Rescue Queensland Bill 2023, the Emergency Services Reform Amendment Bill 2023, the State Emergency Service Bill 2023 and the Disaster Management and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024. I will speak to the cognate debate on those four bills.

Whilst this government may think it is appropriate to cognate these four important bills, I think it is important to acknowledge the thousands of Queenslanders—including nearly 70,000 volunteers—who are directly affected by these bills. I cannot go on without calling out the actions of this government for what they are. Across this state, there are people who owe their lives to a volunteer. The impact that the brave actions of those volunteers have on families, on communities and on our state simply cannot be understated, yet we have a government that restricts debate on four—yes, four—pieces of legislation that directly affect those volunteers. There are 245 pages contained in these bills alone, nearly 140

pages of explanatory notes and 108 pages of committee reports, but the number that really matters is that almost 70,000 people put themselves at risk and do not even get paid to do it. The fact that members will get just 10 minutes to speak on four bills underlies what I am saying. Members contributing to this debate will get just over two minutes to speak on each bill and I think that is a disgrace.

The independent review into QFES commissioned by this government recommended that reforms be undertaken in a staged approach not once, but twice. Even the explanatory notes to the Disaster Management and Other Legislation Amendment Bill claim that 'legislative reform is being progressed in two stages'. Yet today not only is debate on these bills being restricted, but four bills have been bundled up and effectively given just one hour of debate each. What is even sadder is the fact that this is no surprise given what we have seen from this government in relation to these bills. I will go into that in more detail later in my contribution.

The Disaster Management and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024 was referred to the Community Safety and Legal Affairs Committee, whose sole recommendation was that the bill be passed. The Marine Rescue Queensland Bill 2023, the Emergency Services Reform Amendment Bill 2023 and the State Emergency Service Bill 2023 were all referred to the Community Support and Services Committee, which recommended that all three bills be passed. Additionally, in reference to the Marine Rescue Queensland Bill 2023, the committee recommended public education and information sessions to effectively engage and inform volunteers. The LNP members of both committees issued statements of reservation relating to all four bills, mainly in response to concerns raised by volunteers.

In total there are 153 references to volunteers across the four bills, and today I rise to speak on behalf of those volunteers and paid staff and the Queenslanders who rely on them. In order to really examine these bills thoroughly, we need to look at the past and their origins. There are a total of four reviews into the delivery of emergency services in Queensland: the 2018 *Review into volunteer marine rescue organisations in Queensland*, known as the Blue Water Review; the 2020 *Sustaining the SES—partnering for change* review; the 2021 *Independent review of Queensland Fire and Emergency Services*; and the 2023 IGEM *Review of Queensland's disaster management arrangements*.

Despite Queensland's reliance on these organisations, we have again seen a government that has failed to listen and failed to act and then, at the last minute, shut down the voices of Queenslanders. The objectives of the Emergency Services Reform Amendment Bill 2023 are: to ensure civil liability protections continue to apply to the SES, including members, and to make those protections apply to Marine Rescue Queensland and its members, noting that members who do not transfer to Marine Rescue Queensland will be left to rely on existing protections; to formally establish the State Disaster Management Group within the Disaster Management Act 2023; and other consequential amendments to facilitate the government's goals. I will speak further on the concerns we hold around this bill later in my contribution.

The overall objective of the State Emergency Service Bill 2023 is to establish the SES by relocating and expanding upon a number of provisions outlined in the Fire and Emergency Services Act 1990 to facilitate search and rescue operations, preparation for and response to disasters or events, and other required activities. This bill also includes provisions to align Marine Rescue Queensland and the State Emergency Service under the control of the Queensland Police Service—an issue I will address shortly.

The relationship between local government and SES units is well-known, and quite often council employees fill vital roles within the SES as part of their employment. In fact, in their submission to the committee the LGAQ refers to the 'operational and financial obligations often incurred by local governments in supporting local SES units'. Whilst I acknowledge that feedback has resulted in a requirement for local governments to agree to the establishment of an SES unit, there remains what the Brisbane City Council described as a 'significant risk' for councils.

This bill empowers the Commissioner of Police to discipline, suspend or terminate an SES member. While no-one would question the need to have mechanisms in place to ensure proper behaviour and facilitate complaints, the fact is that, as a local government employee, workers are subject to relevant industrial instruments, including enterprise agreements, that set out the relevant processes for matters such as suspension and termination. What we are left with is a situation that could, according to the Brisbane City Council, result in a 'legal and financial liability for councils'. Especially given this government's reliance on the union movement, I call on the minister to provide assurances that this potential liability has been addressed and outline how this has been achieved.

The objective of the Marine Rescue Queensland Bill 2023 is to establish Marine Rescue Queensland as a statewide marine service, along with consequential amendments to facilitate the government's objectives and amendments to facilitate the objectives of the other bills included in this cognate debate.

I referred earlier to the government's commitment to a staged approach when it came to reform and, given this process has been underway for 5½ years, there was ample time for a staged process based on consultation. Instead, confusion reigns supreme, and the very volunteers that this government refers to state that this government's actions have left them feeling disengaged and that they had lost trust. In fact, a senior Queensland police officer told constituents of mine that the process had been 'handled poorly to start with' and that people who had made decisions did not have the authority to make those decisions.

Make no mistake, the creation of a single statewide marine rescue service is widely supported, but this government's handling of this process has been nothing short of disastrous. For this government to refer to valuing and respecting volunteers is a complete slap in the face when, as the treasurer of the South Stradbroke VMR unit told the committee, it has been 'extremely difficult to achieve transparent, accountable communication with the state government'.

Let's consider where we are today. Just two months before the deadline for this government's commitment is due, Marine Rescue Queensland does not exist. Volunteers have been told that most of the important decisions have been made in the last six months, and those in charge of implementing that commitment have admitted they are struggling to meet the deadline. In fact, at a meeting in Ayr on 10 April this year, volunteers were told that if this legislation were not passed by 30 April—as in today—the 1 July deadline would not be met and that the first groups to transition to Marine Rescue Queensland would be 'crash test dummies'. As recently as February, three of those 10 groups had not been identified and, just a few weeks ago, those units had not even received a draft agreement from this government. What a disgrace that a senior minister in this government has stood by while volunteers felt disengaged and devalued.

Over \$27 million has been spent to date, but a far greater expense is the damage that has been done to volunteers across this state. Today, volunteers and community members who have fundraised to support those volunteer organisations still face uncertainty regarding the funds raised in communities across the state. After 5½ years we know that as recently as this month, the Australian Tax Office had not signed off on the proposed ownership model and that questions still surround how locally raised funds will be held and how those funds will be dispersed.

Is it any wonder that almost 80 per cent of Marine Rescue volunteers in this state have not signed up to be a part of this government's plan, given the way their fellow volunteers have been treated? It is this appalling treatment of volunteers and the lack of information which means that today there are still many questions to be answered. On behalf of those volunteers, I will put their questions to the minister. Those questions include: is there a contingency plan should a transition and transfer of asset agreement not be achieved by 1 July this year? Is there a plan to ensure marine rescue services are continued in areas where sufficient volunteers do not transition to maintain operational capability? Has MRQ a plan to ensure marine rescue services are continued in areas where sufficient volunteers do not transition to maintain operational capability, especially given there are indications that up to 25 per cent of volunteers may not transition? Given that surveys of existing facilities have been conducted, what is the cost of required upgrades and is this amount fully funded? How will the boating public be kept up to date with arrangements in their area, especially given that some units will be funded by government to provide assistance and others, potentially close by, will operate on the old model of membership or user pays? When will documents such as agreements and transition requirements be made available to organisations? What vessel logging system will be used? How will this government manage three entities?

From my discussions with both coastguard and VMR units across Queensland, there are a significant number of units in both organisations that will not transition to this new entity. I think the minister should explain to the parliament how he will continue to manage three separate entities going forward, particularly in terms of funding, purchase and upkeep of boats as well. Surely a government that claims to value volunteers has a responsibility to provide those volunteers with the information they need. These are simple questions that should have been answered by now, and I call on the minister to provide those answers during his reply. The fact that these questions still remain unanswered also illustrates perfectly the arrogance and disrespect shown by this government in guillotining the debate.

The objectives of the Disaster Management and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024 are: to amend the Fire and Emergency Services Act to establish Queensland Fire and Rescue and the Rural Fire Service Queensland as two separate services within the Queensland Fire Department; to rename the Fire and Emergency Services Act 1990 as the Fire Services Act 1990; to provide further structure for key positions, including their responsibilities within the Queensland Fire Department; to enhance the legal status of rural fire brigades and provide civil liability protections to brigades and their members; to amend the Disaster Management Act to enhance disaster management arrangements and the Queensland Reconstruction Authority Act to expand the QRA's functions; and to establish a requirement to install smoke alarms in caravans and motorised caravans.

From the outset, I want to acknowledge the members and supporters of rural fire brigades who have contacted me expressing concerns about this bill. Prior to addressing concerns raised by those people, I want to speak briefly about the amendments relating to caravans because those amendments highlight perfectly the results of a lack of consultation. It is without doubt that smoke alarms save lives, so, on the face of it, making smoke alarms compulsory in caravans makes sense, especially in the midst of a housing crisis where more and more Queenslanders are living in caravans. A glaring omission was identified in this bill by Caravanning Queensland—namely, that non-registered caravans on holiday or permanent sites are not covered by the legislation. This omission was identified during the committee process and, whilst I call on the minister to ensure the omission is addressed, it really does illustrate the need for consultation.

Sadly, consultation was also overlooked when it comes to amendments relating to the Rural Fire Service. As one Rural Fire Service volunteer put it, 'volunteers have been lied to, at worst, or been seriously misguided by wrong information disseminated by the minister'. Frankly, it comes as no surprise that volunteers are feeling betrayed and angry when this government gave them seven days—yes, seven days—in which to make a submission to the committee process. After I contacted the chair of the committee I was advised that late submissions would be accepted, and I welcome that, but what was really needed was a suitable time frame for volunteers, their representatives and the communities they protect to have their say.

Just like their fellow volunteers in the Marine Rescue area, members of rural fire brigades across the state have lost trust in this government. The fact is they were promised so much, but so little has been delivered, including information. Yet again, there are unanswered questions and uncertainty and, yet again, that is in total contrast to the government's mantra of respecting and valuing volunteers.

Whilst brigades and members welcome the extension of civil liability protections and the granting of necessary powers, this government has overlooked completely what is important to volunteers and even their background. One volunteer, who also happens to be a lawyer, condemns the process as 'deception that is occurring to parliament, to volunteers and to the communities in which those volunteers live', and cites the need for brigades to seek independent legal advice to clarify their position as an illustration of the disrespect shown to volunteers. That legal advice is based around one of the most contentious issues in this bill.

The advice provided to a brigade is that: the brigade's current status as an independent body will end on 1 July and all assets will automatically become owned by the state, something that was denied as recently as last week; from 1 July, every single brigade owned asset becomes the property of the Rural Fire Service, again in direct contrast to what volunteers have been told; and that currently each brigade is a charitable organisation, meaning the government's actions will result in volunteers having to breach the conditions attached to donations and bequests potentially requiring intervention by the Supreme Court.

We have another brigade where volunteers have now been informed that post 1 July brigades will effectively be a government entity and therefore subject to legal requirements relating to office size, goods storage, the furniture in the offices and even the equipment in their kitchens. During the independent review of Queensland Fire and Emergency Services, it was revealed that many sheds owned by QFES were not connected to electricity or running water and some did not even have a toilet.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Hart): Can I ask you to withdraw the unparliamentary language used before in the quote?

Mr LAST: I withdraw.

Debate, on motion of Mr Last, adjourned.

PLANNING (INCLUSIONARY ZONING STRATEGY) AMENDMENT BILL

Resumed from 19 April 2023 (see p. 1043).

Second Reading



Dr MacMAHON (South Brisbane—Grn) (5.30 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a second time.

I am pleased that we are debating the Planning (Inclusionary Zoning Strategy) Amendment Bill 2023 today. This bill amends the Planning Act so that the minister can enact an inclusionary zoning strategy urgently. The strategy would require 25 per cent of the dwellings in all new large developments to be allocated for use as public housing. After decades of underinvestment in public housing by both Labor and the LNP, this bill provides a model to rapidly expand the amount of public housing in Queensland. This plan would help those Queenslanders who are struggling with the housing crisis. It would help the over 40,000 people on the social housing register and, given the way the current government is going, those people often wait years for a home.

A strategy like this is only necessary because for decades both Labor and the LNP have underinvested in public housing. As of December last year, there were 43,000 people on the social housing register. Those people are waiting for 24,000 homes. Productivity Commission data shows that Labor has built only 1,845 homes since 2015. The current plan is to build just 2,205 homes a year, out to 2046. In my own electorate, a block of social housing was demolished at the end of 2022 and still there is no new housing there. Even if no additional person is added to the social housing register under Labor's current plan, it will still take a little over a decade to house those 43,000 people who are waiting for social housing. Despite the scale of the housing crisis, the ambitions of this government are very low. Labor has no plans to freeze or cap rent increases. They have no plans for a vacancy levy, no plans to limit Airbnb and short-term accommodation and no meaningful plans for mandatory inclusionary zoning.

I want to thank those Queenslanders, stakeholders and experts who wrote to the committee inquiring into this bill, to share their support for inclusionary zoning. Ninety-three per cent of the submissions supported mandatory inclusionary zoning in some form. The Community Housing Industry Association of Queensland wrote—

... Mandatory Inclusionary Zoning (MIZ) would increase the supply of social and affordable housing. MIZ would assist in responding to the housing crisis ... as part of a suite of measures.

In their submission, Kurilpa Futures wrote—

Inclusionary Zoning provides an effective tool to forestall recurrent housing affordability crises and advance social justice and efficiency, to meet predictable accommodation needs.

Kurilpa Futures based their support on the enormous success of inclusionary zoning in other parts of the world, stating that inclusionary zoning—

... is being widely adopted in the UK, USA, Canada and Australia, and in many other mixed economy societies. In the UK for the last decade a figure of 25% has been mandated for designated areas.

The Queensland Council of Social Service talked about the scale of the housing crisis, writing—

Queensland's housing system is under unprecedented pressure.

...

... 100,000 households across Queensland have unmet housing needs.

QCOSS went on to say—

This level of investment is insufficient to maintain the status quo—that is, to prevent further deterioration beyond the current situation.

They also said—

QCOSS supports introducing meaningful inclusionary zoning to obligate private developers to increase the supply of social and affordable housing in Queensland.

In fact, 107 of the 114 submissions on this bill supported inclusionary zoning in some form.

Inclusionary zoning is not a new concept. In fact, inclusionary zoning is already part of government policy; it is just not being enacted. The Queensland Housing Strategy 2017-20 Action Plan states an aim to—

Where surplus state land is developed for residential purposes, introduce inclusionary requirements so a proportion (5—25%) of new dwellings will be designated for social and affordable housing.

The Queensland Housing and Homelessness Action Plan 2021-2025 states that the government will 'Investigate introducing inclusionary planning requirements into the planning framework'.

The government has also launched an Inclusionary Planning Pilot Program that we were very excited to hear about until we looked at the details. The pilot will not deliver public housing or social housing. Rather, it seems like the pilot is testing different kickbacks and support for developers that they can get access to if they 'aim' for a target of 20 per cent affordable housing so that 20 per cent is not even mandatory. The expression of interest form states—

The pilot projects will aim for around 20% affordable housing products by using various incentives such as density bonuses and alternative car parking rates to test the commerciality of different models.

At the core of this proposal is kickbacks for developers to ensure that developers keep making decent profits. To be clear, despite an inclusionary zoning policy being established by the government way back in 2017, we have yet to see any houses delivered under that policy. The government's plan for inclusionary planning is actually just more kickbacks for developers, with an aspirational target, no requirements for public housing and no clear definition or mandate for what 'affordable' means.

The kickbacks to developers do not end there. In February, the Premier and housing minister announced a \$350 million slush fund for developers for urban infill with no requirement that that urban infill include social and public housing. The plan includes waiving infrastructure charges for developers. Councils are already struggling to deliver the local infrastructure needed to support growing communities and this plan will only make it worse. At the moment, my colleague the member for Maiwar has introduced a private member's bill into parliament to remove the cap on infrastructure charges for developers, responding to the fact that councils are struggling to pay for essential services and infrastructure. It is mind-blowing that the state government would even contemplate going in the other direction and give developers discounts on infrastructure charges.

This bill provides just one model for how we can help plug this gap. The inclusionary zoning strategy bill would require the government to give something back to Queenslanders. The bill would introduce mandatory inclusionary zoning into Queensland and would require that 25 per cent of developments of more than 10 lots be reserved for public housing. To be clear, this is not about getting something for free. In the last sitting week, the member for Kawana called our amendment to include inclusionary zoning in state facilitated developments 'communism', but the only people getting something for free are property developers and the real estate lobby.

This year, the Labor state government and the LNP City Council worked together to approve a temporary local planning instrument that allows buildings of unlimited heights in South Brisbane. Property developers and landowners will make huge profits from those unlimited heights and massive increases in land values. Essentially, they are getting money for nothing and there is no requirement for the developers taking advantage of the TLPI to build any public housing.

The Greens have been taking our lead from the community and from experts who are telling us loud and clear that unless we freeze and cap rent increases, put in place a vacancy levy and inclusionary zoning, build tens of thousands of new public homes and introduce measures like mandatory inclusionary zoning then the public housing crisis will only get worse. Of course, inclusionary zoning will not work alone. We still need to freeze and cap rent increases to help the 1.7 million Queenslanders who rent, many of whom are facing rent increases that they cannot afford which will mean an eviction notice. We still need to tax vacant properties to make sure that thousands of empty homes right across Queensland are being used to house people. We need to limit Airbnb and short-term accommodation, which is displacing people from long-term homes. The government needs to directly build tens of thousands of new, secure public homes. We need to scrap tax breaks for property investors and we need to introduce mandatory inclusionary zoning to rapidly expand the amount of public housing in Queensland.

I look forward to the debate. I look forward to support from any member in the House who genuinely cares about ending the housing crisis in Queensland.

 **Hon. MAJ SCANLON** (Gaven—ALP) (Minister for Housing, Local Government and Planning and Minister for Public Works) (5.39 pm): It is this side of the House that does genuinely care about delivering more homes for Queenslanders. I remind the member for South Brisbane of the other comments made by the Queensland Council of Social Service. They were—

We asked for a housing plan that has ambitious social housing targets, more funding for frontline services and better protection for renters. Today this was delivered.

They went on to make many other complimentary comments about our housing plan and so have other states. In fact, New South Wales organisations have asked their state to deliver the same housing plan.

I want to note that the committee has recommended against supporting the bill and the government will listen to that advice. Along with the committee, I also note that key stakeholders such as Q Shelter, the Local Government Association of Queensland, the Planning Institute of Australia, the Community Housing Industry Association of Queensland, the Housing Industry Association, the Urban Development Institute of Australia and the Property Council of Australia do not support the bill as drafted. This bill from the Greens underscores their failure to understand and support policies that would actually deliver more housing. The Planning Institute of Australia stated—

The Bill has the potential to result in significant unintended consequences which could worsen the existing housing crisis by slowing overall supply of new housing projects ...

Leading community housing provider Brisbane Housing Co. raised—

... the quantum of the public housing to be delivered ... which may impact housing supply across the market component of the housing continuum, at a time when increased housing supply is critical;

Q Shelter noted—

The model proposed provides no 'notice period' or 'transition period' to allow for the market to adequately respond to the new legislation.

The bill overlooks the nuanced differences between social, affordable and public housing, conflating these distinct categories within its provisions. It is crucial to recognise that social housing, affordable housing and public housing serve distinct purposes and populations. Underscoring this point, CHIA Queensland said—

As written, the Bill would preclude the provision of social and affordable housing by Community Housing Providers.

As noted by the committee's report, the statewide application of this bill without local contextual refinements poses challenges, particularly in rural and regional Queensland where development dynamics differ significantly from urban areas. This was also noted by Q Shelter, which stated—

The model proposed is not targeted. Different approaches may be needed depending on the regional housing market for example. A uniform approach may have unintended consequences if applied to regional markets of Queensland ...

While the government is supportive of the principles of inclusionary planning, we need to ensure the application of any policy actually delivers real results. That is what our Homes for Queenslanders plan is all about. We have launched an inclusionary planning pilot program that is about delivering models that stack up and deliver homes. Ironically, this program is being delivered by our new state facilitated development pathway, which was rubbished by the member for South Brisbane throughout her contribution on the legislation in this House. The state facilitated development process for the first time will empower me as the minister to condition social and affordable housing—the very thing needed to deliver inclusionary planning policies. These initiatives aim to achieve approximately 20 per cent of affordable housing, testing the viability of various models and showing what is practical. The success of these initiatives will provide us with the tangible evidence we need to deliver real policies across the state for more housing.

The key to improving housing affordability though is to increase supply, and that is something that we know time and time again the Greens oppose doing in their own backyard. To ensure we have well-managed growth and affordable housing for young Queenslanders, we need a million new homes by 2046 and we need to make sure that all of the good intentions in the world do not put a handbrake on building more houses. We need real results—real results like the pilots that we are progressing already through the pathway that the Greens rubbished; real results like the social and affordable homes that will be delivered through the Housing Australia Future Fund which the Greens and the LNP held up; real results like the Help to Buy scheme that will help Queenslanders who do not have the 'bank of mum and dad' to own their own home, which is currently again being blocked by the Greens political party and the LNP. To be really clear, the government does not oppose the principles that underpin inclusionary planning, but we need housing policies that deliver.

 **Mr BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (5.44 pm): It is only the LNP that has the right priorities for Queensland's future. It is only the LNP that cares about the housing crisis in Queensland. Nothing gives me more satisfaction than seeing a little green-on-red action in the Queensland parliament today. They look like they are adversaries, but we know that at the end of the day they preference each other at every election—'You scratch my back, I'll scratch your back.' Half of those members on that side of the House are only here because of the Labor Party preferences from the Greens and vice versa.

The Liberal National Party will not be supporting communist policies today, which is what this policy is. We do not support commie policies. We do not support the policy which will basically give 25 per cent of the ownership of homes in Queensland to the state government. That is a communist policy. How absurd that they do not think that that would close down the development industry in Queensland and no house would be built. Are the Greens going to take money out of their own pockets and build the hundreds of units and developments that developers are building across Queensland? I doubt it. Are their rich corporate donors that are giving the biggest donations in corporate history to the Greens political party going to do all of these developments and hand a quarter back to the state government under the Greens communist policies? I doubt it.

The reality is this: there is no difference between the Labor Party and the Greens party because at the end of the day they are going to preference each other in October. Here is the risk, and members will hear it from me first today. Here is the risk. Are members ready for this? Rest assured in October if there is a hung parliament with the Greens and the Labor Party these are the sorts of policies that will get up in Queensland. The Greens will do a dodgy deal with the Labor Party and this commie sort of policy we are debating today will form part of a Labor-Greens alliance going forward, and that is a big risk for Queensland. I see the housing minister shaking her head. It is what happens with the Greens policy. They will do a deal in a hung parliament. They will say they want all of the rental policies they have been advocating for; they want 25 per cent social housing. By the way, it was only two weeks ago that the Greens moved an amendment to a bill to hand over 50 per cent of units and houses to the state government and now they have brought it back a little bit to 25 per cent. It is only a quarter. The reality is that no builder, no developer and no investor will actually build anything.

Is it better to have a complex of 100 units that are currently being developed in Queensland and the state government putting in place state priorities of affordable living and working with the local government sector and the development sector so that a portion of those will be affordable housing? Then the state could do a deal for social housing for the most vulnerable in our community. Alternatively, they could have a policy where a quarter of the units under this plan just get gifted to the state—and that is what it is: it is commie policy. No developer or investor in their right mind will build anything again in Queensland. Every investor will be driven out of Queensland. No investor will want to come to Queensland and build.

Here is the risk for Queenslanders and anyone looking to invest in Queensland. If it is a hung parliament in October—and the member for Maiwar has already said he will support the Labor Party in a hung parliament—this is the type of policy that will be put on the agenda. There will also be the Greens policy to allow squatters to just walk into any house in Queensland. That will be the deal that the Labor Party will do with the Greens party. The Labor Party and the Greens will defund the police, defund the military and allow shoplifting. That is what is coming to Queensland if there is a hung parliament. The Labor Party members all shake their heads, but they will do any deal to stay in government. That is the reality. We know the Labor Party and we certainly know the Greens, and that is what is coming.

This sort of policy will have a negative effect on the housing crisis in Queensland. That is the deal that the Labor Party will secretly do with the Greens behind closed doors. Why? Because Premier Miles will do and say anything to stay in power. It will mean that a dodgy coalition between the Greens and the Labor Party will happen. It will occur and it will be detrimental to the people of Queensland.

Ms PEASE: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. As enlightening and entertaining as the speeches of the member for Kawana are—not—perhaps you could direct him back to the substantive point of the bill.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Martin): Member for Kawana, I have given you some latitude and you have strayed pretty far from the long title of the bill. I ask you to come back to the long title of the bill.

Mr Purdie: They're being protected by their mates.

Mr BLEIJIE: Yes, the Greens are being protected by their Labor mates; I take the interjection. The Liberal National Party is the only party in Queensland that has the right priorities for Queensland's future. The Liberal National Party is the only party that will address the housing crisis in Queensland. The Liberal National Party is the only party that is giving young Queenslanders the ability to finally think, 'One day I will be able to own my own home.' Under a Labor Party and Greens alliance that would never happen. That is the risk and that is why we do not support commie policies put forward by the Labor Party or commie policies put forward by the Greens today.

 **Mr BERKMAN** (Maiwar—Grn) (5.51 pm): Wow! I am almost impressed at how impressed the member for Kawana is with himself. That is impressive.

I rise to support the bill introduced by my colleague, the member for South Brisbane, which would ensure the Queensland government enacts an inclusionary zoning strategy by 1 July this year. Under the inclusionary zoning strategy, developers would be required to hand over 25 per cent of all new multi-residential developments or newly subdivided lots to the state government for public housing. Importantly, the public housing stock would have to be of equal character and quality to the rest of the development because everyone deserves to live in high-quality housing in a wealthy state like Queensland. This is what a genuine response to the current housing crisis in Queensland looks like. In addition to freezing and then capping rent increases, taxing vacant properties and winding back federal tax concessions that incentivise property speculation and drive up prices, we need a mass build of public housing here in Queensland.

Last week, the latest Anglicare affordability snapshot confirmed that the rental crisis is the worst it has ever been. Queensland has historic low-vacancy rates and, at the same time, more people than ever are relying on the hugely inflated and insecure private rental market. Home ownership rates are steadily in decline, with more finance going to property investors than owner-occupiers. The ratio of housing prices to incomes has absolutely skyrocketed since the early 1990s when governments doubled-down on treating housing like a commodity rather than a basic necessity.

In the midst of a housing crisis, housing supply cannot and should not rely on property investors being able to return a profit. Throughout history in Australia and across the world, public housing has been used as a positive social investment to meet the population's housing needs, yet successive Labor and LNP governments have effectively privatised the provision of housing, outsourcing its delivery to the profit-driven private market. At the end of last year there were almost 44,000 people on the social housing waitlist in Queensland, and those are just the ones who made it onto the list. The Labor government tightened the eligibility criteria to squeeze people out and obscure just how drastically they are failing on social housing in this state. Based on Productivity Commission data, Labor has delivered only 1,845 new social homes since winning government in 2015. They sold off more than 2,000 to the private market in the same time frame. Their so-called Housing Investment Fund has not yet delivered a single home, as I understand it.

The number of people directly impacted by the housing crisis or who work on the front line supporting affected residents and made submissions on the bill is instructive. A disability support pensioner from Runcorn wrote—

As someone living in domestic violence I am unsafe and my life is at risk. I am on a wait list for public housing but I know housing will not be available to me before my current lease runs out. I will be homeless by the end of the year through no fault of my own.

One mother submitted—

I and my five kids are currently facing homelessness. We have been put on the waitlist for a house and told by housing that our car counts as a shelter.

A resident in Taringa, in my electorate, said—

I am currently living in a unit block with cracked walkways, water damage, and unrepaired electronics while my real estate agent is seeking a 10% increase in rent ... I do not believe any decent human can sit with a straight face and say that it is normal for housing to sit so far outside of reach for workers, and particularly younger workers.

Clearly, we need new approaches to increase the supply of social housing. That is why we are proposing an inclusionary zoning strategy.

So far Queensland Labor's approach to the housing crisis has been offering concessions to private developers who hold more and more power in this state—developers whose primary motive will always be profit. They are not philanthropists; they are for-profit businesses. The closest Labor has come to including public housing in new developments, such as we have proposed, is the vague suggestion in their housing plan that says they will pursue 'inclusionary planning' but, like so many of Labor's attempts to feign action on the housing crisis, the detail does not support the headline.

The government is considering relaxing planning restrictions as a trial for developers that set aside some dwellings for affordable housing—not public housing but affordable housing. They said they would aim for about 20 per cent affordable housing but here is the real kicker: ‘affordable’ means practically nothing. It is tied to a volatile, inflated housing market that will not improve unless we build more public housing. Unless developers are required to provide public housing, it is absolutely foolish to think that they will. Developers do not actually have any interest in doing anything that will bring housing costs down because the most important metric for them is and always will be profit. We know developers will not deliver housing because it is needed; they do it to make money.

Right now developers are sitting on a huge backlog of land zoned for housing. Last year across Queensland there were 100,000 residential lots that had been approved for housing but not yet completed, including 60,000 in the south-east. The founder and director of property developer Meriton said openly—

I am holding a lot more than I am selling at the moment, and as the value of property goes up the value of what I have kept rises. A tax on vacant land could help address this but, most importantly, it demonstrates that the overriding imperative for private developers will always be to maximise profit, and they have been raking it in for years. This bill is about getting back just a little bit for Queenslanders.

In a bunch of jurisdictions, including in Australia and internationally, they have adopted some form of inclusionary zoning where developers are required to set aside some units of social housing. As the member for South Brisbane said, the vast majority of submissions on the bill support mandatory inclusionary zoning to increase the supply of affordable housing. One social worker in Banyo wrote in their submission—

I work in a homelessness service for women and children, and we are forced to turn away women and children daily, who are living in cars, tents and unsafe situations ... Plans to decrease strain on the private rental market HAVE to include well-planned developments that include an increase in social housing.

By mandating 25 per cent public housing in new multi-residential developments or subdivisions we go some way towards providing a genuine alternative to the private rental market and one that will bring rental and house prices down. We would also create more diverse communities with a better mix of housing options instead of concentrating disadvantage in particular areas, as is all too common in the current social housing model. Public housing should be well located, well designed and available for people on low incomes to live alongside essential workers. Inclusionary zoning is a great way to achieve that.

Here is an example of how inclusionary zoning could look in my electorate. I have previously written to the housing minister suggesting that the state acquire the Toowong Central site where Woolworths used to be. Now it is sitting empty, destined to sit idle or at best perhaps be a car park while the private developer figures out what to do with it after ditching their previous plans to construct units. I think the government should acquire that site. They could work with council to deliver new public green space as well as public housing and community facilities that would act as a significant public asset for years to come in a highly densified and increasingly densifying suburb instead of leaving it for the developer to land bank and then profit from. Failing that, what if we require the developer to set aside a quarter of any new apartments as public homes? Students and other low-income people struggling to pay rising inner-west rents could have access to the shops, services, public transport network, schools and job opportunities available in Toowong.

They would be able to live in high-quality, beautiful homes just like their neighbours. The state government would benefit from rental payments. Access to affordable housing would put competitive pressure on surrounding investors to offer more reasonable rents. That is what this bill could do for Queenslanders. Public housing used to be built for ordinary working people and their families, not just an increasingly small group of the most vulnerable people in our society. Decades of underinvestment means that public housing now makes up less than 2.8 per cent of all housing and even those with the greatest need are unable to get a home.

Meanwhile, developers are cashing in on the housing crisis. Both developers and the major parties have been treating housing as a tool for profit, not a home for regular people. Housing should be treated as a fundamental human right. Queenslanders deserve better. We need to prioritise high-quality, affordable public housing over damaging property speculation and private developer profit. Developers are not going to deliver affordable homes out of the goodness of their heart. They just will not. We need to mandate a proportion of new homes be set aside for public housing if we want any chance of catching up with demand. I urge the House to support this bill, to support the Greens proposal for an inclusionary zoning strategy that mandates at least 25 per cent of new homes as public housing.

 **Mr POWER** (Logan—ALP) (6.00 pm): I represent many families in Yarrabilba, Park Ridge and other suburbs such as Jimboomba where young families are trying to buy a house for the first time. I want to introduce the House to a particular family, the Matti family, who escaped Mosul, Northern Iraq and proudly bought their first house in Park Ridge. I want the House to think about what the consequences would be if the bill that is before us here were passed. The very house that the Matti family built in the street where there are more than 10 houses would have extra developer charges of more than 25 per cent—in effect, a 25 per cent tax on the house of this migrant family from Iraq.

I am not just making it up. There is research such as that by Lyndall Bryant from QUT's School of Built Environment and Civil Engineering. In his paper *Developer charges and housing affordability in Brisbane, Australia*, he looks at the effect of developer charges on housing affordability. This builds on extensive research from the United States where it is shown that these very charges and taxes come directly back to families like the Mattis who are trying to buy a house for the first time, effectively meaning that at a minimum their house becomes 25 per cent more expensive. This would effectively price out of existence thousands of young families wanting to buy into a house for the first time. I think it would choke supply, make our housing problems more difficult and put investment into places other than Queensland.

I urge members to support the thousands of homes that the minister is actually building—real homes that are actually making a difference to Queenslanders. I also urge both the Liberals and the Greens federally to step out of the way of the funding that could be delivered by Canberra.

 **Dr MacMAHON** (South Brisbane—Grn) (6.03 pm), in reply: Thank you to those members who have contributed to a lively debate this afternoon. It is immensely disappointing that this bill will not pass today and Queenslanders will not get the benefit of a meaningful mandatory inclusionary zoning policy that could rapidly expand the amount of public housing that we have here in Queensland. I thank the minister for listing those submitters who had written in to the inquiry in support of inclusionary zoning in principle. A lot of those organisations said we need inclusionary zoning in some form. Indeed, the quantum that we have included in this bill is ambitious, but it is necessary to address the scale of the crisis that has unfolded under both Labor and the LNP. If that quantum is too high, can the minister tell us what quantum do Queenslanders deserve? How much public housing do Queenslanders deserve? Do Queenslanders deserve to wait for years for public housing? Do they deserve to sleep in tents and cars while they wait? Do they deserve to live in public housing that often gets dangerously hot in summer? What do Queenslanders deserve?

This bill aims to make up for decades of failed housing policy and lack of investment by both Labor and the LNP. The reality is that in many parts of the world, places with societies and economies quite like ours, public housing is done properly and often with the help of inclusionary zoning policies. In Vienna 60 per cent of homes are social and public housing. The Netherlands has 29 per cent social and public housing. Scotland has 24 per cent. We could have a lot more ambition here in Queensland. In fact, we have had this kind of ambition in the past. Even in Australia in the years after World War II the government built tens of thousands of public homes. In Queensland over 10,000 homes were built throughout the state by the housing commission. Now less than one in 40 homes built in Queensland are for public and community housing. The truth is inclusionary zoning in Queensland to rapidly expand the amount of public housing we have is possible. It is possible to build hundreds of thousands of beautiful, quality public homes for ordinary people to rent and buy. If 50 years ago governments could build 10 times as much public housing as we do now then we can do so again and better. If other countries can have 25 per cent social housing as opposed to the just over three per cent we have in Queensland we could do the same thing.

The Greens are fighting for genuine solutions to the housing crisis which has emerged as a result of housing largely being treated as a for-profit tool being thrown to the for-profit developers and the free market so that people who are already wealthy can make a bit more money. While Labor and the LNP are listening to the property developers, the Greens are the only party listening to the community and listening to the experts who are telling us loud and clear that without bold measures like inclusionary zoning the housing crisis is only going to get worse.

Let us look at who supported inclusionary zoning in the inquiry on this bill and who opposed it. Some 107 submitters were in favour of inclusionary zoning in some form and seven were against it. Let us have a look at those. It is clear whose side those who are against it are on: the Property Owners' Association of Queensland, a property investor lobby group, the Housing Industry Association, a private developer lobby group, the Urban Development Institute of Australia Queensland, a private planner and real estate industry lobby group, the Student Accommodation Association and a private developer and real estate lobby group. While Queenslanders are going through the worst housing crisis since the

Depression, these lobby groups have been working for those property developers and rich investors who are making huge profits off the housing crisis as rents go up and the cost of land and housing goes up.

With more and more Queenslanders moving into tents and cars, or waiting for years on the social housing register, property developers are receiving more and more government handouts. While thousands of families struggle with mortgage stress, banks are making record profits. Over 30 MPs in here own over 80 properties between them while everyday people struggle to break into the housing market. Labor and the LNP support giving investors \$37 billion in tax concessions each year while nurses, teachers and workers try to buy their first home, getting outbid by those same investors. With skyrocketing rents and rising house prices, property investor MPs will continue to make huge profits while everyday people struggle to pay rent, pay their mortgage or break into the housing market.

It is astounding that both Labor and the LNP think that the way to build housing is to make things easier for those same property developers who have been hoarding land and holding back housing supply. Big developers are sitting on a huge backlog of land zoned for housing—and this is a deliberate choice—designed to maximise profits for property developers from sky-high house prices. Labor's proposal to waive infrastructure charges will not make houses any cheaper or guarantee new public homes or even affordable homes. Waiving infrastructure charges will mean that local governments will not have the funds they need to invest in crucial public infrastructure for growing communities.

My colleague the member for Maiwar has a private member's bill in parliament to remove that cap on infrastructure charges. As I have said, it is mind-blowing that the government would want to move in the other direction. It is mind-blowing that the government would think that it could enact inclusionary zoning through loose guidelines, open-ended pilots and an aspirational goal that is not even mandatory.

When it comes to housing, both Labor and the LNP think that we just need to lift regulations off property developers and make sure developers can make good profits, but look at where that has us—families sleeping in insecure accommodation, kids heading to school after a night in a car or tent and renters getting kicked out of their home because they cannot afford the next rent increase. If this model for inclusionary zoning is not good enough, I challenge the government to come up with a genuine plan for inclusionary zoning that will mean we will get tens of thousands of new public homes right across the state. I remind everyone that the inclusionary planning pilot that Labor has developed will build no public housing. There are currently 43,000 people on the social housing waitlist.

QCROSS and the Pawson report that it released in 2023 say that, if Labor had not tightened up the criteria to exclude people who were typically qualified any other time, there would be an additional 100,000 households on the waiting list. QCROSS and the Pawson report estimated that the real figure for housing need is growing at 2,700 households per year. To put this in context, since 2015 Labor has added just 1,845 homes to the social housing stock. That means families are going into acute housing stress much faster than Labor has been building social homes. This means thousands of households have to live in a tent, skip meals, skip buying school supplies, skip buying medicine or skip going to the dentist. That is to say nothing of the hundreds of thousands of people who are on the precipice of housing stress.

Labor's social housing plan will take over a decade just to house everyone who is currently on the list. For the benefit of the House, these are some of the Queenslanders who have been let down by decades of failed Labor and LNP policy who are on the social housing register: one person with very high needs waiting for housing in the Miami area; two people with very high needs waiting for housing in the Greenslopes area; one person with very high needs waiting for housing in the Labrador area; one person with very high needs waiting for housing; one person with very high needs waiting for housing in the Noosa Heads area; one person with very high needs waiting for housing in the Hermit Park area; one person with very high needs waiting for housing in the Darra area; two people with very high needs waiting for housing in the Logan area; one person with very high needs waiting for housing in the Miami area; two people with very high needs waiting for housing in the Marsden area; one person with very high needs waiting for housing in the Caboolture area; three people with very high needs waiting for housing in the Holland Park area; one person with very high needs waiting for housing in the Mount Coolum area; one person with very high needs waiting for housing in the Ipswich Central area; one person with very high needs waiting for housing in the Torquay area; one person with very high needs waiting for housing; one person with very high needs waiting for housing in the East Brisbane area; one person with very high needs waiting for housing in the Miami area; one person with very high needs waiting for housing in the Moorooloolooloo area; one person with very high needs waiting for housing in the Ormeau area; one person with very high needs waiting for housing in the Torquay area; one

person with very high needs waiting for housing in the Maroochydore area; one person with very high needs waiting for housing in the Miami area; one person with very high needs waiting for housing in the Currumbin area; three people with very high needs waiting for housing in the Labrador area; one person with very high needs waiting for housing in the Mooloolaba area; one person with very high needs waiting for housing in the Helensvale area; one person with very high needs waiting for housing in the Northgate area; one person with very high needs waiting for housing in the Cleveland area; two people with very high needs waiting for housing; four people with high needs waiting for housing in the Mount Gravatt East area; one person with very high needs waiting for housing in the Enoggera area; one person with very high needs waiting for housing in the Miami area; two people with very high needs waiting for housing in the Paradise Point area; one person with very high needs waiting for housing in the Scarness area; two people with very high needs waiting for housing in the Deception Bay area; two people with very high needs waiting for housing in the Labrador area; three people with very high needs waiting for housing in the Bracken Ridge area; two people with very high needs waiting for housing in the East Brisbane area; one person with very high needs waiting for housing in the Paradise Point area; one person with very high needs waiting for housing in the Miami area; one person with very high needs waiting for housing in the Goodna area; one person with very high needs waiting for housing in the Mooloolaba area; one person with very high needs waiting for housing in the Palm Beach area; six people with very high needs waiting for housing in the Nerang area; one person with very high needs waiting for housing in the New Farm area; two people with very high needs waiting for housing in the Kangaroo Point area; one person with very high needs waiting—

Mr KELLY: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The House appreciates the point that the member is trying to make, but I ask you for a ruling under standing order 236 as to tedious repetition.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Martin): Thank you for bringing that to the House's attention. Member for South Brisbane, I direct you to standing order 236—irrelevance or tedious repetition—as follows—

A member shall not refer to matters irrelevant to the subjects of the debate or engage in tedious repetition during debate.

I understand what you are doing. I ask that you table the stack of papers from which you are reading to assist the House.

Dr MacMAHON: These are individual cases: this isn't repetition. These are individual applications for people waiting for social housing. I would be happy to table the social housing register for the benefit of all members here to understand the scale of the crisis and why we would put forward a measure such as this that would rapidly expand the amount of public housing in Queensland.

Tabled paper: Document, undated, regarding the social housing register [\[714\]](#).

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

Question resolved in the negative under standing order 106(10).

EMERGENCY SERVICES REFORM AMENDMENT BILL

STATE EMERGENCY SERVICE BILL

MARINE RESCUE QUEENSLAND BILL

DISASTER MANAGEMENT AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading (Cognate Debate)

Resumed from p. 1333, on motion of Mr Ryan—

That the bills be now read a second time.

 **Mr LAST** (Burdekin—LNP) (6.22 pm), continuing: It was a situation confirmed by the then commissioner. It is an absolute insult that the volunteers we rely on are expected to work out of facilities akin to the Third World. While I am sure they would welcome facility upgrades, perhaps the minister would like to advise what the cost of the upgrades are, how they will be funded and when they will be completed. Again, we have a situation where there are more questions than answers. Again, these are questions that volunteers deserve answers to.

Concerns have also been raised with regard to training opportunities for rural firefighters, incident controller shortages, fire suppression support at large structural fires and even who is in charge of an incident. Both volunteer and professional firefighters and their communities deserve answers. These issues are not of their making. They are the sole responsibility of this minister and a government that not only guillotines debate but also limits the ability of Queenslanders to have their say when it comes to the services that they literally trust with their lives.

As I did earlier, I will put questions to the minister that have been raised by Queenslanders and, frankly, they are questions that deserve to be answered during the minister's response. Will the minister guarantee that local brigades will have access to the money that they have previously raised to spend locally as determined by the local brigade? Will the minister guarantee that the state government will not forcibly acquire rural brigade funds and hold them centrally? Will the minister guarantee that there will not be another layer of bureaucracy put in place for local rural fire brigades to access their locally raised funds? Will the minister guarantee that local rural fire brigades will be able to continue raising money locally, access the money locally and determine locally how the brigade will spend that money? Will the minister guarantee that volunteers will not have to wade through layers of bureaucracy just to receive the authority to purchase basic items to ensure the proper functioning of their brigades? Further on that particular point, will there be caps or a ceiling on the amounts that brigades can expend without having to seek further approvals?

Another contentious issue relating to this bill is the structure of the new Queensland Fire Department and, particularly, how brigades and members of the new Rural Fire Service Queensland fit into that structure. Ninety-three per cent of Queensland is protected by the Rural Fire Service, made up mostly of volunteers. Those volunteers and those communities deserve certainty when it comes to funding essential services. As the examples I have given clearly demonstrate, there is no certainty under this bill and there is a clear lack of respect for the life- and property-saving tasks undertaken by the Rural Fire Service. For those reasons, the LNP opposition will be opposing clause 31 of this bill—that is, the establishment of the two separate entities: Queensland Fire and Rescue and Rural Fire Service Queensland.

As I have mentioned previously, a common objective of these bills is to bring several entities under the control of the Queensland Police Service and to reallocate responsibility for Queensland's disaster management functions to the Police Commissioner. It is a fact that under the current minister we saw police numbers go backwards. We saw reforms put in place that later needed to be wound back, and we have seen the youth crime crisis envelope the whole state.

Many Queenslanders, both directly affected by these bills and in no way affected, have expressed concerns about the additional functions being added to a Police Service that is already stretched beyond breaking point and have questioned whether these changes will divert police resources away from their core functions of law and order. These concerns are amplified by the fact that this government has committed in these bills to increase staff numbers to address the additional functions, whilst recently we have seen record numbers of police leaving and numbers plummeting. What all Queenslanders, and our police especially, deserve is for the minister to explain how these additional responsibilities will be handled without reverting resources from fighting crime and without putting an even larger strain on our Police Service.

As shadow minister, my responsibility is to ensure the best outcomes for Queenslanders. Whilst I have raised concerns on behalf of Queenslanders, I will also acknowledge positive elements of these bills. Perhaps the most important of those elements is civil liability protections. The fact is that responding to an emergency, whether it threatens people or property, comes with risks. When time is of the essence and the responders themselves are in harm's way, mistakes can be made. In the vast majority of cases it is not because of ill will—a fact proven by the responders rushing towards an incident to help others rather than running away to protect themselves.

It is now just over 11 years since the Malone inquiry recommended that volunteers be provided with protections under both criminal and civil law. Whilst we would all hope that those protections are not needed, 11 years later volunteers throughout our state will finally have the protection that they deserve.

In times of crisis, or in response to a disaster, Queenslanders deserve a disaster management system that works and is built on local knowledge and proper resourcing. For those reasons, amendments relating to disaster management are generally supported by those on this side of the House.

Queensland may well be the most disaster affected state, but it is our emergency services who make the difference. Regardless of whether they be professionals or volunteers who put others first, every Queenslanders values the contribution they make to our communities. I want to put on the record both my personal thanks and the thanks of those on this side of the House for the work that they do.

During my time as a police officer and as an area director of Emergency Management Queensland, I have seen my fair share of responses to natural disasters and incidents and I have witnessed the selflessness and dedication of both professional and volunteer responders. It is not only a government responsibility to ensure the response to an incident or disaster is handled as well as possible but also the responsibility of the government to ensure those who respond are respected, supported, valued and properly resourced. I note that the vast majority of the amendments contained in these bills are due to reviews and that the intention is to deliver the best response possible when Queenslanders need help.

My issue, and the issue of my colleagues, is not with the intent. Our issue is with the way this government has gone about this process. To have people with 50 years of service as volunteers talking about walking away is not only heartbreaking but also has the potential to deprive the next generation of volunteers, and our communities of a pool of vital knowledge and experience.

It is not just those who have dedicated a large portion of their life to protecting their communities. When referring to his experience dealing with this government's processes, a 32-year-volunteer from my electorate said, 'Why should I bother putting myself at risk? The government doesn't care about me. They only care about PowerPoint displays and cutting ribbons.' That statement is a sad indictment on this government. Throughout the state, especially in regional Queensland, we have a proud history of going to the aid of others and of putting ourselves in harm's way for strangers—or, as some might say, of looking out for our mates.

At the heart of this issue are volunteers who save lives and property. It is a fact that after a shortened debate this government will pass these bills. It is a fact that, despite a process that was promised to be staged and apparently focused on respecting and valuing volunteers, and despite the best efforts of many on this side of the House, these bills will be passed without those brave men and women receiving the answers they deserve. I call on the minister to provide the answers I have asked for here as part of this debate, to give assurances and, above all, to show respect. Queenslanders and those who respond in their time of need deserve that at the very least.

 **Mr BENNETT** (Burnett—LNP) (6.30 pm): We must support any improvements to the response of agencies to disasters and disaster management. I note both ministers' contributions and I welcome those clarifications, but there are still some questions to be asked on behalf of the people we have been talking to. There are recurring themes in these bills. Given the government's failure to deliver the promised additional police officers around this state, members would be right to question how these positions will be filled without an impact on frontline policing. Queenslanders rely heavily on brave volunteers in their time of need and the government must get this implementation right.

The lack of consultation and mixed messaging has been referred to by volunteers in many of the affected groups. We should be encouraging volunteers by being open and transparent with them. The association president I spoke to in the Wide Bay was given seven working days over Christmas from receipt of the draft legislation to consult with association members. Given that the Blue Water Review was completed in 2018, the government has had more than enough time to consult in a meaningful and respectful manner with VMR and coastguard members.

A large proportion of the real effects on volunteers will come through regulation rather than legislation. The government has not made the regulations public, which means that even as the legislation comes before the House volunteers still do not know all of the details. The transfer of volunteer agencies to the Queensland Police Service will bring with it a significant change in how these groups operate. The government must ensure that volunteers are respected and that the transition is implemented in a way that respects their service to the community.

In addition to staff members, these reforms will bring about 8,000 VMR and SES volunteers under the control of the Queensland Police Service. There are concerns regarding the ability of the QPS to manage so many additional staff and volunteers. The time taken by the government, including the cost to undertake lengthy reviews, has resulted in angst amongst those volunteer organisations subject to the reviews.

Estimated costs, which have been talked about in some of the committee's reporting, include allocating up to \$10 million over two years and providing 30 temporary full-time equivalent positions to the Reform Implementation Taskforce; and allocating approximately \$142 million per annum ongoing from 2023-24 through the following distributions, and I talk about this in a positive light: \$60 million per annum for the SES, \$27 million per annum for the establishment of MRQ, \$20 million per annum for disaster management functions in the QPS and \$11 million per annum to contribute to the cost of 143 additional firefighters. I have long advocated in this place for a fairer distribution of the Emergency Management Levy, and it is great to see that finally real funding will make a real change to these wonderful organisations, volunteers and paid staff.

Estimated costs also include allocating up to 550 full-time equivalent positions to support implementation of the independent review report recommendations, which includes the provision of an additional 60 FTE equivalents for the SES—hoping there are positive outcomes for all—and the additional 30 FTE positions that have been allocated to the Reconstruction Authority are also welcome.

The bill's stated purpose is to establish a new Marine Rescue Queensland Act, the main purpose of which is to establish MRQ. The bill also proposes to establish the functions, powers and membership of MRQ, the role and functions of the Queensland Police Service Commissioner in relation to MRQ, and the appointment and administrative arrangements of authorised marine rescue officers. The bill will combine the Australian Volunteer Coastguard Association and Volunteer Marine Rescue Association Queensland into Marine Rescue Queensland as a single entity. We know that is not all rosy and we know there are concerns going forward, particularly with the rollout as proposed. Some brigades and some flotillas in my electorate will be included and some will be pushed past 1 July.

Public education was talked about. I welcome the member for Morayfield and Minister for Police talking about communication, because it was a huge issue. It continues to be a huge issue, with information not being disseminated. Volunteers said they did not feel valued. They did not feel that communication was fair and reasonable. Recommendation 2 is critical to bring people along with the process, and that is why we welcomed those representations from the committee to talk about a better communication strategy. Dr Kingston, who is from up my way, said they did not have real issues with the bill but he also said—

We do, however, have significant concerns with the largely yet to be developed doctrine and regulations to underpin the legislation.

We pass on Dr Graham Kingston's concerns.

The culture of volunteerism must be allowed to continue and flourish. Volunteer marine rescues or coastguards may choose not to be part of MRQ. I guess we will see what chaos and crisis that may bring. This has been a long time in the making, and the fact that we have not been able to get this right has been disturbing for a lot of flotillas and the communities they represent.

The *Review into volunteer marine rescue organisations in Queensland*, the Blue Water Review, was conducted from 2018 to 2020 and so far has cost \$27 million. I believe there is more to come. The estimated annual operating costs of marine rescue in Queensland, according to the QPS, is only \$8 million. We put a lot of money into reviews. We would argue that this new entity should be cohesive and effective. It should be doing the work they want to do, which is to get on the water and provide a safe environment for the people who need their services.

I share concerns regarding the lack of information provided to volunteers as to how the new arrangements will operate. I know the minister tried to answer the question about the compulsory acquisition of equipment, but the issue still remains about how we access money. I really hope there is clear communication from the government, particularly in relation to how MRQ and others will operate. Volunteers are the backbone. During the committee process we heard of real concerns that people had as a result of conversations with public servants who had come out to talk to the flotillas. One particular brigade that will be spoken about later in the debate has over \$740,000 in the bank. Of that, \$120,000 has been raised through sausage sizzles and donations. If they still feel uncomfortable with the process then we have a problem with communication. I urge both sides of the House to make sure we respect these processes and ensure going forward the process will allow fundraising funds to not be transferred away from flotillas and organisations. We do not want to see that angst. The people who gave evidence to the committee I am proud to be deputy chair of were really quite angry about the process.

Of utmost importance to the Queensland Police Service is supporting emergency service members so they can help Queenslanders when they need it most. My meetings with rural fire brigade representatives has exposed that volunteers are angry and they do feel undervalued. Those

experienced members who turn up to protect us every time—covering 93 per cent of the state—know there is a push for union control. Those are their words; not mine. They have heard of stacked statistics being rolled out over the last 12 months, and that is something that we all should be taking time to have a look at.

I had hoped that these bills would have dealt with the botched blue card system that continues to plague rural fire services across the great state of Queensland. Before someone pulls me up I will take this opportunity to talk about the issue of dress uniforms. They have still not been provided to volunteers and rural fire services. Locally, it has been highlighted that the Bundaberg Rural Fire Brigade area may pick up an additional 45 rural fire brigades from the North Burnett under the area office responsibilities, and many of the local first officers are asking questions about those issues going forward. We must support the many submitters who want what was promised: a different structure; a completely independent rural fire department. That is what they were promised many times by the government. Now that appears to have been taken off the table.

I would also like to put on the record that the committee process was really valuable in terms of the three bills we had carriage of at the time. There were wonderful men and women who appeared before us in the committee process to tell their stories. While we are being somewhat critical of the process, I will take this opportunity to give a shout-out to the men and women who provide these amazing services, particularly the unpaid volunteers who continue to turn up when we ask them to. I do acknowledge that this legislation supports that. All in this House should be happy that we are working positively towards outcomes that will give protection to our volunteers. Without repeating myself, I do particularly want to acknowledge the distribution of extra funding. There has been a 'chook raffle' mentality for way too long, and the fact that we can resource and provide opportunities for the men and women of our volunteer services is something that we should applaud.

I do encourage, as I said before, the police minister in particular to continue his conversations about communication and transparency. Equally, the minister for emergency services, in relation to the carriage of the disaster management component, should acknowledge the comments that were made earlier about making sure assets and other contentious issues are explained. That is all we could ever ask—that is, that we continue to engage with these organisations to make sure they remain and we do not see a mass exodus of volunteers, as is being threatened. That would be a sad day if it is only based on communication.

 **Mr RUSSO** (Toohey—ALP) (6.40 pm): I rise to speak to the cognate debate for the Emergency Services Reform Amendment Bill 2023, the State Emergency Service Bill 2023, the Marine Rescue Queensland Bill 2023 and the Disaster Management and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024. The Community Support and Services Committee, in its reports Nos 40, 41 and 42 of the 57th Parliament and tabled in this Assembly on 15 March 2024, has recommended to the Assembly that these bills be passed. The Community Safety and Legal Affairs Committee, in its report No. 8 of the 57th Parliament tabled on 19 April 2024, has also recommended to the Assembly that the Disaster Management and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024 be passed.

The purpose of these bills is to progress legislative reform of the Queensland emergency services and disaster management arrangements over two stages. The first stage consists of three bills—the State Emergency Service Bill, the Marine Rescue Queensland Bill and the Emergency Services Reform Amendment Bill. These bills will make the legislative amendments necessary to restructure emergency service arrangements as recommended in the independent review report and they will conform with certain recommendations made in the Inspector-General Emergency Management review.

The Queensland State Emergency Service will be established through the State Emergency Service Bill and will recognise the value of the State Emergency Service and Marine Rescue Queensland members and their service to the community. The Disaster Management and Other Legislation Amendment Bill is complementary to the legislative reform brought in these other three bills. The overarching objectives of the disaster management bill are to enhance Queensland's disaster management arrangements, to expand the Queensland Reconstruction Authority's functions and to establish the Queensland Fire and Rescue and the Rural Fire Service Queensland as dedicated fire services under the act.

As we all know, Queensland experiences more natural disasters than any other state in Australia. With the growing impact of climate change, the frequency and intensity of these disasters are expected to rise. Natural disasters can leave lasting scars on communities, destroying lives and livelihoods. How

emergency services prepare for and respond to these disasters can significantly impact recovery. It is crucial that our emergency services are managed efficiently and effectively, with cooperation at all levels and across all services.

The core purpose of these four bills is to facilitate this effectiveness—to ensure Queensland's emergency services are structured, administered and led in a manner that will uplift their ability to respond to the challenges that lie ahead. The Queensland arrangements for the governance, funding and organisational structure of the SES are unique in terms of the three-way state, local government and SES relationship. In no other state does local government have responsibilities in the disaster arena, nor are they enmeshed in the SES funding and support in a manner similar to the Queensland arrangements. No other states have a partnership funding model similar to Queensland.

This is not rushed legislation. The delivery of emergency services in Queensland has been considered in a series of reviews, including the *Review into volunteer marine rescue organisations in Queensland* published in 2018, the SES review *Sustaining the SES—Partnering for change* published in 2020, and the *Independent review of Queensland Fire and Emergency Services* published in November 2021. The *Review of Queensland's disaster management arrangements* was presented to the government for consideration on 28 April 2023.

The office worked with the Department of the Premier and Cabinet, the Queensland Police Service, QFES, the Queensland Reconstruction Authority, the Department of State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning, relevant state agencies involved in disaster management, the State Disaster Coordinator, the Local Government Association of Queensland and other relevant stakeholders to obtain the information necessary to the review. The committee investigated the disaster management bill and it found that stakeholders generally acknowledged the need for reform of the Fire and Emergency Services Act and the structure and administrative arrangements of QFES. I commend the bills to the House.

 **Mr BERKMAN** (Maiwar—Grn) (6.45 pm): I rise to make my contribution to this cognate debate on four bills—yep, four. I think that must be some kind of record. At least this time, I suppose, they are four bills that are somewhat related to each other. It makes it a little bit easier to swallow than it was last week when we had two separate cognate debates which included two bills each that were some of the most significant legislation that we have seen in this place but were squeezed through in record time, and two bills were completely unrelated. I will put my procedural concerns aside for the time being, though.

It is worth noting at the outset that there are some quite legitimate concerns about the operational structures that are proposed in the rearrangement under these bills, not least of all the kind of top-down, almost quasi-militaristic structures that are proposed. I note specifically the RFS concerns about bringing volunteer-based organisations—these really grassroots, bottom-up organisations—under this kind of new proposed scheme and under the control of a bureaucracy that has little or no experience or understanding of the volunteer experience and the volunteer management in the fashion that it occurs in the RFS.

Other members have already mentioned some of the concerns around uncertainty around the reallocation of funds, which I think are entirely fair. I hope that they are addressed by the minister. Additionally, we should always approach the expansion of police powers and functions very carefully. It is obviously quite a substantial shift to have these new functions sit under the Queensland Police Service, but in this instance it seems like a sensible enough suggestion. I am very eager to see how it plays out in the long run.

To start with, I did want to turn to some submissions from organisations including QCOSS, Neighbourhood Centres Queensland and Community Legal Centres Queensland that raised the huge contribution of neighbourhood and community centres and other similar community-based organisations in disaster response and recovery. That is not to detract in any way from the extraordinary work that is done by the rest of our emergency service workers and their respective organisations, but this was a theme that they raised in hearings that also emerged in the Community Support and Services Committee's inquiry into social isolation and loneliness.

We heard in both that inquiry and the inquiry that covered three out of four of these bills—at least in the previous inquiry—that neighbourhood and community centres were essentially operating with funding only for a single full-time-equivalent staff member in a lot of cases, which means they are obviously playing an incredibly oversized role in disaster response. The government response to that

inquiry was to quite significantly increase funding for neighbourhood and community centres across the board. It is obviously a welcome additional funding source, but I still would suggest that it is not enough when we consider the myriad various roles that neighbourhood and community centres play. It is not just about creating community hubs that support disaster recovery efforts, although this is clearly a pivotally important role, particularly in those disaster-prone areas across the state.

I think it is important for us to recognise just how important it is for governments to foster connected communities because connected communities are resilient communities. We have seen that time and again. It was certainly my experience during the 2022 floods—seeing the existing connections in our communities really bringing everyone together. It is like the social glue that everyone needed at that point to suck it up, put on the gumboots and get into the mud. I was really proud and impressed to see the small army of volunteers that the Greens had put together in the federal election campaign at that point going out in droves to get in amongst the muck. It is those pre-existing coordinated groups that are ready at the drop of a hat to get in amongst it.

All of this is to highlight the importance and value of adequately resourcing the non-government and community sector for both their bread-and-butter community support work and the valuable disaster recovery work they do. If the underpaid, underappreciated staff in neighbourhood and community centres are spending all their time meeting the daily needs of the community they serve—be they social needs or material needs—we cannot expect that they will have any capacity for other important community work. As QCOSS put it, substantial additional investment is necessary—

... to engage with the strategic meetings of relevant bodies; sufficient and ongoing funding for specialised staff such as disaster resilience workers to undertake disaster response and resilience activities; and increased funding to support emergency response infrastructure, and equipment such as generators.

Community Legal Centres Queensland put it this way—

We would like to see more investment in particular for community and social service organisations that really do that long work of holding communities together long after the fire front has passed and long after the floodwaters have receded.

I could not agree more with that sentiment. We see the ADF come into town in that immediate emergency response, but it is ultimately the people on the ground who are left in the wake of these disasters and who really struggle to put it back together, and neighbourhood and community centres are so integral to that. In response to this issue, the Queensland Police Service predictably noted that the allocation of funding for such organisations is a matter of policy. All we can do is encourage the government to continue to increase funding to all of these non-government and neighbourhood and community sector organisations.

Another issue that was raised specifically in the hearings by Monica Taylor, the disaster and climate resilience project coordinator at Community Legal Centres Queensland, was the fact that this is actually a golden opportunity, as she put it, for a minor additional reform to insert good Samaritan protections into our civil liability legislation. The civil liability regime is already being reformed through this package, which is why it is such a good opportunity. There are necessary and simple reforms to that civil liability framework that address the risk that is posed to those everyday heroes who jump in their tinny or their kayak or whatever it might be in response to a disaster and get out there and help. They just get in amongst it and help those who need help.

The situation is different for volunteers in the SES, for example. They have an explicit exemption from liability under the Civil Liability Act, whereas if something goes wrong or someone gets hurt while Joe Blow in his tinnie is trying to help, they are potentially exposed to civil liability despite their best efforts. To avoid this kind of disincentive for the community to engage and offer help in the midst of natural disasters and the recovery and clean up, we need some reform. It should be a simple reform. I encourage the government to take some steps in that direction, as suggested by CLCQ.

It is obviously our hope that this swag of reform will leave our emergency services respondents in better shape to be able to continue to offer the absolutely invaluable work they do for Queensland and in support of Queenslanders—because, let us face it, we would be lost without them. It has been mentioned already—and I am sure it will be mentioned again in this debate—that we know Queensland is the most disaster prone state in the country. We see year after year, especially in La Nina years, those staggering clean-up bills coming through time and time again. They are not getting any smaller and it is not getting any easier for Queenslanders to insure their homes, properties and possessions, and all of this will only worsen as the impacts of climate change take hold.

We can make these kinds of administrative rearrangements and restructure the organisations that we rely on to come and mop up the mess after the fact, but we need to take urgent steps to address climate change. Again, I will accept that the government has done some great work domestically on our domestic renewable targets and emissions reductions targets, but as long as we continue to dig up and export coal and gas, as long as we actively advocate for a longer life for the fossil fuel sector, we have blood on our hands. We are directly contributing to those harms that are experienced by not just Queenslanders, as the most disaster prone state in the country, but people all over the world.

It is a sobering thought for me, if I am really honest, that my nearly five-year-old daughter has in her lifetime lived through one notionally one-in-100-year flood and the burning of 37-odd per cent of the Gondwana World Heritage area. These rainforests have never burned and are not adapted to deal with fire, and we are at risk of losing them. My 14-year-old has lived through two one-in-100-year flood events in his short life. We need to do more to address climate change or no tinkering with emergency services is going to help us.

 **Ms BUSH** (Cooper—ALP) (6.55 pm): I rise to speak in support of the cognate bills, incorporating the Emergency Services Reform Amendment Bill, the State Emergency Service Bill, the Marine Rescue Queensland Bill and the Disaster Management and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. I note the committee reports recommended that the bills be passed.

Queensland is the most disaster affected state in Australia. The bushfires that occurred last year in Queensland's west were a terrifying reminder of the real risk that bushfires present. The February 2022 floods had an incredible economic, social and environmental impact on many parts of Queensland, including in my electorate where our local creeks flooded substantially, inundating hundreds of homes. Many of our locals had a front row seat to the life-saving work that our emergency services agencies undertake. I had constituents stranded in their homes requiring swiftwater rescues, the SES attended hundreds of homes to assist with the debris and fallen trees, and the police were under incredible pressure to keep up with response calls. We will forever be grateful for that.

Ensuring that our emergency services agencies are designed and supported to respond to the impact of natural disasters is important—which is what these bills will achieve—and it becomes more pressing when we recognise the impact of climate change on extreme weather conditions. The latest report from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change is clear that climate change is intensifying extreme weather events. When we last convened here in parliament, we passed landmark legislation locking in Queensland's emissions reductions targets, strengthening the work set out in the Queensland Climate Action Plan and the Queensland Energy and Jobs Plan, which maps the state's pathway to net zero by 2050. While we undertake that work, it is still imperative to ensure our frontline services are established in a way that enables them to meet current demands.

These reforms will implement recommendations to the independent review of the Queensland Fire and Emergency Services and the Inspector-General Emergency Management's review of Queensland's disaster management arrangements. The bill will establish Queensland Fire and Rescue and Rural Fire Service Queensland as dedicated fire services under the act. The commissioner will continue to lead the new Queensland fire department with support from senior experienced personnel. The bill establishes the role of the Chief Fire Officer as a statutory position that is responsible for providing advice to the commissioner on matters relating to service delivery, operational culture, best practice and innovation, and research across the fire services.

The bill prescribes that the commissioner, Chief Fire Officer, deputy commissioner, assistant commissioner and other executive and senior officer roles within Queensland Fire and Rescue must have professional firefighting experience, incident control experience and fire prevention expertise which reflects the necessary proficiency and experience expected in these units. The bill also establishes the Rural Fire Service Queensland advisory committee, which provides strong representation to Queenslanders who volunteer their time for our community.

Thousands of Queenslanders donate their time and their experience to fire and emergency services, supporting our communities in their greatest time of need, and we cannot thank them enough. At this point, I want to also recognise the role of neighbourhood centres in disaster response recovery. I note that both QCOSS and Neighbourhood Centres Queensland made submissions to the bill on this, and there is nothing in the bill that precludes our disaster preparation from working with community centres at a local level.

I also welcome the reforms that will require smoke alarms to be installed in caravans and motorhomes across Queensland. We would all be aware of fatal events where, regrettably, those incidents could have been avoided if we had all domestic settings covered by that piece of legislation. The safety of our communities, the safety of Queenslanders, is a priority for our government. This organisational realignment in this bill will ensure our emergency services and disaster management responses are established in a way that meets future demand. I commend the bills to the House.

Debate, on motion of Ms Bush, adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT

Road Infrastructure; Gambling

 **Mr POWELL** (Glass House—LNP) (7.00 pm): With limited public transport across the electorate, our roads are our lifelines. If you ever needed a more tangible demonstration of the chaos, crisis and wasted mismanagement of this third-term Labor government, you need only look at the state of the roads around Glass House. It took two years to get action on Kilcoy Beerwah Road at Cedarton following a landslide in March 2020. It took 15 years to get action on Maleny Kenilworth Road at Cambroon. It has taken a significant cheque from the federal government to see a long overdue upgrade to Steve Irwin Way between Glass House Mountains and Beerwah, but there is still so much more that needs to be done. Tonight I table a nonconforming petition from 586 residents calling on TMR to undertake rehabilitation and resurfacing works on the D'Aguilar Highway through Woodford as a priority.

Tabled paper: Nonconforming petition regarding resurfacing works on the D'Aguilar Highway through Woodford [\[715\]](#).

TMR have done testing. They know this stretch of the D'Aguilar Highway is a problem but now advise they have no allocated funding to do the job. The stretch of road is a busy thoroughfare, especially around school pick-up and drop-off times and on weekends. I add my voice to that of my residents. Please rehabilitate and resurface the road now.

Let us see the same for Mount Mee Road from Ocean View to Dayboro, and for Landsborough Maleny Road from Maleny to Bald Knob, and from Maleny Kenilworth Road from Maleny to Witta, and the list goes on. As one constituent said to me, 'If our cars were in this poor a state, they would be considered unroadworthy. Surely our roads are "uncarworthy". Why is the government not held to the same standard?' Hear, hear!

Briefly on another matter, let us face it: Aussies love to gamble, from a game of two-up on Anzac Day to a flutter on the Melbourne Cup or a punt on the footy, to those one-armed bandits, the poker machines. For most, it is a passing occasion, a special treat, some fun on a Friday night; for others, it becomes an addiction. I am pleased we return most of the taxes from gambling back to the community through the Gambling Community Benefit Fund, but that does not always sit comfortably with me. After meeting Val and Jenny from Relationships Australia which has the largest and longest running gambling help service in the state, I feel even less comfortable.

Madam Deputy Speaker, did you know we only send 0.6 per cent of the taxes we take back into gambling harm minimisation? A simple doubling or tripling of that to 1.2 per cent or 1.8 per cent to bring it into line with other Australian states would lift it from an annual contribution of \$10 million to, say, \$20 million or \$30 million and would allow services like Relationships Australia to reach far more problem gamblers. There is a state budget coming up in June. I am keen to see this much needed increase in gambling harm minimisation funding. I hope the government is listening.

Motor Neurone Disease

 **Hon. GJ BUTCHER** (Gladstone—ALP) (Minister for Regional Development and Manufacturing and Minister for Water) (7.03 pm): I rise to speak tonight about a devastating disease that affects many people in Queensland and around the world—motor neurone disease, or MND. I would like to take a moment to reflect on the challenges faced by those people living with MND and the importance of continuing to support research initiatives into finding a cure for this horrendous disease. Motor neurone disease is a progressive neurological condition that attacks the nerve cells responsible for controlling voluntary muscles. As the disease progresses, individuals with MND experience muscle weakness, paralysis and difficulty with speech, swallowing and even breathing. There is no current known cure for MND, and the average life expectancy after diagnosis is just two to five years.

In Queensland, there are approximately 450 people living with MND at any given time. These individuals and their families face immense physical, emotional and financial challenges as they navigate life with this devastating disease in Queensland. The impact of MND is not limited to the individual diagnosed but also extends to their loved ones, caregivers and their support networks.

It is crucial we continue to raise awareness about MND in Queensland and support those living with this terrible disease. By increasing public understanding of MND and its effects, we can help reduce stigma, improve access to services and enhance the quality of life for individuals and their families affected by this condition.

In addition to raising awareness, we must also prioritise funding for research into MND. The search for a cure and effective treatments for MND is ongoing, and it is essential that we invest in scientific research and clinical trials to advance our knowledge and find new therapies for this disease. By supporting research initiatives aimed at understanding the underlying causes of MND and developing target treatments, we can bring hope to those affected by this devastating condition.

I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the incredible work done by such organisations as MND Queensland, a non-profit organisation dedicated to providing support and resources to individuals living with MND and their families. Through their advocacy, education and fundraising efforts, MND Queensland is making a tangible difference in the lives of those affected by this disease.

I urge each of you here tonight to consider how you can contribute to the fight against MND in your communities. Whether through volunteering, raising money or advocating for increased research funding, there are many ways to support those living with this debilitating condition. Together we can work towards a future where MND is no longer a death sentence and where all individuals living with this disease receive the care, support and hope that they deserve. Thank you for your attention to this tonight and let us continue to strive for a world free from motor neurone disease.

Betros, Mrs P; Carter, Mr B; Fire Ants

 **Mr JANETZKI** (Toowoomba South—LNP) (7.06 pm): Two deeply loved and respected Toowoomba families have suffered a very sad loss over the last couple of weeks and I want to pay tribute to both of those families tonight. Firstly, Trish Betros has passed away. Trish was a deeply loved woman and partner and wife to Bevan. Toowoomba has grown up with the Betros family. For Bevan to have lost Trish is deeply sad, and I want to pass on my family's and the community's condolences to Bevan and his family but also the broader Betros family—Kerry and Di who my family is close to, and Murray as well who also run Betros Bros. Vale, Trish.

The second family I want to pay tribute to is the Carter family on the passing of Brian Carter. Brian Carter was a giant of Toowoomba. Brian had a 37-year career at Heritage Bank and was the chair for 30 of those years. I was fortunate to have Brian as my leader there after employing me many years ago now. He was a formidable figure in the boardroom and I learnt a great deal from Brian. Brian had a deep love not only for Heritage Bank but also his law firm, as well as for Northern Brothers Diggers. However, more importantly, Brian's love for his departed wife, Rosemary, was well known throughout the community. To their children, Austin and Julie, our hearts go out to you. Know that your father was a significant figure who was much loved, and we know how much he loved you. Unfortunately I cannot be there on Friday, but on behalf of my family and the broader Toowoomba community, to Brian, a giant of our community, vale.

In the last minute I have, I want to talk about fire ants. Fire ants are now in the Murray-Darling Basin for the first time ever, four kilometres from Oaky Creek which feeds directly into the Condamine River which feeds into the Murray-Darling Basin. It is a significant concern. It started as 78 nests, then 110, and now more nests. I call on the minister to take this seriously and to wake up.

Mr Furner interjected.

Mr JANETZKI: Wake up because this is a significant concern for our community. I reflect on what the minister has said in the past where they were in the horseshoe, or that they were surrounded, or that they had been successful in limiting them towards South-East Queensland. That is not the case, and the agriculture minister must face up to it now that the fire ant risk is throughout the Murray-Darling Basin. It is time to take it seriously. It is not good enough. We call on the agriculture minister to do more.

Kelly and Carroll Family; War Veteran Support

 **Mr KELLY** (Greenslopes—ALP) (7.09 pm): Will Kelly volunteered to serve in World War I, leaving Mareeba and his beloved future wife, Josie, to head to the other side of the world. There is a bit of contention over why he joined up, being of Irish extraction, but regardless he did his duty bravely. He served in Belgium and France. He was seriously wounded. He was lucky to survive the wound and the trip back home to Australia. He then married Josie with whom he raised nine children, including my father, Bill Kelly. Will again served in World War II but, due to his age, in a training capacity.

My grandparents' lives took them to many parts of Queensland such as Inglewood and Rockhampton and finally to Camp Hill, always serving the community, and the church was central to their shared lives.

Tom Carroll was a classic itinerant Queensland bush worker, being born, raised and roving over South-West Queensland before finally settling in Taroom with his wife, Dorie. They had three kids, one of whom was my mother, Patricia. Like Will, Tom was of Irish extraction and my mother told me that his politics were left of centre and, as such, he was not an enthusiastic entrant into World War II, but joined up when the Japanese attacked Australia. He served in Milne Bay, returned to Taroom to his beloved wife and children and one more child—Dom—arrived not long after the war. He served his community and church in so many ways and I think about him every time I pass the Taroom Hospital and the RSL. Will and Tom took massive risks and made huge sacrifices for our nation and so did their wives and kids.

On Anzac Day, I never forget nor take for granted the sacrifice and courage of people like my grandfathers, Will and Tom, nor of my uncles, cousins, nephews, friends and all the great men and women who have served our nation. I certainly do not forget my wife's great uncle Harley, who made the ultimate sacrifice and did not return from World War I. I stand in this place with the privilege of being able to honestly represent my community without fear. I never take democracy for granted. I know it has been won by courage, conviction and sacrifice. We are here because they served.

Remembering those who served is important, but supporting veterans who have returned is also essential. Greenslopes Private Hospital has always been at the centre of veterans' health in Queensland. The Gallipoli medical research centre is a dedicated, specialist health research centre for veterans that is funded, in large part, by the Ramsay foundation and Ramsay Health Care. I have advocated for many years for funding to support their research. I am so pleased to report that in last year's budget a veterans' health and welfare fund was established and GRMF has received funding to support research and the translation of research into practice.

In other good news, I have been working with Brendan Cox and Legacy Brisbane who are moving to Greenslopes. Our government is supporting the establishment of a veterans' health hub near the Greenslopes Private Hospital with \$3 million in funding. It will be a partnership between Legacy Brisbane, Mates4Mates, Open Arms and RSL Queensland. They will work with the Gallipoli Medical Research Foundation and the Keith Payne mental health unit at the Greenslopes Private Hospital. I know that this will make a big difference to the people who have defended not just our nation but our way of life, our values and, importantly, our democracy.

Burdekin Electorate, Road Infrastructure

 **Mr LAST** (Burdekin—LNP) (7.12 pm): I want to talk about a disaster that is unfolding at Moranbah with the closure of the Peak Downs Highway in the last week when an excavator from the Caval Ridge Mine became wedged under the overpass and, as a consequence, damaged that bridge to the extent that it now needs to be replaced. Of course, what that has meant for that particular area is that all the residents, the workers and the business operators who operate and live in that particular region are now forced to undertake a two-hour drive via Clermont, Dysart and the Beef Road to get around that particular road closure.

What has that meant? It has been an absolute catastrophe for some of those businesses and for some of the property owners who live along that road. Some of these business operators are going out of business. We had a quarry owner contact my office today. Due to this road closure he has already lost \$750,000 in income and he looks like he will have to retrench 30 staff. We have a trucking business in Clermont that has had to jack its prices up by \$25 a tonne because his drivers now have an extra two hours to drive on a return trip to Mackay. It does not stop there because that means the drivers are exceeding their logbook hours so they are now forced to stay overnight which adds further costs and delays to the transport of goods and services and produce into those communities.

This is having an absolutely devastating effect on that particular region. We need the detour beside the overpass to be constructed. We are told it will take somewhere between two weeks and one month to construct that detour. That is not good enough. We are not accepting that it is going to take that long to construct that detour. It needs to happen now. They should be operating there 24 hours a day until that detour is in place to allow the residents, the business operators and the truckies to access that highway. This is a major arterial; this is a major highway servicing the Isaac region. We cannot afford to have that particular highway closed for another month.

I am calling on TMR and BMA to work together to get that detour constructed as an absolute priority and to put in place the necessary traffic controls to allow traffic to safely negotiate that detour. We are told that this bridge will take 12 months to replace. That is a substantial amount of time that traffic will have to go around this detour. In the meantime, we have a property owner who has lost up to 20 head of cattle this week because the Dysart to Clermont road that they are travelling at the moment is unfenced in sections. That is what is happening as a consequence of delays in building this detour. It needs to happen now.

Parliamentary Friends of Music

 **Mr KING** (Kurwongbah—ALP) (7.15 pm): I rise this evening to talk about all things live music. As members would know, in a recent sitting week we had another one of our amazing Parliamentary Friends of the Music industry events in the Premier's Hall. It was meant to be on the Speaker's Green, but weather and other issues stopped that. We had a great event anyway. These events are bigger and better each time. I would like to thank our sponsors Kris and the team from QMusic, Bernie and the Queensland Hotels Association, Brick Lane Brewing and Trentham Estate Wines and, of course, my co-chair, the member for Bonney.

Anyone who came along will agree that DJ Eljae was a hit, as well as James Blundell and his son. I am not known as the biggest country music fan, but James was outstanding and we all appreciate him playing for us. I also have to give a shout-out to a great new local band from out my way who came along on the night—the Phosphenes. Rosie, Toby and Reece are very talented young musos. They constantly impress all who listen to them with their original music. A testament to this is that they made the finals for the Brisbane Battle of the Bands final last week at Black Bear Lodge and came second. I am sure they will bring it home next time.

The Parliamentary Friends of the Music Industry group was formed by myself and the member for Bonney after the difficult time of the COVID-19 virus when the music industry was suffering. We believe with 93 members in this place, spread over the whole state, we could all be out in our communities making sure upcoming bands like the Phosphenes get some recognition. I know the member for Redlands is the No. 1 supporter of her local band, the Beddy Rays from Redland Bay. They have had a lot of success and are well on their way. Other members are the same. I have often talked with the member for Toowoomba North about his love for the live music scene as well. We are very fortunate in Moreton Bay to have two highly-renowned venues in Eatons Hill and Sandstone Point that host some of the biggest and best. In fact, last weekend, Eatons Hill hosted the Pandemonium show which was headlined by Alice Cooper. So we do all right, and much better than Sirromet, member for Capalaba! Rob Comiskey and the team certainly deliver the goods for us in Moreton Bay.

Recently QMusic hosted the Queensland Music Awards. I was honoured to be invited along. Sadly, due to our sitting schedule, I could not make it, but one of my Kurwongbah team members went along. Some of our great local talent were awarded. Sahara Beck and Jem Cassar-Daly both won awards. Members will remember that they played here at the inaugural Parliamentary Friends of Music event. James Blundell, who played at the last one, was awarded. We saw them here first, members! So next time we host one of these events, please come along. Better still, get out in your communities and support your own local bands. We surely have another Powderfinger, Bee Gees, AC/DC or INXS out there somewhere.

Hinchinbrook Electorate, Crime

 **Mr DAMETTO** (Hinchinbrook—KAP) (7.17 pm): Crime is continuing to be the No. 1 problem in north and regional Queensland. Across Townsville we are seeing multiple vehicles stolen on a nightly basis, with youth crime being the No. 1 topic that needs to be solved in North Queensland. The KAP has a four-step approach to reducing youth crime in Queensland. Relocation sentencing still sits at the top of the list of policies that we would like to see implemented in this state. I remind everyone: relocation sentencing is built on four pillars. It needs to be a remote location, mandatory, a fixed-term and have intensive rehabilitation. I note that the state government has implemented an intensive on-country

program, but it is missing some very important elements. There needs to be a specific court order or sentencing option available to magistrates for this to work properly. For relocation sentencing to work properly, we must remove detention as a last resort from the Youth Justice Act. Removing detention as a last resort is imperative to making sure we are putting victims before these criminals. For the benefit of everyone in the House, I will table this document. It has a lovely QR code that takes you directly to the spot where it shows that previously the Labor government and the opposition have voted against removing detention as a last resort.

Tabled paper: Document, undated, titled, 'KAP, Youth Crime' [716].

Mandatory sentencing is also something that both sides of the House have voted against but Queenslanders are asking for. Rather than increasing maximum sentences, which do nothing and are very rarely actually enacted in any case, KAP is calling for mandatory sentencing in section 408A of the Criminal Code, unlawful use of a motor vehicle; section 419, burglary; section 421, entering a premise for break and enter. We are also calling for children to be charged with adult crimes and do adult time if they commit prescribed crimes such as grievous bodily harm, rape and even murder.

In this state children have been getting away with too much for too long. The KAP has a comprehensive plan to reduce youth crime in this state, but the fact is that both sides of the House have to get tough on this. They have to put their foot down and say enough is enough. We have a generation of children that have been raised softly. The judicial system treat them softly, the school system treats them softly and we are dealing with it right now out on the streets. We are seeing marches calling for a reduction in violence. We need the reduction in violence to start at the base of the problem: training children to know that they have to respect the law and society, so we will have adults who respect society and the laws as they grow up.

As a fifth measure, the KAP has adopted a policy of castle law or castle doctrine, which should give people in Queensland the right to defend themselves with any means necessary in the case of a home invasion. We should be putting victims before perpetrators.

Upper Mount Gravatt State School

 **Ms McMILLAN** (Mansfield—ALP) (7.20 pm): I rise tonight to highlight the significant investment made in the infrastructure at Upper Mount Gravatt State School since I was elected in 2017, a stark contrast between the current initiatives and the dark days of the former LNP government. During that time as a principal, I witnessed firsthand the devastating impact of their cut, sack and sell agenda. Six schools were shut and sold, resources were brutally slashed and 500 teacher positions were cut.

The commitment to improving educational facilities at Upper Mount Gravatt State School demonstrates our Labor government's dedication to providing high-quality learning environments for students in my community. Under this Labor government, there has been a transformation in the educational landscape at Upper Mount Gravatt State School. The commitment to improving educational facilities at this great school exemplifies our dedication to providing high-quality learning environments for the students in my community.

Since being elected, more than \$18.3 million has been allocated to new and improved infrastructure at Upper Mount Gravatt State School, signalling our unwavering support for educational excellence. One of the most notable projects at Upper Mount Gravatt State School is the construction of the brand new \$8 million building that replaced the classrooms damaged during the fire in 2018. Further, a \$566,000 multipurpose sports facility has provided students with access to modern sporting facilities, enhancing their physical education experiences. Additionally, the installation of a 2.1 metre high security fence around the perimeter of the school, funded through the Prioritised Nominated Project program, has ensured the safety and security of students and staff. Further enhancements to recreational facilities include the refurbished tennis court, the construction of handball courts and the installation of athletics pits.

Looking towards the future, the Upper Mount Gravatt State School is set to benefit from the construction of a new student drop-off area and staff car park, providing much needed infrastructure to support the school community. This \$715,000 project will be completed later this year. In addition to these physical infrastructure improvements, I am proud to be part of the Labor government that is investing in school resources and jobs to ensure our next generation emerges as the best and brightest. Labor recognises the transformative power of education. We stand firmly behind our exceptional teachers and our school staff.

The investment in education infrastructure at Upper Mount Gravatt State School reflects our Labor government's ongoing commitment to providing high-quality learning environments for students in my community. I commend the Department of Education for their great work. I am certainly eager to witness the positive impacts these investments will continue to have on the future generations in the Mansfield electorate.

Mount Lindesay Highway

 **Mr KRAUSE** (Scenic Rim—LNP) (7.23 pm): We have heard a lot about budget blowouts overseen by the former minister for main roads, Mark Bailey: \$600 million on the Coomera Connector, \$3.15 billion on the Logan and Gold Coast Faster Rail and there are others, too. Scenic Rim is suffering from another blowout and this time it is on the Mount Lindesay Highway, which is the main artery into Cedar Grove, Cedar Vale, Woodhill, Beaudesert and beyond.

The project to duplicate this highway between South Street and Johanna Street at Jimboomba has blown out in cost from \$57.4 million when first funded—80 per cent funded by the LNP federal government I should say—to a new cost estimate of \$75 million. That is a near \$18 million blowout, or 30 per cent, to duplicate 1.5 kilometres. That is right, a 30 per cent blowout in cost, another blowout presided over by this Labor government that has failed this highway over so many years considering they have been in office for so many of the last 34 years. I table material from TMR's website confirming this cost blowout.

Tabled paper: Document, undated, titled 'Mount Lindesay Highway (Brisbane-Beaudesert), Johana Street to South Street (Jimboomba), duplication' [717].

I also table a project newsletter from May 2021 indicating, somewhat heroically in hindsight, that construction on this project would commence in early 2022.

Tabled paper: Document, undated, titled 'Mount Lindesay Highway upgrade program—Johanna Street to South Street, Jimboomba' [718].

That date passed, and I recall being told by TMR that construction would then start in early 2023. That time came and went as well. While the government did put up some advertising banners to say that the project was coming soon, we are now in April 2024 and still there is no construction activity. TMR's website says it will start in this second quarter of 2024, but who knows?

The Albanese government's go-slow on infrastructure, including their 90-day review of infrastructure projects which took about 200 days to complete, has also had a devastating impact because all the costs have gone up during that time when they were delaying the project. No doubt the CFMEU got into the new government's ear once Premier Miles became Premier late in 2023 and demanded more for less and that has sent the costs up as well. The people of the Scenic Rim electorate suffer because of those decisions. I table an extract from the main roads infrastructure program from last year's budget, which puts this project even more into doubt.

Tabled paper: Extract, undated, from the Queensland Transport and Roads Investment Program 2023-24 to 2026-27 [719].

It shows there is only funding for \$57.4 million. That is not enough after this latest budget blowout by this Labor government. This government needs to get funding in this coming budget in June. They should also be lobbying their Labor mates in Canberra for more federal cash, just like Scotty Buchholz delivered when the LNP was in government in Canberra. They need to make sure this project is fully funded and gets underway without further delays.

It is clear that, under Labor governments at state and federal level, the Mount Lindesay Highway improvements are in the slow lane; they are on the backburner. The former federal government with Scott Buchholz as the local member provided about \$100 million to the highway and ensured that these upgrades were on the agenda. The member for Logan, who has had the good fortune in past years of having federal LNP governments, needs to get on the case and make sure this project gets going ASAP.

Autism Awareness Month; Apology

 **Mr BROWN** (Capalaba—ALP) (7.26 pm): April is Autism Awareness Month. As a member of a 'neuro-spicy' household, I think it is important to celebrate and educate during this month. People are aware that my seven-year-old son is autistic, but his diagnosis has also led to my wife venturing down the path of being diagnosed with autism this year. We know that more and more adults are going down that path of being diagnosed. The most recent data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics shows a 25 per cent increase in the number of Australians diagnosed with autism between 2015 and 2018, up from 164,000 in 2015 to 205,000 in 2018. I believe those figures would be much greater now. The

increase in prevalence rates does not necessarily mean that autism is on the rise. Rather, it is likely that increased autism awareness and understanding, with resultant changes to the diagnostic criteria, have led to better identification of autism characteristics.

I was fortunate this month to be invited to the Sycamore School at Alexandra Hills in my electorate to hand out the certificates for their superheroes parade to celebrate Autism Awareness Month. I would like to thank the school's founder, Cindy Corrie, for the invitation. I am proud to have worked alongside Cindy to ensure that the school could be co-located at the Alexandra Hills TAFE campus. Since then, the school has expanded into high school. The co-location at the Alexandra Hills TAFE has meant many students have been able to go onto TAFE after high school to do their certificate studies or have integrated into their senior studies that are also on the Alexandra Hills site.

It is through my work with this autism school, work with local parents and my own experience that has led me to fight for a local autism excellence school in our state system. I believe we need a school that has all the associated therapies such as OTs, speechies and psychologists located at a state school. Unfortunately, currently therapists are not allowed onto school grounds. It would be beneficial to have small class sizes with access to teachers and properly trained teacher aides and the infrastructure to match, such as sensory-suitable classrooms and breakout rooms. Parents I have come across are desperate for an alternative that also caters for mainstream inclusion. That is why I will be working with the education minister to make sure that this becomes a reality for my local community.

It has been brought to my attention in recent sitting days that I inadvertently interjected from a seat other than my own and I also queried a ruling made by the Deputy Speaker. I apologise unreservedly.

The House adjourned at 7.29 pm.

ATTENDANCE

Andrew, Bailey, Bates, Bennett, Berkman, Bleijie, Bolton, Boothman, Boyd, Brown, Bush, Butcher, Camm, Crandon, Crawford, Crisafulli, D'Ath, Dametto, de Brenni, Dick, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Frecklington, Furner, Gerber, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Hart, Head, Healy, Hinchliffe, Howard, Janetzki, Katter, Kelly, King A, King S, Knuth, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Linard, Lister, Lui, MacMahon, Mander, Martin, McCallum, McDonald, McMahon, McMillan, Mellish, Mickelberg, Miles, Millar, Minnikin, Mullen, Nicholls, Nightingale, O'Connor, O'Rourke, Pease, Perrett, Pitt, Powell, Power, Pugh, Purdie, Richards, Robinson, Rowan, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Scanlon, Simpson, Skelton, Smith, Stevens, Stewart, Sullivan, Tantari, Walker, Watts, Weir, Whiting, Zanow